

Complaints and Feedback Policy and Guidance

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Document Change Log

This document will be reviewed **two years** or as changes in legislation dictate.

Version No	Date	Document Change
1	Feb 2012	EDP Policy Written
2	March 2016	Significant changes to requirements
3	July 2018	Updated as part of EDP's policy review exercise. Brought in line with standard template, updated roles, reference to integrated systems, added investigation process and central roles etc.
4	September 2021	Updated Policy to align with Humankind and bring complaints processes for services where EDP forms part of an integrated service or partnership under one main point of reference

Equality Statement

All customers, employees and members of the public should be treated fairly and with respect, regardless of age, disability, gender, marital status, membership or no membership of a trade union, race, religion, domestic circumstances, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin, social & employment status, HIV status, or gender re-assignment.

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Introduction

EDP aims to provide services that fully meet the needs of our service users and stakeholders. EDP values Complaints and other feedback as a vital tool for developing and improving our services. EDP receives a range of different feedback. We categorise this feedback as either a Complaint, Concern, Comment or Compliment.

This policy complies with guidance from the Care Quality Commission (CQC):

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/regulation-16-receiving-and-acting-complaints#guidance> Local Government and Social Care Ombudsmen <http://www.lgo.org.uk/adult-social-care/> and Parliamentary and Health Ombudsmen <https://www.ombudsman.org.uk/>.

It should be noted that this policy relates to individual complaints and feedback, and that service users, community members and others are also encouraged to share feedback in line with the Working Better Together Policy regarding service user involvement.

Scope

The scope of this policy extends to all services within EDP.

Promotion of the Complaints and Feedback Policy

EDP's Complaints and Feedback Policy will be promoted to service users and other stakeholders, including within service user handbooks, reception areas and our websites. A "Providing Feedback about our Services" statement is available on MyEDP and can be used and tailored by services to meet local needs. EDP services will ensure that information will be made available in accessible formats and other languages on request.

Equality and Diversity

EDP positively promotes Equality and Diversity, delivering our services in line with the Equality Act 2010. Should complaints or concerns be received that indicate potential discrimination in relation to an individual's protected characteristics, or other issue which suggests failure to meet the requirements of the Act, these will be handled formally in line with EDP's Equality and Diversity policies and with due regard to the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

EDP works to effectively safeguard both adults and children. Should a complaint or concern indicate potential failings in relation to EDP's safeguarding responsibilities, including allegations of abuse, these concerns will be handled formally and in line with EDP's safeguarding policies and procedures. EDP will involve relevant external bodies as appropriate, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), CQC and the Police.

Data Protection

EDP will handle complaints and other feedback in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2016, and EDP's Information Governance requirements including in relation to consent, confidentiality and the appropriate recording, management and sharing of information. EDP will notify the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) should a breach meeting the threshold for notification occur.

Duty of Candour

EDP will act in accordance with Regulation 20: Duty of Candour in respect of complaints about care and treatment that have resulted in a notifiable safety incident within EDP's CQC registered delivery.

Complaints

Definition

A Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, our staff or volunteers, or those acting on our behalf.

Where dissatisfaction can't be resolved at the time it is brought to us, it will be handled formally as a Complaint.

EDP's positive approach to complaints

EDP views complaints positively, as an opportunity to put things right if they go wrong, and improve our services. EDP will encourage and support people through the complaints process. EDP will ensure complainants are not

discriminated against or victimised – the service a person receives will not be negatively affected if they make a complaint, or if somebody complains on their behalf.

Support and Assistance to Complain

EDP will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate an individual's needs. Complainants will be offered support to complain. This may include encouragement to make their views known, or practical support like arranging interpretation or signing services.

Complaints from third parties acting on behalf of complainants will be accepted with the consent of the complainant, or where the service user cannot complain unaided and cannot give consent because they lack capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Service users will be provided with information about other local and national organisations who can support them to make a complaint. EDP will make available information about how to raise concerns outside of the organisation, for example to the service commissioner or CQC where applicable.

Making a Complaint

Complaints may be made to any employee or volunteer by telephone, in person, in writing, by email, through EDP's websites or via social media. All complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days.

Investigation and Resolution

All complaints will be investigated by a manager with sufficient seniority to resolve the issues identified within the complaint (the 'Complaint Handler'). The Complaint Handler will liaise with the complainant throughout the investigation and provide a written response to them with their findings.

