

Leeds Mind: Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy (External)

Category:	Organisation
Title:	Compliments, Comments and Complaints
Responsibility of:	CEO
Developed in consultation with:	SLT/OMT
Staff with operational responsibility for development, implementation, and review:	SLT/OMT
Target audience:	Clients/volunteers/general public
Associated policies:	Whistleblowing and grievances Leeds Mind Values and Behavior Framework
Date first ratified Review Dates Date Last Reviewed Next review	February 2021 June 2025 June 2028
Accessibility	If you would like a copy of this policy in a larger print, get in touch with us at Leeds Mind by phone (0113 3055800) or email (leeds.mind@leedsmind.org.uk) and we'll be happy to send you one.
Policy review	This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or in line with organisation and/or changes in legislation

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full term
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
OMT	Operations Management Team

Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy

Introduction

Leeds Mind is committed to providing a high-quality service for the people we support via our services, fundraising, and other activities. Our handling of compliments, comments and complaints supports this high-quality service. Effective communication is a vital part of the process in dealing with comments and complaints as we are more likely to find a solution that satisfies all parties if everyone involved feel listened to and respected. All of our staff and volunteers work in line with our values and our behavior framework. If anyone falls short of that standard, it might be that a complaint is logged to deal with it formally. You can find these values [here](#).

One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the feedback from people that use our services and our supporters and stakeholders, and in particular by learning from complaints. Sometimes we can apologise, put things right and make improvements where required, sometimes we can only explain our actions or decisions and learn for the future.

This policy can be used by clients, volunteers and the general public but is not intended for use by staff who should use our grievance or whistle blowing policy.

All people who are supported by our services are advised of the process and are given a leaflet explaining the procedure.

Compliments, comments and complaints may be made in several ways including face to face, by telephone, by social media, through our website, via email or in writing. A form is available at Appendix 1 and the link to our complaints is on our website here: <https://www.leedsmind.org.uk/contact/>

Compliments and Comments

We welcome your compliments about our services. When you send in a written compliment we will ensure that it gets passed to the appropriate member of staff, volunteer or department.

Comments are really helpful to us in reviewing the services we offer. They are even better if you can suggest a possible solution. We will consider all reasonable ideas and we will let you know if we have made any changes as a result. Equally, we will let you know if it is not possible to make a change, and the reason(s) why.

Complaints

We aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible.
- we treat all complaints seriously as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response.
- you are always treated with courtesy and fairness.

- we deal with your complaint promptly, politely and in confidence. It is likely however that we will need to share details with relevant employees in order to investigate your complaint fully
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review regularly our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- Acknowledge all concerns within 5 days of receipt, keeping the process as straightforward and accessible as possible;
- Resolve informal concerns quickly within 10 working days – this may include minor issues, or matters raised more informally that don't require a fuller, formal complaint response
- Resolve formal concerns within 28 working days – this includes any issue where the person expects a thorough investigation and a substantial response from Leeds Mind
- In all cases, encourage mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred if appropriate.

We encourage the people we support and other stakeholders including our supporters to communicate openly and assertively to try to resolve the complaint at an informal level. Dealing with issues directly in this way maximises the likelihood of a positive outcome.

Persistent/vexatious complainants may have a genuine grievance but take inappropriate steps to complain. All complaints will be dealt with fairly and appropriately while ensuring that other clients, service users, staff or volunteers do not suffer detriment and that the resources of Leeds Mind are used effectively.

An informal approach is recommended when it can be achieved. If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

1. **Acknowledging Your Complaint:** Once we receive your complaint, whether in writing or verbally, we will forward it to the appropriate manager. If your complaint is about a manager, it will be escalated to a member of our Operational Management Team (OMT) or Senior Leadership Team (SLT), depending on the situation.
2. **Resolution Process:** We will arrange a conversation with you to try to resolve the issue informally. This meeting will be scheduled within ten working days of receiving your complaint, but we will aim to do it as soon as possible.
3. **Available Options:** During our conversation, we will discuss potential resolutions with you. These may include one-on-one meetings, involvement of another senior manager, or bringing in an external mediator. We'll ensure that you have a say in how you would like to move forward.
4. **Clarification:** Please note that this conversation is not part of the formal complaints procedure, but rather an informal attempt to resolve the issue before proceeding with a formal process if necessary.

We are committed to resolving your complaint efficiently and fairly.

If a complaint has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant informally then the procedure at in Section 1 below should be followed. In Section 2 you can see a diagram which shows the full process. Section 3 is a copy of the form and in Section 4 how our responses will be presented.

Monitoring of compliments, comments and complaints

A log of all compliments, comments and complaints is kept and a quarterly report is prepared for the SLT and the Quality and Performance committee, which monitors the performance of our work to ensure it is meeting our high standards. These reports are compiled into an Annual Report for the Board of Trustees.

