

Just Psychology CIC Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

Part 1: Policy Statement

Just Psychology aims to be a learning organisation. We want to find out what we are doing well and what we are doing badly so that we can do even better in the future. Therefore we welcome feedback from our service users. Praise and blame are equally useful. Let us know how you have found our service.

If you are puzzled or concerned about the way we have treated you, you may ask us for an explanation before deciding whether to make a complaint.

You may make a complaint about any aspect of our service regardless of whether you have asked for an explanation first.

If you wish to make a complaint, we have a simple procedure which we will be happy to tell you more about.

As an Equal Opportunities organisation, we aim to treat everyone on their merits – irrespective of age, disability or impairment, race, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, sexuality, dependants or class. If you believe we may have discriminated against you on such grounds, we would be very concerned and would welcome the chance to investigate your complaint thoroughly.

Part 2: Definitions

Comment – a comment is positive or negative feedback about our service, which does not require a response.

Complaint – a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, in any form, with our services, whether justified or not, which requires a response

Compliment – a compliment is an unsolicited expression of gratitude or praise for a member of staff or service area.

Formal complaint – either a complaint that cannot be resolved quickly at point of contact, or one where the customer has requested a formal, written response

Informal complaint – a complaint that can be resolved quickly at first point of contact, which means a written response is unnecessary

Part 3: Making a comment

Anyone can make a comment to Just Psychology. All comments will be recorded and investigated, and we will take action as required. Comments on areas of strength or weakness are used to continuously improve our services. Comments should be sent to:

info@justpsychology.co.uk or can be posted via our website:
<http://justpsychology.co.uk/node/160>

Part 4: Giving a Compliment

Anyone who has a relationship with Just Psychology can compliment a member of staff, a team or the organisation as a whole. Compliments are passed on to staff and their managers, and are used to identify areas of good practice that we can learn from. Compliments should be sent to: info@justpsychology.co.uk or can be posted via our website: <http://justpsychology.co.uk/node/160>

Part 5: Complaints Procedure

Scope of the procedure

This Complaints procedure applies to complaints about the organisation from its service users. It does not apply to complaints from the organisation's staff or volunteers, which are considered under the organisation's grievance and problem-solving procedures.

Principles underlying the procedure

Openness

Complaints will be fully investigated and recorded, all parties kept informed and the procedure publicised. Any member of staff referred to will be given the chance to comment or answer criticisms. Complaints about staff may lead to action under the organisation's disciplinary procedures.

Confidentiality

The complainant may remain anonymous. If this is likely to limit the ability to follow up the complaint, the complainant will be told this and given assurances that any information s/he gives will only be used for the purpose it is given and not shared with anyone else except with his/her permission.

Support for complainants

Complainants will be offered information about how to get support from an independent source in putting their complaint e.g. a local third sector organisation. They will also have the chance to bring someone to support them to any meetings that are arranged regarding the complaint, as long as all people due to attend the meeting are informed of the name and position (if any) of the complainant's supporter and have no objections.

The Complaints Procedure

Complaints can be made in person, by telephone, email or using the contact form on our website: <http://justpsychology.co.uk/node/160>

The complaints procedure has the following stages:

1st stage - Informal Discussion

This will normally be between the complainant and a member of staff / Director/ Advisory Board member. It will attempt to establish that the complainant wants to make a complaint, what the complaint is and, if possible, to find a resolution to the complaint that all involved

find acceptable. The first stage should take place as soon as possible and within no more than two weeks of the complainant raising the matter.

2nd stage - Formal Complaints

If not satisfied, the complainant can register a formal complaint either verbally or in writing. If the complaint is regarding a member of staff, it will be investigated using the disciplinary procedure. If the complaint relates to a Director/Advisory Board member, then the complaint will be investigated by a Director/Advisory Board member not involved in any aspect of the complaint. If this is not possible, then an independent investigation will be carried out.

3rd Stage - Independent Investigation

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal investigation or if the complaint is regarding a Director/Advisory Board member and there are no other Directors/Advisory Board members available to carry out the investigation, an Independent Adjudicator acceptable to both sides will be asked to investigate. Possible adjudicators would include CEOs or managers of local third sector organisations. A timetable for investigation would be agreed with the adjudicator. Findings would be reported in writing to the parties and the decision of the adjudicator would be considered as final. The adjudicator's decision should include recommendations about outcomes from the complaint, which should be adhered to unless there are exceptional circumstances to take into consideration (see 4th Stage - Independent Panel).

4th Stage – Independent Panel

If the Directors/Advisory Board or complainant believe that the actions recommended by the Independent Adjudicator are unfair, either side has the right to request that an Independent Panel be formed to discuss these suggestions. This panel should consist of three independent persons acceptable to all involved, who will discuss the complaint and make a final decision on what outcomes there should be. It should aim to have its first meeting within two weeks of being formed and should further aim to come to its decision within four weeks of its first meeting. Any delay in these proceedings should be communicated to all parties involved as soon as possible. The panel can call any person before them to discuss the Independent Adjudicator's recommendations and its decision on the complainant's outcomes is final.

Recording Complaints

All complaints will be recorded. The record will include the date of the complaint, the complainant's name and address unless they wish to remain anonymous, the form of it (i.e. in writing or verbal), who received it, what the details of the complaint were, and what action was taken, by whom and on what timetable.

Monitoring Complaints

Directors and Advisory Board members will report annually to the Board on complaints during the year and policies and procedures will be reviewed if appropriate.

Publicity

This Policy Statement and Procedure is available on our website: www.justpsychology.co.uk