No employee can investigate a complaint about themselves.

EDP aim to resolve all complaints within 20 working days of receipt. Where this is not possible, for example if the complaint relates to more than one team, we will notify the complainant with an explanation and revised timescale.

EDP will take appropriate action following investigation to resolve the issue which led to the complaint, both addressing the issue for the complainant and prevent its recurrence. The issues identified within the complaint may require changes to service delivery, which will be implemented promptly and addressed as part of a broader review of complaints received during a quarter.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, some actions may need to be taken immediately, before full investigation, for example to prevent or reduce risk of harm.

Appeal

Complainants have the right to appeal the decision made in relation to their complaint within 10 working days of being notified of the outcome. Complainants will be notified of how to appeal when informed of the outcome of their complaint.

Appeals will be handled by a manager more senior to the person who handled the original investigation (the 'Appeal Handler') and resolved within 10 working days. The complainant will be notified of the outcome of their appeal in writing.

Should a complainant remain dissatisfied following the outcome of their appeal, signposting will be provided to alternative complaint options including the service Commissioner and Ombudsman where applicable.

Repeat and Vexatious Complaints

Repeat Complaints are repeated complaints about an issue that has already been investigated and where appeal has been exhausted.

Vexatious Complaints are complaints that are made without sufficient grounds and are intended to cause upset, annoyance or inconvenience.

Repeat or vexatious complaints will not be progressed further, with the agreement of the Operations Director. Complainants will be signposted to alternative complaint options including the service Commissioner and Ombudsman where applicable.

Each complaint will be considered on its own merits. If a complaint is received that is slightly different from the original complaint, but about the same broad area of activity, a decision will be made on whether the issues are sufficiently different to justify being considered as a new complaint.

Repeat and vexatious complaints should be acknowledged and complainants informed that their complaint will not be progressed further.

Anonymous Complaints

EDP will record and investigate anonymous complaints and concerns to the degree that it is possible to do so.

Third Party Complaints

Where a third party makes a complaint about the service, acting on their own behalf and without the consent of individuals or groups potentially effected, EDP will follow this policy and associated guidance, investigating the concerns raised as appropriate. It should be noted however, that a third party has no legal right to information and therefore the details or outcome of the investigation will not necessarily be shared.

Third party complainants who do not have a right to information regarding investigation or outcome, do not have a right of appeal and can be signposted to alternative complaint options including Commissioner and Ombudsman where applicable.

Partnership, Sub-Contracting and Commissioner Arrangements

EDP works in partnership or as part of sub-contracting arrangements with other organisations. Also, some contractual arrangements require that complaints are notified to commissioners/third parties in the first instance.

EDP works to ensure that giving feedback or making a complaint is as easy, accessible and supported as possible and therefore complaints and feedback made to an EDP staff member or volunteer about an EDP service will follow this policy and associated guidance for recording, investigation and review of outcomes, unless otherwise specified.

Where EDP works in partnership and a partner organisation receives the complaint or feedback in the first instance and/or is better placed to undertake the investigation, or learning needs to be shared, this will be recorded on the HUB accordingly and consent to share information will be sought if and as required.

If partnerships or sub-contracting arrangements require a different policy or process to follow, a local written procedure will be put in place to:

- Avoid any confusion about how complaints will be dealt with and by whom, including the roles and responsibilities of each organisation
- Enable oversight of complaints received and their resolution to ensure that any lessons that need to be learned are identified, addressed and shared across the service.

If a different process to this policy and guidance is required, it is the responsibility of that service lead to ensure the staff and volunteers are aware of the correct process to follow and this should be made available on MyEDP.

Suspension of the Complaints Procedure

Should anyone undertake legal proceedings, use of the Complaints Procedure will be reviewed by the Operations Director, who may decide to suspend the process.

Concerns

Definitions

A Concern is an expression of dissatisfaction not handled through the formal complaints procedure and which meets the following criteria:

- Resolvable either immediately or within 24 hours to the satisfaction of the person raising the issue
- The person raising the issue does not wish to formalise their complaint
- Minimal impact on one or few individuals
- Does not require formal investigation to establish facts
- An issue that doesn't indicate a breach in EDP's Code of Conduct, or meet the definition of 'Serious Complaint'
- Agreed to be recorded as a 'concern' by line management

Comments and Compliments

Definitions

A **Comment** is feedback which is neutral i.e. neither an expression of dissatisfaction nor a positive statement.

