



Royal Association for Deaf people

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Please click [here](#) for BSL translation of this policy.

Version number	Date	Author	Purpose
001	May 2023	Joint CEO	2023 review
002	November 2024	COO	2024 Review and Update

Full policy

Purpose and scope

RAD values complaints and any comments and suggestions are welcome. We will treat all people who make them with respect and understanding.

Our complaints policy and procedure is crucial for RAD as it ensures accountability, builds trust with our stakeholders, and provides a transparent way to address and resolve concerns effectively.

RAD encourages people with a complaint or suggestion to try to resolve this informally with a RAD member of staff (see section on Informal Problem Solving below). The RAD Complaints Procedure is in place where this has been tried and not worked or where it is felt that this has not resolved the issue.

RADs Complaint procedure will:

- Inform the CEO and the Executive Team of all complaints
- Allow the CEO or COO to share or report complaints to the board of trustees
- Log all complaints in a Complaints Log system
- Acknowledge all complaints and provide a written response to the complainant at every stage of the procedure
- Keep copies of all correspondence related to the complaint
- Meet the costs of sign language interpreting or other communication support required in handling a complaint
- Provide an appropriately qualified independent person (e.g. advocate) to support the complainant if the person is a vulnerable adult and / or if they request such a person
- Address complaints as transparently as possible, while upholding RAD's duty of confidentiality to those who use its services.
- Deal with complaints within the timescales detailed in the procedure.

RAD will not accept anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints can be challenging to accept because they often lack sufficient detail for proper investigation, make it difficult to seek clarification or provide feedback, and can increase the risk of misuse or malicious allegations without accountability.

Colleague complaints

Complaints from colleagues are dealt with under the “Grievance Procedure” at RAD.

Informal problem solving

Whenever possible, it is preferable to resolve matters informally. This might involve:

- Having a direct conversation with the staff member involved in the issue
- Discussing the matter with the manager responsible for the specific service
- Engaging in a mediation meeting facilitated by a neutral third party, or
- Requesting guidance or clarification from a relevant team lead or supervisor

It may be possible to sort things out quickly and easily to everyone’s satisfaction.

An appointment should be made to discuss these issues specifically. Every effort will be made to provide an Interpreter or communication support at RAD’s expense where enough notice is provided.

RAD Complaint Procedure

Complaints and/ or suggestions can be sent to: Complaints@royaldeaf.org.uk

We will receive the complaint into a complaints mailbox which is accessed by RADs Senior Leadership Team for action.

All complaints are logged in a Complaints Log.

The Chief Executive will be informed of all complaints received and will later report them and their outcomes to the Trustees.

There are four stages to the complaints procedure:

- 1) Acknowledgement
- 2) Investigation
- 3) Response/ Decision
- 4) Appeal

Complaint's procedure process:

Stage	What happens - Actions taken		Time-scale
	Action taken by staff	Information received by complainant	
Stage 1: Acknowledgment	<p>Logged on Complaints Log - date / content of letter</p> <p>Acknowledgement letter will be written to explain timescale and what happens next</p> <p>Complaint allocated to appropriate Senior Manager with timescale for investigation</p>	<p>Acknowledgement letter by email explaining timescale and what happens next</p> <p>Communication support and/or advocacy (as appropriate) will be offered at RAD's expense at all stages of the process if needed</p>	<p>5 working days</p>
Stage 2: Investigation	<p>Manager will investigate staff known to the complainant – this may involve interviewing all parties</p> <p>The purpose is to understand the complaint, ascertain all the facts and, where possible, to resolve the matter satisfactorily for all concerned or to explain the situation to the complainant's satisfaction</p> <p>Chief Executive receives written report from the Manager</p>	<p>Interviews / further information may be requested</p> <p>If the outcome is not thought satisfactory, formal complaint (Stage 3) offered</p> <p>Stage 3 complaint procedures shared</p>	<p>Manager reports to the Chief Executive within 3 weeks of receipt of complaint</p>

<p>Stage 3: Decision and response</p>	<p>Chief Executive will send written response with outcome /decision</p> <p>Every attempt will be made to ensure that the Chief Executive's decision is understood</p>	<p>Letter from Chief Executive</p> <p>Explanation of right to appeal to Trustees if the outcome is not thought satisfactory</p> <p>Appeal (Stage 4) offered if response unsatisfactory</p>	<p>Complainant receives Chief Executive's reply within one calendar month from receipt of the complaint</p> <p>Complainant has 5 working days to request an appeal to the Trustees.</p>
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<p>Stage 4: Appeal</p>	<p>The Chief Executive will acknowledge receipt of the Appeal within 5 working days</p> <p>A panel of two Trustees, chosen by the Chair of Trustees, will consider the appeal usually at one meeting called a Hearing</p> <p>The Hearing will be held within four weeks of receipt of the appeal (because of the time needed to book appropriate communication support)</p> <p>The Appeal Panel will receive at least a week before the meeting copies of the original complaint, the Chief Executive's response, the appeal letter and all other relevant documents or evidence</p> <p>Complainant may be invited, and staff may be required, to attend the appeal hearing</p> <p>Recommendations / decision will be taken</p> <p>The Chief Executive will write a letter explaining the outcome of the hearing</p>	<p>Acknowledgement of Appeal</p> <p>Verbal decision may be given on day of investigation</p> <p>Letter with outcome / decision from the Chief Executive - what action is being taken because of the panel's recommendation.</p>	<p>Acknowledgement within 5 working days</p> <p>Hearing within 4 weeks of Appeal</p> <p>Letter with outcome to be sent to complainant within one week after the Appeal hearing</p>
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Additional Procedures

If your complaint is about the Chief Executive or the Trustees of the Royal Association for Deaf People you need to contact RAD's Chair (chair@royaldeaf.org.uk) and they will advise you of the procedure that will be followed and the associated timescales.

If your complaint is about the Chair or the Trustees, you need to contact RAD's Chief Executive CEO@royaldeaf.org.uk and they will advise you of the procedure.

For certain RAD services a complaint can be made to other authorities;

RAD Communication Service

If the complaint is about a Communication Professional provided by RAD it is recommended to use RAD's in-house feedback & escalation process - and the RAD Complaints Procedure.

If the outcome of this process is unsatisfactory, a formal complaint may be lodged with the National Registers for Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind people (NRCPD). Complaints to the NRCPD can be made in writing or by video letter.

For more details and information please visit: [NRCPD | Concerns and Complaints](#)

Independent Living Services

If the outcome of a complaint about the Independent Living Service is unsatisfactory, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman can be contacted and requested to carry out an independent investigation.

Fundraising

If the complaint is about RAD's fundraising activities and RAD is unable to resolve it satisfactorily, the **Fundraising Regulator**, the self-regulator for fundraising in the UK, can be contacted to consider it. This can be done by:

- Submitting the complaint through the Fundraising Regular website at: www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk