

CPD Complaints Procedure

This page explains the CPD complaints policy in detail and the process for submitting and dealing with complaints.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Federation of the Royal Colleges of Physicians is committed to delivering a high quality CPD service. As part of this commitment, it is recognised that on occasion customers may be dissatisfied with the way in which something has been done, and that complaints arising from this should be handled in a clear, fair and consistent way.
- 1.2 These Procedures apply to all CPD diary users who consider that they have grounds for complaint regarding the provision of a service by the Federation CPD team. These procedures may also be used to consider complaints by prospective CPD diary users or any other party, if deemed appropriate by the Medical Director for CPD.
- 1.3 Where any party expresses dissatisfaction with any aspect of the CPD service to a member of the CPD team informally (for example over the 'phone or in an email) the team will make every effort to address their concerns informally. If this does not resolve the concerns the next step would be to submit a written complaint.
- 1.4 Complaints will not be considered if they are submitted anonymously or on behalf of another party, without that party's explicit consent in writing.
- 1.5 Any dispute as to the interpretation of these Regulations shall be referred to the Medical Director, whose decision in the matter shall be final.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 A 'complaint' is defined as an expression of a specific concern about the provision or quality of a service by the CPD team, including issues such as staff conduct, disputes about the policies, other procedures or the application thereof.
- 2.2 These procedures are not applicable in the following circumstances:
 - (i) If the complaint concerns a person or activity not subject to the jurisdiction of the CPD team;
 - (ii) If the complaint would be more appropriately handled by one of the Royal Colleges (in which case complainants will be referred to that Colleges' Complaints Procedure)
 - (iii) If the complaint amounts to an allegation of criminal activity (which will be referred to the Police for separate consideration);
 - (iv) If the complaint appears to be intended to delay or prevent the consideration of an allegation of misconduct.
 - (v) If the complaint is related to formal disciplinary action being taken against any member(s) of staff, as disciplinary procedures take precedence over this procedure.

3 Procedure

- 3.1 It is expected that complaints will be raised as quickly as possible, and no more than **two** months from the date in which the incident occurred.
- 3.2 All complaints must be submitted in writing to the CPD and ePortfolio manager, stating (i) the nature of the complaint, (ii) what has / has not been done to resolve it, (iii) why the complainant is not satisfied with what has / has not been done, and (iv) what the complainant would like to be done to resolve the matter to their satisfaction. Complainants must make clear in the letter that it is a formal complaint they are submitting and make clear to all other CPD and Federation staff they may continue to have contact with that they have submitted a formal complaint.
- 3.3 All complaints will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. Wherever possible a full response will be made within twenty working days of the date of the letter of receipt unless extenuating circumstances exist in which case the complainant shall be informed of this and notified of the revised deadline for the response. Full reasons shall be given for the decision reached. If this does not resolve the matter, or this step is for any reason not possible or appropriate; (ii) the complaint is referred to the next relevant authority, usually the Head of Communications, CPD and International for Federation.
- 3.4 Complainants are assured that they have the opportunity to raise matters of legitimate concern through these Complaint Procedures without risk of disadvantage or criticism. Towards this end, the Federation recognises the importance of confidentiality when handling complaints and will maintain this as far as is possible during any investigation. However, it will occasionally be necessary to disclose a complainant's identity to progress an investigation. Complainants who are not willing for their identity to be disclosed in this way should make this clear in their letter of formal complaint.
- 3.5 Only once all attempts to resolve the complaint in accordance with paragraph 3.2 - 3.4 have been exhausted may a formal complaint be submitted to the Federation Chief Operating Officer, who will consult with the Medical Director. The Chief Operating Officer (or delegated senior manager) will reach a conclusion on the complaint and determine a course of action.
- 3.6 The Federation will take all necessary steps to support all parties involved in a complaint and undertake all investigations sensitively and expeditiously.
- 3.7 All complaints will be considered on their individual merits, and all complainants will be treated equally.

4 Appeals about the outcomes of complaints

- 4.1 If a complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of their formal complaint, they may appeal in writing to the CPD and ePortfolio manager. This will be reviewed together with the head of Communications, CPD and International. If necessary, it will be escalated to the Chief Operating Officer (who will again consult with the Medical Director) for a decision.
- 4.2 All appeals about complaints will be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. Wherever possible a full response will be made within twenty working days of the date of the letter of receipt, unless extenuating circumstances exist in which case the complainant shall be informed of this and notified of the revised deadline for the response.
- 4.3 The decision of the Chief Operating Officer is final, and the complainant will be notified of this in their letter and that the complaints procedure is at an end.