Complaints are monitored to identify ways to improve practice and maintain a high-quality service.

Support and training are offered to staff to enable them to conduct investigations.

Section 1. Complaints Procedure

Stage 1: Submit a complaint

1. If you'd like to submit a complaint in writing, the easiest way to do this is via our online form [on our website](#), which you can find [here](#). If you wish to write it via a letter, please request a complaint form from info@leedsmind.org.uk or over the phone (0113 305 5800). Please submit your completed complaint form by email to info@leedsmind.org.uk, by post to **Leeds Mind, Clarence House, 11 Clarence Road, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4LB**, or in person.
2. If you need assistance with filling out the form or would like support in making a complaint, don't hesitate to reach out to us. We're here to help! You can also make a complaint verbally to any member of our staff, who will then direct you to the right person to take the details of your complaint. The form is available through the 'Contact Us' button on our website or via the above link. You can also use telephone or text. We'll send you an acknowledgement within 5 working days.
3. Once we receive your complaint, it will be forwarded to the appropriate member of the OMT or SLT who will then assign the investigation to the relevant person.
 - a. If the complaint is about a non-management employee, the team leader will investigate, unless there's a conflict of interest.
 - b. If the complaint is about a manager, it will be handled by the relevant OMT or SLT member.
 - c. If the complaint involves a member of the SLT, the Chief Executive will look into it.
 - d. If the complaint is against the Chief Executive, a Board of Trustees member will investigate.
 - e. If the complaint is about a Board member, then another board member will investigate this with support from a member of the Leeds Mind SLT.

In some cases, Leeds Mind may appoint an independent investigator if needed. To help resolve the issue as quickly as possible, we recommend submitting your complaint as soon as you can after the incident.

We handle all complaints with openness, in line with Leeds Mind's core values, and keep a record of the process for transparency.

4. The people we support in our services are welcome to have an advocate, relative, or friend assist with making a complaint. It's important to note that the complaint must come from the people we have supported, with support from the third party, rather than the third party making the complaint on their behalf. All communication will be sent directly to the complainant, though we can also send copies to the third party if requested.
5. If a third party (such as a relative or colleague) submits a complaint, the investigator will first inform the individual the complaint concerns. We will then arrange a conversation or meeting between the investigator, the person raising the complaint, and the person being complained about.

Stage 2: Investigating the Complaint

1. The investigator (as identified in stage 1 point 3 above) will first arrange a conversation or meeting with the complainant to fully understand the details of the complaint and discuss how they would like the issue to be resolved.

The investigation will typically be completed well within 28 working days. If there are any delays, the investigator will contact you to explain the reasons why.

2. The investigator will inform the person or people the complaint has been made against, along with their line manager(s), and share the details of the complaint. As part of the investigation, they will speak with the person(s) involved and any relevant witnesses.

All interviews during the investigation will be held in a private space to ensure confidentiality, and notes will be taken when needed. If further advice is required, the meeting can be paused and resumed at a later time.