A **Compliment** is positive feedback about the service provided.

EDP values comments and compliments as a way of informing service development and improvement.

Relating to Complaints, Concerns, Comments and Compliments

Training

All employees and volunteers will be trained in identifying and managing complaints, concerns and other feedback in line with the requirements of their role.

Recording

Complaints, Concerns, Comments and Compliments will be recorded on the HUB Management Information System. Recording will be in line with the GDPR 2016 and EDP's Data Management and Information Governance Policies.

Governance, Monitoring and Review

Complaints, Concerns, Comments and Compliments will be monitored and reviewed through EDP's Integrated Governance meeting and reporting structures.

Each EDP service will review complaints and other feedback quarterly within Local Integrated Governance or Management Meetings where applicable. This review should include consideration of trends and learning.

EDP's Quality and Compliance Team will monitor compliance with this policy through regular service inspections. The team will prepare organisational level quarterly reports for the Integrated Governance Committee which will include trends and highlight any issues that may need auditing or reviewing. This will be a standing agenda item.

Changes made as a result of feedback will be promoted to service users and other stakeholders, including within newsletters, information within reception areas and our websites.

EDP will provide service commissioners and regulatory bodies with appropriate information in relation to complaints received, in line with the requirements of that body. In relation to the CQC, EDP will provide within 28 days of request a summary of complaints received, EDP's Response, correspondence and other relevant information.

Relevant Documentation

- Appendix 1 - Complaints and Feedback Guidance
- Appendix 2 - How to Give Feedback About Our Services
- HUB – complaints, concerns, comments and compliments – user guide
- HR03 Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- P28 Mental Capacity Policy and Guidance
- OR06 Information Governance and Data Protection Policy
- P12 Service User Involvement & Empowerment Procedure

Relevant Forms

- Appendix 3 - Compliments Record Form 2021
- Appendix 4 - Complaint Appeal Form 2021
- Appendix 5 - Receipt of your complaint 2021
- Appendix 6 - Outcome of your complaint 2021
- Appendix 7 - Receipt of your appeal 2021
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Appendix 1 – Complaints and Feedback Guidance

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Note: Please read this guidance in conjunction with The HUB Complaints, Concerns, Comments and Compliments Guidance and Attachments on the HUB User Guide

Definitions and Categorising Feedback

Definitions

- A **Complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service provided that requires a response.
- A **Concern** is an expression of dissatisfaction that is not handled through the formal complaints procedure
- A **Comment** is feedback which is neutral i.e. neither an expression of dissatisfaction nor a positive statement.
- A **Compliment** is positive feedback about the service provided

Categorising Feedback

Appendix 1a: Complaint, Concern, Comment or Compliment? Sets out a process for identifying the type of feedback received.

Complaints and Concerns help EDP to continually improve our service and put things right when they go wrong. There is a distinction between a Complaint or Concern, and a request for a particular service to be provided. The following are not considered to be a Complaint or Concern –

- An initial request for service, or change in service where this isn't linked to the standard of service provided: for example a request for a female worker rather than a male worker
- Asking for explanation of a policy or decision: for example a service user requesting the reason why visits should be conducted by two members of staff
- An appeal against a decision where an appeal process is in place in relation to that decision

Expressions of dissatisfaction by EDP staff should not be handled through EDP's Complaints Policy and should instead be handled either formally or informally through the organisation's Grievance procedures.

Expressions of dissatisfaction received from former EDP employees should be considered on a case by case basis in discussion with Human Resources, and may fall within the scope of this policy where the complaint doesn't directly relate to that person's employment.

Complaints made by EDP Volunteers may be addressed using the Complaints Policy, if the concerns cannot be resolved informally via the Volunteer Problem Solving Procedure.

