



Charities Commission Number : 1195980

Grievance and Complaints Policy

Four key points for a fair grievance procedure are:

By 1 person

a) FOHW Trustees should deal with issues promptly and consistently and the FOHW Trustees should carry out any necessary investigations.

b) The Complainant should have an opportunity to put their case.

c) The Complainee should have an opportunity to put their case.

d) The Complainant should have the right to be accompanied at by one person at any formal meeting if they wish.

1. How to complain

FOHW Trustees would like to sort out any complaint or concern as soon as possible. Many complaints and concerns can be sorted out immediately and informally.

i) Verbally

If you are able, please raise the issue informally with a Trustee or Sub-Group Leader. Your complaint or concern will be listened to carefully, any problems will be discussed between Complainant and Trustee. Often a quiet word or asking for support from a Trustee may be all that is needed to resolve an issue.

ii) In Writing

If informally sorting out the problem does not work, then the Complainant must detail in writing, to the chairperson, the specific circumstance which constitutes the grievance. This should be without unreasonable delay, within one month of the incident. Please include dates, times, witnesses, etc. as applicable. Complainants should stick to the facts and avoid insulting or abusive language.

The chairperson will designate a Trustee who will read your complaint carefully and will investigate any formal complaint thoroughly. Generally, you will receive a response within ten working days of receipt of your letter, in person ideally, with a formal written response. This Trustee will contact you to allow you to say anything you wish to support your complaint and ask further questions about your complaint, so it will be useful if you could include an email address or telephone number as well as your address.

2. Appeals

Either party has the right to appeal against the decision. This appeal must be against the decision



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of the investigating trustee. They must do so in writing within five working days of receiving written notification of the grievance decision, stating the reasons for the appeal. Any documents submitted in support of the appeal must be attached. Whoever has dealt with the written complaint will be excluded from hearing any appeal as they will be the subject of the appeal. An appeal meeting should ideally then be convened within 7 days of receiving the right to appeal.

i)Appeal Meeting

A note-taker, who must be uninvolved in the case will take down a record of the proceedings. Two Trustees will constitute an Appeal Panel. The Trustees hearing the appeal should, if at all possible, have had no prior direct involvement in the case (this precludes both the chairperson and the investigating trustee hearing the appeal). The Complainant is entitled to be accompanied by a trusted representative of their choice at the appeal.

A member of the FOHW Appeal Panel will introduce the meeting, read out the grounds for the appeal and ask the appellant if they are correct and require the appellant to provide clarification regarding details of the appeal if unclear. They should be given the opportunity to put forward her/his case and say how they would like to see it resolved including any additional evidence provided before the hearing. The FOHW Appeal Panel may question the appellant and any of the appellant witnesses.

The designated investigating Trustee will be asked to speak to outcome of the initial investigation. They may be asked questions by the appellant as well as by the trustees on the hearing panel.

The Complainant/companion will be given the opportunity to sum up but may not introduce any new material.

Any person who is the subject of a grievance should be provided with an opportunity to respond to the complaints made against them.

The meeting may be adjourned by the Appeal Panel if it is considered necessary to undertake further investigation. The meeting will be reconvened as soon as possible.

Having considered the grievance, the Appeal Panel will give their decision regarding the case in writing to the Complainant, this will normally be within five working days. If appropriate, the decision will set out what action FOHW Trustees intends to take to resolve the grievance or if the grievance is not upheld, will explain the reasons why.

The decision of the Appeal Panel or person hearing the appeal shall be final.