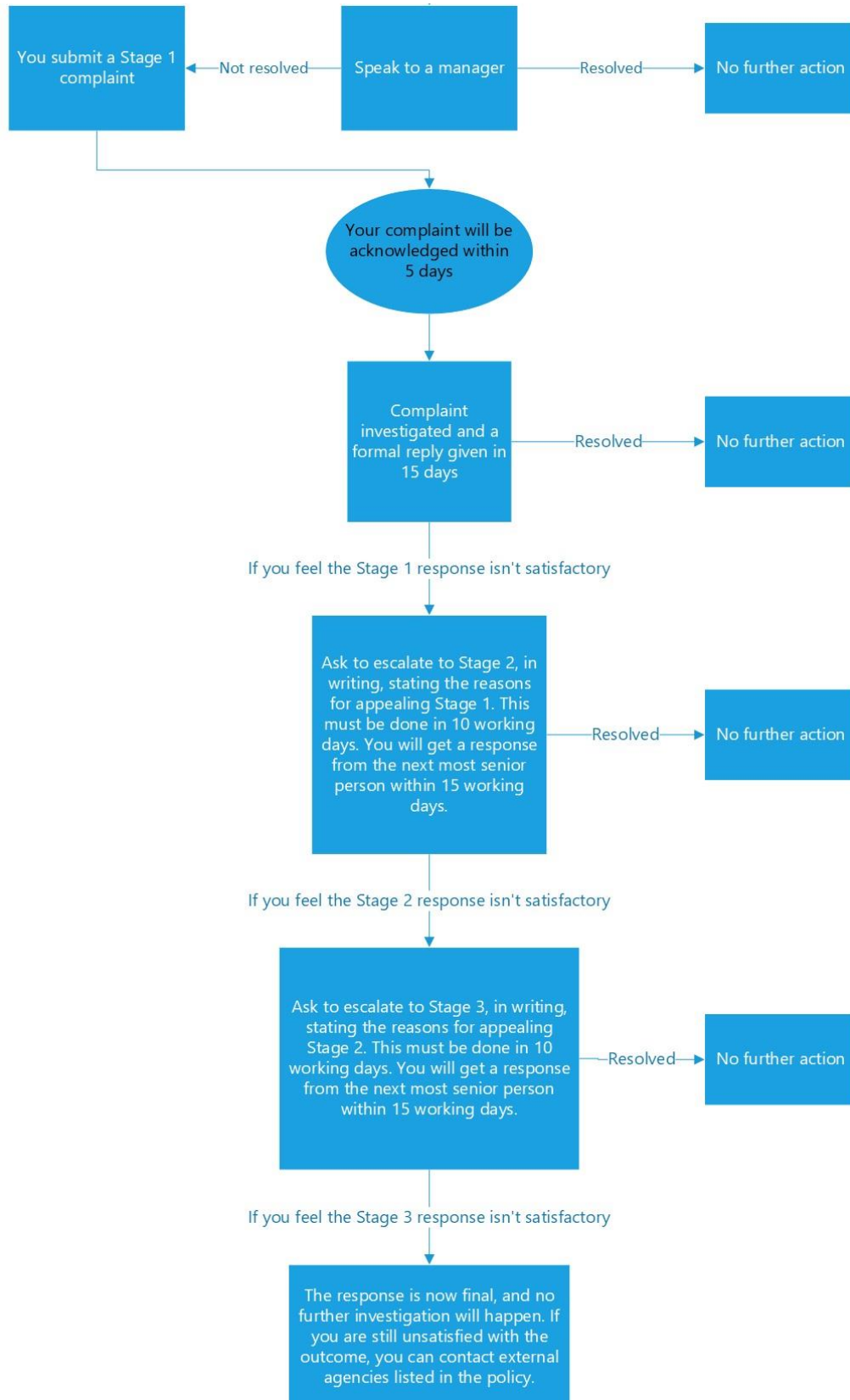
3. Once the investigation is complete, the investigator will write to the complainant, summarising the facts and outlining the decision reached. The complainant will then be asked to respond in writing, either confirming they are satisfied with the outcome or indicating if they wish to appeal the decision.

Stage 3: Appealing the Decision

1. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation and would like to appeal, they can complete the Appeal Form and email it to info@leedsmind.org.uk within 15 working days of receiving the decision, or send it in writing to Leeds Mind at Clarence House.
 - a. If the complaint was investigated by a team leader, the relevant OMT or SLT member will review the appeal and conduct any further investigation if necessary.
 - b. If the complaint was investigated by a member of the SLT, the Chief Executive will review the appeal and carry out further investigation if needed.
 - c. If the complaint was investigated by the Chief Executive, a member of the Board of Trustees or the Chair of the Board will review the appeal and make any necessary further investigation.
 - d. If the complaint was investigated by the Chair of the People Development Committee, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will review the appeal and conduct any additional investigation if necessary.
2. You will be notified of the outcome of your appeal within 28 working days.
3. The response to the appeal will be final, and no further internal investigations will take place. If you are still unsatisfied with the outcome, you can contact external agencies such as the Mental Health Advocacy Service, relevant health or social service representatives, the Ombudsman, the Citizens Advice Bureau, your local Councillor, or your Member of Parliament.

Section 2: Leeds Mind Complaint Procedure Diagram

If you are unhappy and want to make a complaint, you will log it in whatever way feels right to you and then it will follow this process:



Section 3: Our Complaints and Appeal Form

On the next 3 pages, printable versions of our complaint and appeal form. These can be posted or given in person where a person does not want to complain via our website form.

Our Complaint Form

This form to be completed by the person making the complaint. If someone is completing the form on your behalf, could they please complete section 1.2 and 1.3.

Name of person complaining	
Telephone Number	
Address including Postcode	
Email	
1.2 Name of person completing this form if not the person complaining	
1.3 What relation are you to the person with the complaint	
Please give details of your complaint making it as specific as possible, including the name of the person(s) against whom it is made (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	

Please give the names and addresses of any witness if appropriate:

What is your desired outcome (what do you want to happen?)

Signature of Complaint

Date

Our Complaint Appeal Form

This form to be completed by the person making the appeal. If someone is completing the form on your behalf, could they please complete section 1.2 and 1.3.

Name of person complaining	
Telephone Number	
Address including Postcode	
Email	
1.2 Name of person completing this form if not the person complaining	
1.3 What relation are you to the person with the complaint	
Please give details of your appeal, why you are not happy with the outcome and what you'd like to happen now (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	
Signature of Complaint	
Date	