

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

CST is committed to providing a high-quality service to everyone we deal with (members and service users). In order to do this we need you to give us any comments about our service, and to tell us when we get things wrong. We want to help you resolve your complaint as quickly as possible.

We treat as a complaint any expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for a response. We listen to your complaints, treat them seriously, and learn from them so that we can continuously improve our service.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not.

Our policy covers complaints about:

- The standard of service we provide
The behaviour of our staff
- Any action or lack of action by staff

Our complaints policy does not cover:

- Matters that have already been fully investigated through this complaints procedure
- Anonymous complaints
- Complaints about access to information where procedures and remedies are set out in legislation, e.g. Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection Act

Persistent and/ or vexatious complaints

The definition of unreasonably persistent behaviour is 'done repeatedly or as a habit'. The term vexatious is recognised in law and means 'denoting an action or the bringer of an action that is brought without sufficient grounds for winning, purely to cause annoyance to the defendant.'

In order to counter this, we reserve the right to refuse to investigate persistent and/or vexatious complaints.

Our standards for handling complaints

- We treat all complaints seriously, whether they are made by letter or by email.
- You will be treated with courtesy and fairness at all times.
- We will treat your complaint in confidence.
- We will deal with your complaint promptly - we will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within 5 working days and we will send you a full reply within 20 working days of receipt.

September 2018

Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England, Charity Number 1107640, Company Number 05303883

VAT Registration Number 270 0880 18

CST Registered Office; Suite 10, Whiteley Mill, 39 Nottingham Road, Stapleford, Nottingham NG9 8AD - Tel 0115 917 0142

- If we cannot send a full reply within 20 working days of receipt we will tell you the reason why and let you know when we will be able to reply in full.

Confidentiality

All complaints received will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

How to complain

You can make a complaint by email or post.

You can send an email to admin@cstuk.org.uk or in writing to registered office CST c/o Suite 10, Whiteley Mill, 39 Nottingham Road, Stapleford, Nottingham NG9 8AD

We have a 2-stage complaints procedure. At each stage it will help us to resolve your complaint quickly if you can give us as much clear detail as possible, including any documents and correspondence and stating that you are making a complaint in line with our procedure.

The stages of the complaints procedure

Stage 1

This is the first opportunity for us to resolve a complainant's dissatisfaction, and we hope that the majority of complaints will be resolved at this stage. In the first instance, we will try to get the complaint resolved by the Chief Operating Officer and Company Secretary unless the complaint is about the Chief Operating Officer and Company Secretary in which case we the Chief Executive Officer will try to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer, a trustee will try resolve the complaint.

Stage 2

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request a review by the board of trustees. Your request should be sent to the email or postal address above, addressed to the Chair of CST.

At each stage, please send your complaint or request for review to the CST office.



**Confederation
of School Trusts**



CST Professional Development



**National Teacher
Accreditation**

Timescales for handling a complaint

Stage 1 - maximum 20 working days

- Acknowledgement within 5 working days
- Full written response within 20 working days (unless the complaint is received outside of term time, in which case a full response will be made in 30 working days).

Stage 2 - maximum 20 working days

- Acknowledgement within 5 working days
- Full written response within 20 working days (unless the complaint is received outside of term time, in which case a full response will be made in 30 working days).

Extending time limits

We aim to complete all complaints within the timescales above; however, if a complaint is very complex it may occasionally be necessary to extend the time limit. If this is the case, we will keep the complainant informed of progress with the investigation, the reasons for the delay, and the new deadline.

Following any stage of the procedure, a complainant has a maximum of 20 days from the date of the final response to request that their complaint be progressed to the next stage.

If you remain dissatisfied

We trust we will be able to resolve your complaint quickly and efficiently and that you will be satisfied with the way your complaint has been handled. However, if you remain dissatisfied, you have the right in relation to complaints about CST as a charity to contact the Charity Commission as the regulator. However, CST Professional Development and NTA are not regulated by the Charity Commission and therefore stage two is final.

Date 21 September 2018; Revised 2 November 2018

Date of review every 2 years; next review November 2022

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