Concerns

Concerns are expressions of dissatisfaction not handled as a formal complaint, either because the feedback was raised as a concern rather than a complaint, or because feedback raised as a complaint was resolved informally (see Informal Complaints resolution, below). Feedback handled as a Concern should meet the following criteria:

- Resolvable informally, either immediately or within 24 hours to the satisfaction of the person raising the issue
- Minimal impact on one or few individuals
- Person raising the issue not wishing to make a formal complaint
- Does not require formal investigation to establish facts
- An issue that doesn't indicate a breach in EDP's Code of Conduct, or definition of 'serious complaint'
- Agreed to be a 'concern' by line manager

Responsibility

Concerns can usually be handled by the person receiving the concern. Line management should be informed that a concern has been received, and the action to be taken / taken.

Recording

Concerns and the action taken in response should be recorded on the HUB under 'Concerns, Comments and Compliments'.

Review

Concerns should be reviewed regularly by management to enable trends and learning to be identified.

Complaints

A Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, our staff, or those acting on our behalf. Where the feedback does not meet the definition of a 'concern', it should be handled as a 'complaint'.

A simplified flowchart setting out an overview of the process for handling complaints and appeals comprises **Appendix 1b: Complaints and Appeal Handling Process – Simplified**. A more detailed flowchart comprises **Appendix 1c: Complaints and Appeal Handling Process**.

Complaints made via Websites and Social Media

Complaints may be made to any employee or volunteer by telephone, in person, in writing, by email, through EDP's websites or via social media. Complaints can be received via info@edp.org.uk or services' email addresses published via our websites. These are forwarded on to the relevant Service Manager/Director who will allocate a complaints handler. The Complaints Handler will acknowledge the complaint and record it on the Hub.

EDP or its services' social media is monitored via designated social media leads and the Marketing Team. Complaints posted to EDP's social media are sent to the relevant Service Manager and Director who will agree a response. It is the service's responsibility to allocate a Complaint Handler and record the complaint on the Hub and acknowledge the complaint.

Complaint Handling: Informal Resolution

Informal resolution can offer a fast and effective resolution to dissatisfaction. Complaints can be resolved informally where the following criteria are met:

- Resolvable either immediately or within 24 hours to the satisfaction of the person raising the issue
- Person raising the issue not wishing to make a formal complaint
- Minimal impact on one or few individuals
- Does not require formal investigation to establish facts
- An issue that doesn't indicate a breach in EDP's Code of Conduct, or meet the definition of 'Serious Complaint'

- Agreed to be a 'concern' by line manager

All employees are able to resolve low level complaints, or concerns -

- Thank the person for bringing the matter to our attention, and ask what they would like to happen to resolve the concern
- If it seems likely the issue can be handled informally as a concern, speak to line management and confirm this course of action
- Attempt to resolve the issue immediately to the complainant's satisfaction. Where this isn't possible there and then, inform the complainant when action will be taken, or that the concern will be considered in ongoing review of the service, as appropriate.
- Record as a Concern on the HUB

The process of appeal does not apply to complaints handled informally. Dissatisfaction with informal resolution should prompt consideration of handling the complaint formally.

Complaint Handling: Formal Resolution

Responsibility

The Complaint Handler is responsible for the investigation of the complaint, communication with the Complainant, and taking action to resolve the issues identified (where applicable). The Complaint Handler should be a Manager with sufficient authority to put the issues identified right, should the complaint be upheld. The Complaint Handler cannot be a person the complaint relates to.

If the concerns relate to more than one EDP service or team, one Complaint Handler should be appointed to investigate all of the concerns and act as a single point of contact for the Complainant. The Complaint Handler will liaise with the relevant teams and provide a coordinated response to reduce frustration and confusion for the Complainant.

Investigation

EDP aim to resolve all complaints within 20 working days of receipt. Where this is not possible, for example if the complaint relates to more than one team, we will notify the complainant with an explanation and revised timescale.

The goal of investigation is to establish the facts and decide whether the service provided has fallen below the level that could be reasonably expected. The complaint handler should seek to establish:

- What happened
- What should have happened
- The cause of any identified failings
- What can be done to put right any failings

Investigation should proceed as follows –

Speak with the complainant to establish the full details of the complaint and record this on the Complaint Record Form. This could be via phone or in person. (Preferably in person, if the complainant agrees)

- Thank the complainant for bringing the issue to EDP's attention.
- Identify if the person needs additional support through the complaints process.
- Ask the complainant to state in their own words their complaint. Where the complainant has made their complaint in writing each point within the complaint should be clarified, with more detail requested if necessary. Record key dates, times and events. Use open questions to gain as full a picture as possible of the events relating to the complaint.
- Support the individual to pin-point the specifics of their complaint. This is important as complaints can sometimes contain a number of issues. Being specific about the key points of the complaint allows each aspect to be investigated, and a decision made as to whether the complaint is Upheld, Partially Upheld or Not Upheld.
- Ask what resolution the complainant would like to see.
- Read back a summary of the complaint to the complainant.
- Explain you will keep them informed of the progress of your investigation.

