

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Making a Complaint

Any person who has dealings with ASCL may make a formal complaint. This document sets out the procedure by which these complaints are dealt with by ASCL staff and, where appropriate, by the Presidential Trio. Disagreement with a decision taken by ASCL or an ASCL policy statement would not normally be grounds for invoking the formal complaint procedure; however dissatisfaction with the *manner* in which a decision was made or policy decided upon would be relevant.

ASCL takes all complaints and matters raised by members seriously and will attempt to deal with all issues quickly and thoroughly. Initial complaints will be dealt with by the manager of the appropriate section. Any person who then makes ASCL aware that s/he is unhappy with any aspect of the conduct of its administration or operations has the opportunity to make a formal complaint and should be made aware of the procedure.

In the first instance, a written, formal complaint should be addressed to the director of the section about which the complaint is directed, in writing by either email or hard copy. Complaints should be made promptly and within four weeks of event. A written response will be sent within five working days advising the complainant of the action being taken. For formal complaints, a note will be entered in the Complaints Register, held confidentially on the operation director's computer system. The note will include the name and contact details of the complainant, the name of the company, school or other organisation where appropriate, a brief statement of the nature of the complaint and the response given to it.

Staff Response

All employees are required to follow the following procedure in responding to initial or informal complaints:

- 1 In cases of complaint in person or on the telephone, the respondent should listen, take details and endeavour to rectify or explain the matter immediately. If a resolution is accepted by the complainant, no further action will be needed.
- 2 If the complainant is not satisfied and wishes to see, or speak to, a more senior officer, this may be arranged at once, if a suitable member of staff is available, or an appointment may be made or a promise given of telephone contact.
- 3 In the case of a written, but not formal complaint, the recipient should either respond, in writing or by telephone, or pass the matter to a senior officer for action. A written response should be sent within five working days.
- 4 When a complaint, whether formal or informal, is of a serious nature, or where the complainant is dissatisfied with the response of the senior officer, the matter should be passed, with an appropriate briefing statement, to the deputy general secretary. An acknowledgement should be sent to the complainant, detailing the referral and promising a response within ten working days.

- 5 The deputy general secretary will resolve the complaint. The deputy general secretary will advise the complainant of the action being taken and inform the initial respondent of what has happened.
- 6 Should the complaint involve the deputy general secretary then the matter should be referred to the general secretary for resolution.
- 7 Should the complaint involve the general secretary, the matter should be referred directly to the presidential trio for resolution.
- 8 The Complaints Register will be reviewed at regular intervals by the operations director who will make an annual summary report to July Executive.

Appeals Procedure

Formal complaints will be referred to the presidential trio

- when the general secretary decides it is appropriate
- when the complaint is directed at the general secretary or
- when the complainant wants to appeal a decision made by the general secretary. The presidential trio will respond themselves to the complainant, informing the general secretary of the action taken.

Should an appeal be made against a referral to the presidential trio, or a complaint be made against a member of the presidential trio, the appeal or complaint will be referred to an appeals panel of three ex-presidents of the association. The panel will respond themselves to the complainant, informing the presidential trio and general secretary of the action taken.

The decision of the appeals panel will be final.

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