

Corporate Complaints Policy

Introduction

- 1 Complaints matter to the Nursing and Midwifery Council. We recognise that every concern raised by one of our customers is an opportunity to improve. Complaints highlight problems to us and they provide us with a valuable opportunity to learn from where things have gone wrong.
- 2 A complaint can be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with the service we have provided. Complaints may arise from any area of our work. Many complaints are likely to arise from failure to comply with operational processes, provide good customer service and from information security and data breaches.
- 3 It is vital that we deal with everyone who raises a complaint with us in a fair and timely way and that all complaints are properly considered on their merits, regardless of their nature and source.
- 4 We need to have clear processes in place for:
 - 4.1 reporting, recording and monitoring complaints;
 - 4.2 assessing the severity of complaints and if they warrant a full investigation;
 - 4.3 providing high-quality and customer focused responses;
 - 4.4 managing complaints to ensure that any risks arising from them are mitigated as far as possible; and,
 - 4.5 ensuring that any learning identified from complaints leads to improvements and that any necessary changes are implemented.
- 5 Managers at all levels are responsible for ensuring that we take timely action to implement the necessary changes arising from the learning we receive from complaints. The feedback and learning we receive from complaints will be regularly reviewed by the Executive and our Council, and used to continually improve and develop our services.

Aim of the policy

- 6 The principle aim of this policy is:
 - 6.1 To develop a single system to identify, manage, record, respond and learn from corporate complaints.

Who this policy applies to and their roles

- 7 This policy applies to all colleagues in the NMC. All those working for and on behalf of the NMC must be made aware of and comply with this policy.

- 8 All members of staff have a responsibility to report any relevant complaint to the Enquiries and Complaints Team.
- 9 The team is responsible for:
 - 9.1 managing all corporate complaints;
 - 9.2 asking a member of staff to undertake investigations;
 - 9.3 coordinating responses for customers;
 - 9.4 identifying any learning from complaints;
 - 9.5 ensuring that any necessary changes are made to address any learning identified from complaints; and,
 - 9.6 providing regular reports to the Executive and Council on the numbers of complaints received, key trends and learning from complaints, as well as the actions that have been taken to address specific learning.

Key Principles

- 10 In considering complaints we apply the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) *Principles of Good Complaints Handling*, which are:
 - 10.1 **Getting it right** – we will have an approach and systems in place that encourages colleagues to resolve complaints in a constructive manner;
 - 10.2 **Being customer focused** – we will make sure our processes are simple and accessible, and that we deal with complaints promptly and sensitively;
 - 10.3 **Being open and accountable** – we will provide clear and complete information on how to complain and how to take complaints further. We will give honest explanations and wherever practical, reasons for decisions;
 - 10.4 **Acting fairly and proportionately** – we will treat all customers fairly and without discrimination. We will make sure that complaints are investigated in an appropriate manner;
 - 10.5 **Putting things right where possible** – we will acknowledge our mistakes and apologise where appropriate. We will also take action to reduce the likelihood of those mistakes happening again; and
 - 10.6 **Seeking continuous improvement** – we will use complaints to understand what we can do better and as a means to improve our work.

Application of this policy

11 This policy is effective from 7 August 2019 and will be reviewed annually.

Related documents

- How to make a complaint about the NMC: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/contact-us/complaints-about-us/>
- Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's Principles of Good Complaints handling: <http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/improving-public-service/ombudsmansprinciples/principles-of-good-complaint-handling-full>