- If the complaint was made in person, or over the phone, provide a written summary of the complaint to the complainant.
- A template letter for acknowledging the receipt of a complaint can be found as an appendix to the policy and is also available on MyEDP. Template letters may need to be amended to suit the needs of the complaint/complainant.
- It is sometimes the case that a Complainant will not engage with the process, beyond providing the initial feedback. Attempt to contact the Complainant and offer support to engage with the process; this should not cause the investigation to exceed 20 day timescale. If attempts to contact the Complainant are unsuccessful, the complaint should still be investigated as fully as possible, based on the available information.

Speak to witnesses or others who could help establish the facts.

Where the complaint relates to conduct of EDP or partner organisation staff, speak to the relevant staff member(s).

Review any other information, such as written information, records on management information systems, or CCTV footage.

Record the investigation on the HUB, uploading the Complaints Record Form to the record.

- Where complaints relate to the conduct of an EDP staff member, the line-manager and the HR Business Partner should be informed to agree if the disciplinary policy needs to be invoked. If so, the staff member will be informed via the start of a disciplinary investigation letter, following a verbal conversation between the staff member and line manager. Where complaints relate to the conduct of Volunteers, similar discussion should take place with relevant manager and HR, using the Volunteer Problem Solving Guidance.
 - The HR Business Partner should be added to the Complaint record on the Hub as an Interested Party.
 - Information relating to the investigation and outcome should still be recorded on the Hub, but reports relating to HR outcomes such as recommendations for disciplinary hearings will not be uploaded and instead remain with HR.
 - Investigation may reveal it is necessary to notify external bodies for example the Care Quality Commission, Commissioners or the Police and prompt action taken as appropriate.
 - In the case of a complaint meeting the definition of a 'Serious Complaint' Senior Management should complete the investigation. No member of staff can investigate a complaint about themselves.
 - The complainant's needs around translation, interpretation or disability should be considered, and action taken to enable the complainant to effectively complain.
 - During investigation consider consent, confidentiality, Data Protection and Information Governance. Remember that other parties will have varying knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the complaint and that there should be no inappropriate disclosure of such information to other parties.

Repeat and Vexatious Complaints

Repeat Complaints are repeated complaints about an issue that has already been investigated and where appeal has been exhausted.

Vexatious Complaints are complaints that are made without sufficient grounds and are intended to cause upset, annoyance or inconvenience.

Repeat or vexatious complaints will not be progressed further, with the agreement of the Operations Director. Complainants will be signposted to alternative complaint options including the service Commissioner and Care Quality Commission where applicable.

Each complaint will be considered on its own merits. If a complaint is received that is slightly different from the original complaint, but about the same broad area of activity, a decision will be made on whether the issues are sufficiently different to justify being considered as a new complaint.

Repeat and vexatious complaints should be acknowledged and complainants informed that their complaint will not be progressed further.

Serious Complaints

A Serious Complaint is a complaint where the consequences to service users, the public, staff or Humankind and / or partner organisations are so significant, or the potential for learning is so great, that a heightened level of response is

justified. The list below is not intended to be exhaustive, however a serious complaint is likely to involve a complaint in relation to:

- Serious misconduct of EDP or partner staff member or volunteer, including allegations of such. (For example allegation of abuse against a member of staff).
- Significant or sustained negative media attention
- Reputational damage to EDP or partner agency
- Substantial disruption to service delivery, or operation of EDP, or a partner organisation.
- Significant failing by EDP or partner organisation relation to safeguarding of adults or children (or where this is likely to be the case).
- A complaint relating to the serious injury or death of any person.
- A breach of Information Governance requiring notification to the Information Commissioner.
- A complaint involving an event requiring notification to the Charity Commission, or one which is Riddor Reportable.

