



Service Users Complaints policy and procedure

FOR

The Awareness Centre (TAC)



COMPLAINTS POLICY

The Awareness Centre is committed to providing excellent customer service for our clients and private therapists and a supportive learning environment for placement therapists and training school students.

We understand that the people using our services may have a range of different issues and a range of experiences. We encourage constructive feedback about these experiences and we invite all stakeholders, to tell us about their experiences, including complaints.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Making a Complaint:

If you have a complaint, either about the Awareness Centre, a member of our team, counsellor, or faculty, we hope you feel able to speak to the individual direct in the first instance. We take all complaints seriously and will do everything we can to put things right and reach a satisfactory conclusion for all.

Alternatively, you can put a complaint in writing to the front of house managers about our front of house services and TAC buildings.

If your complaint is about a private therapist, clients will need to contact their therapist first to discuss this matter and/or their governing body because they hire rooms from TAC. Private practitioners maintain their own professional indemnity insurance and are registered/accredited through a governing body (BACP, UKCP, and BPS). Clients can also contact the Counselling Manager and you will receive acknowledgment within 5 working days.

If your complaint is about your NHS and Low-Cost Counselling, then you can write to the Counselling Manager – you will receive an acknowledgment within five working days.

If you are unhappy with the response to any clinical complaint, you can escalate your complaint to the Clinical Lead.

If your complaint is about your course tutor or facilitator, then you can write to the programme manager – you will receive an acknowledgment within five working days.

If you are unhappy with the response to any training school complaint, you can escalate your complaint to the Training Lead.

After speaking with either a manager or lead, if you are not happy with the overall outcome and wish to take things further, you may raise your complaint with the Managing Director.

If you are not happy with the overall outcome and wish to take things further please contact:

BACP
15 St Johns Business Park
Lutterworth
Leicestershire
LE17 4HB



United Kingdom
Web: www.bacp.co.uk

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

Stage 1

If you wish to make a complaint you must do so within **one month** of the date on which the event occurred, or of the date which you could reasonably be expected to have known about the matter.

If your complaint is to do with front of house services or the building, you should email the Front of House Manager setting out your reasons, any relevant supporting evidence and indicating the outcome you desire. (There is no specific form for this purpose.)

If your complaint is to do with your Private, NHS or Low-Cost counselling sessions, you should email the Counselling Manager setting out your reasons, any relevant supporting evidence and indicating the outcome you desire. (There is no specific form for this purpose.)

A complaint may only be made by a Service User or a group of Service Users, not by a third party or a representative, and can only be made anonymously if there is sufficient evidence to support it. Anonymous complaints should be rare and will be treated with caution.

In addition, you are encouraged to raise matters less formally with the individual concerned. For example, if you have a complaint about the building, it would be appropriate to raise the matter with the front of house team. If you have a problem with your Counsellor, Supervisor, Tutor, Facilitator or a member of staff, we hope you will be able to discuss it with them in the first instance. S/he will take your complaint seriously and will do everything to resolve the matter.

This should be completed within **one month** of the complaint.

Stage 2

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, and you have written a formal email of complaint to Manage, they are responsible for responding to you within **five working days**.

S/he may wish to interview you and any other person s/he deems relevant (unless you do not wish to be interviewed). Thereafter, they must make a formal report within two weeks of receiving the complaint.

The report must set out the evidence collected, the Managers conclusions, including whether or not s/he upholds the complaint, and any recommendations that s/he deems appropriate.

Getting Advice

At the interview you are also entitled to be accompanied by a person of your choosing.

Treatment of Complainants

You may have reservations about making a complaint, but (as indicated earlier) TAC takes complaints very seriously and views complaints as a means of improving the services that we provide.



All employees involved in a complaint are required to respect the confidentiality of information and documents generated as a result of the complaint and not to disclose such information to people not concerned with the matters in question

Outcome of the Complaint

As indicated above, the Managers in making his/her report will indicate the action which s/he deems appropriate if the complaint is upheld, or partially upheld.

Stage 3

If you have received the formal report from either the Managers or are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you have the right to take the matter further by writing to the Clinical or Training Lead within **21 days** of receiving the report. You must include a copy of the report and state the reasons why you are not satisfied.

The Clinical or Training Lead is experienced and will undertake a further investigation, again interviewing you (unless you do not wish to be interviewed) and receiving further information as deemed appropriate.

The Clinical or Training Lead will then produce a report within one month of receiving your complaint setting out their conclusions, whether the complaint is upheld and or further actions to be taken.

Note that if you have **not** received the report from the Clinical or Training Lead within the two weeks required and s/he has not informed you of the need to extend that date, and the reasons for extending, you are entitled to make your complaint to the Managing Director.

If you are still unsatisfied, you may contact the BACP directly if it is a clinical or training complaint.

The Centre's External Independent Facilitator

The Centre may call on an external independent Facilitator to investigate the complaint.

Further information

If you require further information about the procedures referred to above you can contact the Front of House Manager, Counselling Manager or Programme Manager.

As a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) we abide by the Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy which is published by the BACP and includes the Professional Conduct Procedure.

If you do not feel that the above options are appropriate, or you wish to take things further, please contact BACP directly at:

15 St Johns Business Park
Lutterworth
Leicestershire
LE17 4HB
United Kingdom
Web: www.bacp.co.uk

