

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS
COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK POLICY

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Prepared by	Governance Adviser
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Relevant legislation, regulation, standards	Charity Commission Guidance

CHANGE HISTORY		
Version	Change details	Approved by
1.0	Policy created	Board; 2019
2.0	Minor updates to wording, removal of stages of complaints	Board; July 2025

Introduction

1.1 At RCSLT we aim to provide an efficient and effective service that is valued by all our members and customers. We strive for continuous improvement, and we welcome any feedback on how we're doing and how we can improve. We review all feedback, both compliments and complaints and use customer comments as an opportunity for organisational learning.

We're committed to providing a high-quality service but understand that sometimes things can go wrong. If you feel we've fallen short of our commitments, or you're unsatisfied with our services or activities, please let us know. This will give us the opportunity to put things right.

Many matters can be resolved informally, so do contact our Membership Team in the first instance as we may be able to resolve your concerns straight away. You can do this on info@rcslt.org or call +44 (0) 20 7378 3012.

If your concern or complaint relates to the conduct of an RCSLT member, you should contact the [Health and Care Professions Council](#) (HCPC) directly.

This policy sets our approach and related process for managing customer feedback about RCSLT and our products and services, our customer complaint handling and how we use and learn from feedback and compliments and ensure a fair outcome for our customers and stakeholders.

Scope and applicability

2.1. This policy is applicable to all RCSLT customers and stakeholders who wish to provide feedback, compliments or raise a complaint relating to RCSLT, and its services. It outlines how to provide feedback, compliments or raise a complaint, the associated timelines, and our complaint escalation procedure.

Throughout this policy where we reference 'customer' this is synonymous with 'you'.

Purpose and objectives

3.1. This document sets out the process RCSLT staff are required to adopt when handling customer feedback, compliments or managing complaints. Our general principles are as follows:

- a) we aim to provide a clear and easy way for you to provide feedback, compliments or raise a complaint
- b) we will investigate our customers, or their authorised representative* complaints free of charge

- c) we do not consider social media as a direct channel for raising a complaint
- d) complainants' information and personal data are treated with due care and respect in line with our fair processing notice (FPN).

* If an individual is raising a complaint on behalf of a customer, we would require prior written consent from the complainant to start our investigations.

Complaint definition

4.1 We define a complaint as: an expression of dissatisfaction relating to one of our products or services or something that the RCSLT has done or failed to do and/or a specific action by a staff member, volunteer or trustee and where there is an expectation for us to investigate the cause of the concern or problem and to provide a resolution or remedial action.

4.2 We class comments made about RCSLT that don't relate to a specific incident or individual as feedback. We don't investigate feedback using our complaints procedure. But we will acknowledge and respond to you as quickly as we can.

4.3 Most complaints don't need to go down the formal route and can be resolved informally so our Membership team should be contacted in the first instance as we may be able to resolve any concerns straight away. This is often the quickest and best way to deal with an issue. Resolving complaints informally may be appropriate if a full investigation isn't necessary, and there aren't any concerns that someone has breached our policies or procedures.

4.4 You may wish to feedback or raise a concern without a formal complaint being made. We will ensure that the concerns you have raised are escalated to the relevant staff member or member of the senior management team who will discuss with colleagues and agree if any action needs to be taken. See contact details.

4.5 We recognise that there will be occasions where a more formal complaint may need to be made, whether that is relating to one of our services, something about the RCSLT or the complaints handling process itself.

Our principles

5.1 We are fully committed to addressing all complaints, fully and fairly, and in a reasonable timeframe. We do this by:

- adhering to our published service levels as set out in Section 7 (process and timeline)
- handling complaints in accordance with our values: Accountable, Belonging, Integrity, Professional, Compassion and Empathy
- sharing the details of who is handling a complaint and their contact details

- providing accurate, clear information and advice in all communications
- providing regular updates throughout the process (as required)
- respond in a professional way, providing a clear explanation or an apology where things have gone wrong and where appropriate mediation
- following appropriate regulatory guidelines
- learning from feedback, compliments, and complaints to continually improve our service in particular paying attention to patterns of complaints or recurring issues which could indicate wider systemic challenges.
- Regular reporting at executive and board level on serious complaints and their resolution.

Confidentiality

6.1 We will manage all complaints with respect and confidentiality. There may be a need to share the details of your complaint with other teams at RCSLT, third parties' suppliers and advisors to RCSLT and external bodies such as regulators. More information on how we use your data can be found [here](#).

Where a complaint involves one or more members of staff, volunteers or trustees we will also respect their rights to privacy however we may need to share their details with those directly involved in any investigation.

Raising a complaint

7.1 You should normally complain within three months of the event(s) concerned or becoming aware that you have something to complain about. For those issues which are over twelve months old, we will not investigate.

7.2 A complaint can be made by contacting our membership team on +44 (0) 20 7378 3012. You can also write to us at RCSLT, Membership 2-3 White Hart Yard, London SE1 1NX.

7.3 When contacting us, please provide us with as much information as possible so that we can investigate the complaint thoroughly. The complaint will be assigned to the most appropriate member of staff, who will manage the investigation and share the outcome.

7.4 We know that sometimes it can be hard to put concerns into writing. If you don't feel comfortable or confident doing this, you can send us an email asking for a call back and someone will get in touch.

We may still ask you to put your concern in writing. You don't have to write this yourself. You

can ask someone else to write it, but you'll need to check what they've written and approve it before sending it to our membership team.

7.5. Anonymous complaints will not be responded to, although we will respect anonymity should you wish to not be identified.

7.6 If your concern or complaint relates to the conduct of an RCSLT member, you should contact the [Health and Care Professions Council](#) (HCPC) directly.

7.7 Depending on the seriousness of the complaint, we may follow our Serious Incident Reporting Procedure and the concern may be referred to the Charity Commission by the Trustees in accordance with the Commission's guidance.

7.8 Any member, or member of the public, may complain about wrongdoing in a charity; there is general guidance on the [Charity Commission website](#).

Responding to complaints

8.1 We will acknowledge your complaint via email within two working days along with confirmation of our complaint handling process (unless a full answer is possible at that time). If you do not provide an email address, a letter will be despatched by first class post within as soon as possible from the date of receipt of complaint.

8.2 Complaints will be assessed and assigned, and the investigation managed by an appropriate member of staff, details of which will be provided.

8.3 All relevant information and evidence will be gathered to ensure a complaint is investigated in a fair way. It may be necessary for us to contact you for further information as part of this process.

8.4 We aim to resolve most complaints and provide a response within 5 working days. For more complex complaints this may take longer. In providing our response, we will ensure that we have investigated the complaint thoroughly and provide an explanation and outcome to the concerns that have been raised.

8.5 Our target is to provide resolution of any issue within 20 working days. Where this may not be possible, or in more complex cases, we will make contact to update you on our progress and indicate when our investigations are likely to be completed along with a deadline by which we should be able to provide a full response.

8.6 Depending on the nature of the issue raised as part of the resolution process we may suggest dealing with a concern or problem via a private dispute resolution process, such as mediation, to help all parties arrive at a mutually agreeable solution. Mediation may not always be appropriate but if we consider it is, we may invite those involved to take part in this voluntary process to help to resolve the issue. Mediation will be used only where all parties

involved agree. A mediator will discuss the issues raised by your complaint and seek to facilitate a resolution.

Reporting

9.1 We need to ensure that the problem is resolved as quickly as possible for our complainant and hold each other to account that we have done all that we can to resolve the issue and prevent it happening again. All complaints are analysed on an on-going basis to identify and address any recurring or systematic issues. Based on feedback we may review and update our information, advice, policies and procedures and staff guidance.

If you are not happy with the outcome

10.1 If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may ask for the matter to be reviewed. You need to request a review in writing within 28 calendar days of the date on the outcome letter or email. In special circumstances, we may extend this deadline.

10.2 A request for a review must provide all relevant details, including any new evidence an explanation should be provided clearly stating why and providing any additional, relevant information that is appropriate.

10.3 Please contact us in writing by email at cosec@rcslt.org, by contacting our membership team on +44 (0) 20 7378 3012. You can also write to us at RCSLT, Membership 2-3 White Hart Yard, London SE1 1NX.

10.4 We will acknowledge your request for a review via email within two working days along with confirmation of our complaint handling process (unless a full answer is possible at that time). If you do not provide an email address, a letter will be despatched by first class post within as soon as possible from the date of receipt of request for a review.

10.5 Your complaint will be assigned, and the investigation managed by an appropriate member of staff or trustee, not previously involved in investigating your complaint (for example, if your complaint is regarding the CEO, this will be investigated by a trustee, not a staff member). Contact details will be provided.

10.6 All relevant information and evidence will be reviewed to ensure your review is investigated in a fair way. It may be necessary for us to contact you for further information or clarification as part of this process.

10.7 We aim to resolve most complaints and provide a response within 10 working days. For more complex complaints this may take longer. In providing our response, we will ensure that we have investigated the complaint thoroughly and provide an explanation and outcome to

the concerns that have been raised.

10.8 The decision of this review is absolute and marks the end of a complaint. After the final review we won't engage with the original complaint any further.

Continuous improvement

11.1 We are committed to continuously improving our processes and responses to our customers considering any feedback that we receive.

11.2 To help us continuously improve the service we provide; we may send you a short survey via email about the complaints process after you have received an outcome. Your feedback will help us to understand what we are doing well and how we can continue to improve.

11.3 All complaints are analysed on an on-going basis to identify and address any recurring or systematic issues. Based on feedback we may review and update our information, advice, policies and procedures and staff guidance.

11.4 The RCSLT executive leadership team are responsible for ensuring the effective management of this policy and regular review of complaints and resolutions.

11.5 The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that RCSLT responds to any concerns raised by customers and other stakeholders and for oversight of the effective management of complaints and ensuring any lessons learnt are adopted.

Providing feedback or compliments

12.1 We strive for continuous improvement and so value all feedback or compliments about how we are doing or details about how we can improve our services either when customers contact us or when using or experiencing any of our products or services. We are always happy to answer any questions customers might have and to listen to their ideas for improvement.

12.2 If we have done something well or you have a general comment or suggestion about how we can improve things, we want to know. We review all feedback and aim to identify and act on any appropriate actions identified at the earliest opportunity.

12.3 Positive feedback or compliments can be provided via our online feedback form, or you can contact us at info@rcslt.org or call +44 (0) 20 7378 3012. You can also write to us at RCSLT, Membership 2-3 White Hart Yard, London SE1 1NX

Monitoring compliance

13.1 The RCSLT's Company Secretary has lead responsibility for ensuring compliance with this Policy and will review its contents on a regular basis. They will be responsible for monitoring its effectiveness and will provide regular reports in this regard to the Trustees of the RCSLT who have overall responsibility for ensuring this Policy complies with the RCSLT's legal and ethical obligations.

Training

14.1 The RCSLT will provide training to Trustees, Committee members and employees to help them understand their duties and responsibilities under this Policy.