The Operations Director should be made aware as soon as possible of complaints that may meet the above definition. It will likely be necessary to inform service commissioners or other stakeholders (including for example the CQC) in the event of a serious complaint.

The HUB record should be updated to 'Serious Complaint'. The Complaint Handler may need to be a more senior person to reflect the serious nature of the complaint.

Deciding the Outcome

Following investigation, a complaint may be found to be Upheld, Partially Upheld or not Upheld –

A Complaint is **upheld** when it is concluded that the service provided which led to the complaint fell below the standard that could be reasonably expected, in relation to all points of the complaint.

A Complaint is **Partially Upheld** when it is concluded that the service provided that led to the complaint fell below the standard that could reasonably be expected, in relation to some points of the complaint but not others.

A Complaint is **Not Upheld** when it is concluded that the service provided did not fall below the standard that could reasonably be expected in relation to all points of the complaint.

Communicating the Decision

The conclusion reached must be based on objective review of evidence. It is essential that all points raised by the complainant, agreed at the start of the investigation, are considered in the response. The outcome of the complaint should be communicated to the complainant at first verbally. This gives the complaint handler the opportunity to answer any questions the complainant may have or give clarity if needed. This should help reduce the likelihood of the complainant being dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint. The decision/outcome should then be confirmed in writing to the complainant. Complainants should be made aware of their right to appeal the outcome and provided details of how to do this and the timescales for doing so. A template letter for acknowledging the receipt of a complaint can be found on MyEDP. Template letters may need to be amended to suit the needs of the complaint/complainant.

If a complaint relates to the conduct of a member of staff, they and their line manager should be informed of the outcome of the complaint investigation.

Redress (Putting things right)

Redress can take a number of forms. EDP should always consider the complainant's wishes and try to meet these where possible or, where this is not appropriate, providing a full explanation of the service provider's position.

There are limits to EDP's ability to provide certain remedies, and complainant's wishes may not always be reasonable. Any failings should be acknowledged and remedied quickly and fairly and in a way that best reflects the extent of the problems encountered by the complainant. Appropriate redress should include an apology, an explanation and correcting the error.

Generally, where service failings have been identified which have disadvantaged the client, attempts should be made to put the complainant back in the position they were in before the error occurred.

EDP management should look to improve procedures or systems or deliver further staff training to address service failures highlighted by the complaint where this is appropriate. The complainant should be told about action taken, but not details that affect individual staff members.

Appeal

Timescales

The complainant can appeal the outcome of a complaint within 10 working days of receiving notification of the decision. The appeals process, and communication to the complainant should be completed within 10 working days.

Responsibility

An Appeal Handler should be appointed. The appeal handler should be a person more senior to the person who investigated the original complaint and should be senior enough to resolve the issues highlighted within the complaint and appeal. The Appeal Handler is responsible for investigating the appeal, communicating the outcome and putting in place actions to resolve the issues identified, where appropriate.

Grounds for Appeal

The original investigation should be thorough and objective. An appeal can't be considered simply because the complainant disagrees with the outcome; the following grounds for appeal should be met:

- concern that the complaint has some weakness in the way the original investigation was completed (reasons for this should be stated in the appeal)
- New information relating to the original complaint that should be investigated

This appeal should be made in writing using the 'Appeal Form'.

Where grounds for appeal are not met, this should be communicated to the complainant.

A decision about whether the complaint or aspects of it have now been upheld, and what action will be taken should be communicated in writing to the complainant with details of alternative complaint options if they remain dissatisfied such as a service commissioner or Ombudsman. A template letter for the outcome of an appeal can be found on MyEDP in this policy's folder. Template letters may need to be amended to suit the needs of the complaint/complainant. Complaints can only be appealed once. This is the final stage of EDP's Complaint Process before the complaint is closed.

Comments

Comments are neutral feedback, i.e. neither positive nor negative. This might be an observation or suggestion for improvement where the person making the comment isn't dissatisfied with the current service. Comments can be useful for informing service change and improvement.

Responsibility

Comments can be handled by the person receiving the comment.

Recording

Concerns and the action taken in response should be recorded on the HUB under 'Concerns, Comments and Compliments'.

Review

Comments should be reviewed regularly by management to enable trends and learning to be identified.

