

Should you have a complaint...

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## Our Aims

Scripture Union Scotland is committed to providing a quality service and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of everyone with whom we come into contact.

However, we know that there may be times when we do not meet our own high standards. When this does happen we want to hear about it, deal with the situation as quickly as possible and put measures in place to stop it happening again.

We take complaints very seriously and we treat them as an opportunity to develop. This is why we are always very grateful to hear from people who are willing to take the time to help us improve. We will ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- 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 services, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures

## What is a complaint?

We define a complaint as any **expression of dissatisfaction** (with the charity, with a member of staff, trustee or other volunteer) **made by someone other than a member of staff or volunteer that relates to SU Scotland's activities and requires a formal response.**

*NB A separate grievance policy exists for complaints made by staff members and a volunteers problem solving policy is in place.*

## How will we respond?

We will work hard to fix problems, correct mistakes and address your concerns in a way that satisfies your concern. When contacting us about a complaint, please feel free to let us know how you think it could be resolved. We will always treat you with courtesy and respect, listen to what you say, keep you informed about our progress, provide you with a prompt response and tell you who to go to if you want to escalate your complaint further.

There may be rare occasions when we choose not to respond to a complaint at all, including:

- when a complaint is about something that SU Scotland has no direct connection to. We may choose to reply to clear our name but we are not obliged to
- when someone unreasonably pursues a complaint that we have already responded to. They will be given escalation points but we may choose not to reply again; we will always inform the person of our decision to do this
- when a complainant is being obviously abusive, prejudiced or offensive in their manner
- when a complainant is harassing a staff member
- when a complaint is incoherent or illegible

Whilst SU Scotland cannot respond to any complaints made anonymously, we will investigate the complaint and use the information to improve in any way that we can.

An informal approach to the relevant member of staff or event Team Leader is often most appropriate when it can be achieved. However, if your concern cannot be resolved informally to your satisfaction, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed. The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

# Our Complaints Procedure

## Stage 1 - Informal

It is vital that reasonable efforts are made to resolve a complaint in person or by phone with the relevant manager / team leader who is your initial point of contact. Should you receive a satisfactory response to your complaint at this level, a brief record of the conversation will be made and placed on file in order that we can learn from your feedback. However, no further acknowledgement in writing will be made.

## Stage 2 - Written Complaint

If you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to the member of staff who first dealt with you, or their manager, so that he or she has a chance to put things right.

If you are unsure which member of SU Scotland staff to write to, your complaint should be addressed to The Director of Development.

In your letter or email you should set out:

- the reason for your complaint
- where and when it arose
- the name(s) of anyone involved (if known)
- what outcome you are hoping for
- your contact details (name, address, daytime telephone number and/or email)

Alternatively, a Team Leader may supply you with a written complaints form to complete and return.

You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt. You should get a response and an explanation within 15 working days.

## **Stage 3 - Review**

If you are still not satisfied with our response and wish to take your complaint further, please write or email within 28 days of receiving our reply.

Your case will then be passed to the relevant Departmental Director responsible for the activity who will investigate your complaint further and will contact you with their conclusions and any actions to be taken.

You can expect an acknowledgement of your request within 5 working days of receipt and a response within 15 working days.

We will work to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

## **Stage 4 - Final Review**

In the case of a complaint relating to a residential event, the Director of Development and Holidays will be the final arbiter. In other cases, should you not be satisfied with the reply received under stage 3, you can write to the Chief Executive (using the contact addresses below), stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You must do this within 10 days of receiving the written response.

The Chief Executive (or their nominee) will respond within 5 working days to inform you of the action which will be taken to investigate your complaint, and when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation. Depending on the level of work involved, a final response will normally be made within one month.

## Responsibilities

**Our responsibilities** are to:

- acknowledge a formal complaint in writing
- respond within a stated period of time
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint
- take action where appropriate

**Your responsibilities** are to:

- bring any complaint to our attention, normally within 4 weeks of the issue arising
- raise concerns promptly and directly with the relevant event leader / member of staff
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date, and stating what you would like the outcome to be
- allow SU Scotland a reasonable time to deal with the matter
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond SUS's control

## Confidentiality

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and SU Scotland maintain confidentiality. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

## Taking your complaint outside SU Scotland

If you are not satisfied with our response, you may wish to contact the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator

Tel: 01382 220 446 | [www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)

We view all comments and complaints as an opportunity to improve. We are happy to acknowledge the mistakes that we have made, apologise sincerely for them and then try to prevent them from happening again in the future.

## How to contact us

**Please write to us at:**

General Enquiries, Scripture Union Scotland,  
70 Milton Street, Glasgow, G4 0HR

**or email us:**

[info@suscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@suscotland.org.uk)

**Thank you for helping us to improve the quality  
of what we do!**

Scripture Union Scotland is registered in Scotland as a charity (no.SC011222) and as a company limited by guarantee (no.SC54297)