Compliments

Compliments are positive feedback about the service received. Compliments are useful for identifying when things are working particularly well, often highlighting good practice. This can help inform service change and improvement and provide positive feedback to the individuals involved.

Responsibility

Compliments can be handled by the person receiving the comment.

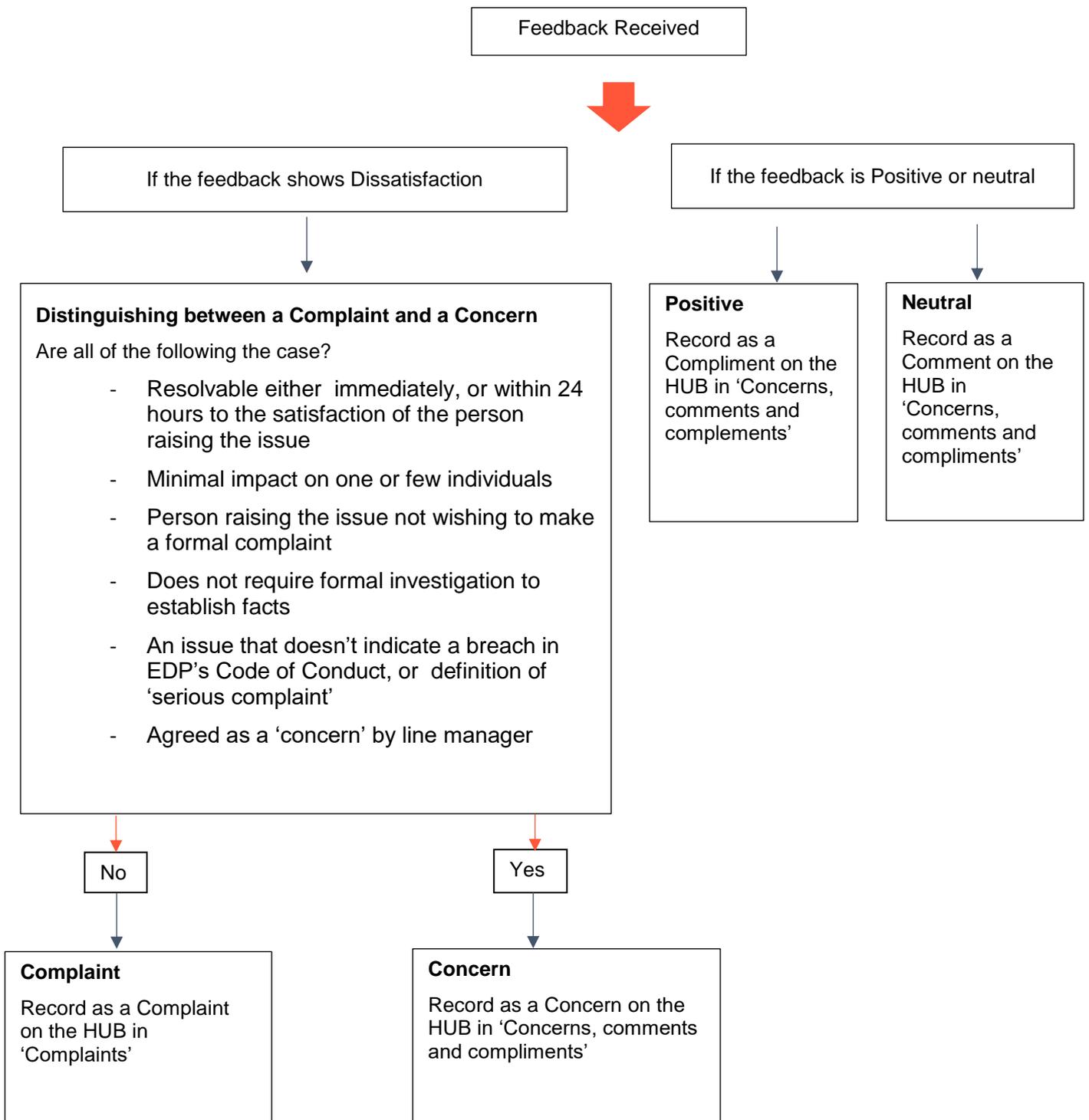
Recording

Compliments should be recorded on the HUB under 'Concerns, Comments and Compliments'.

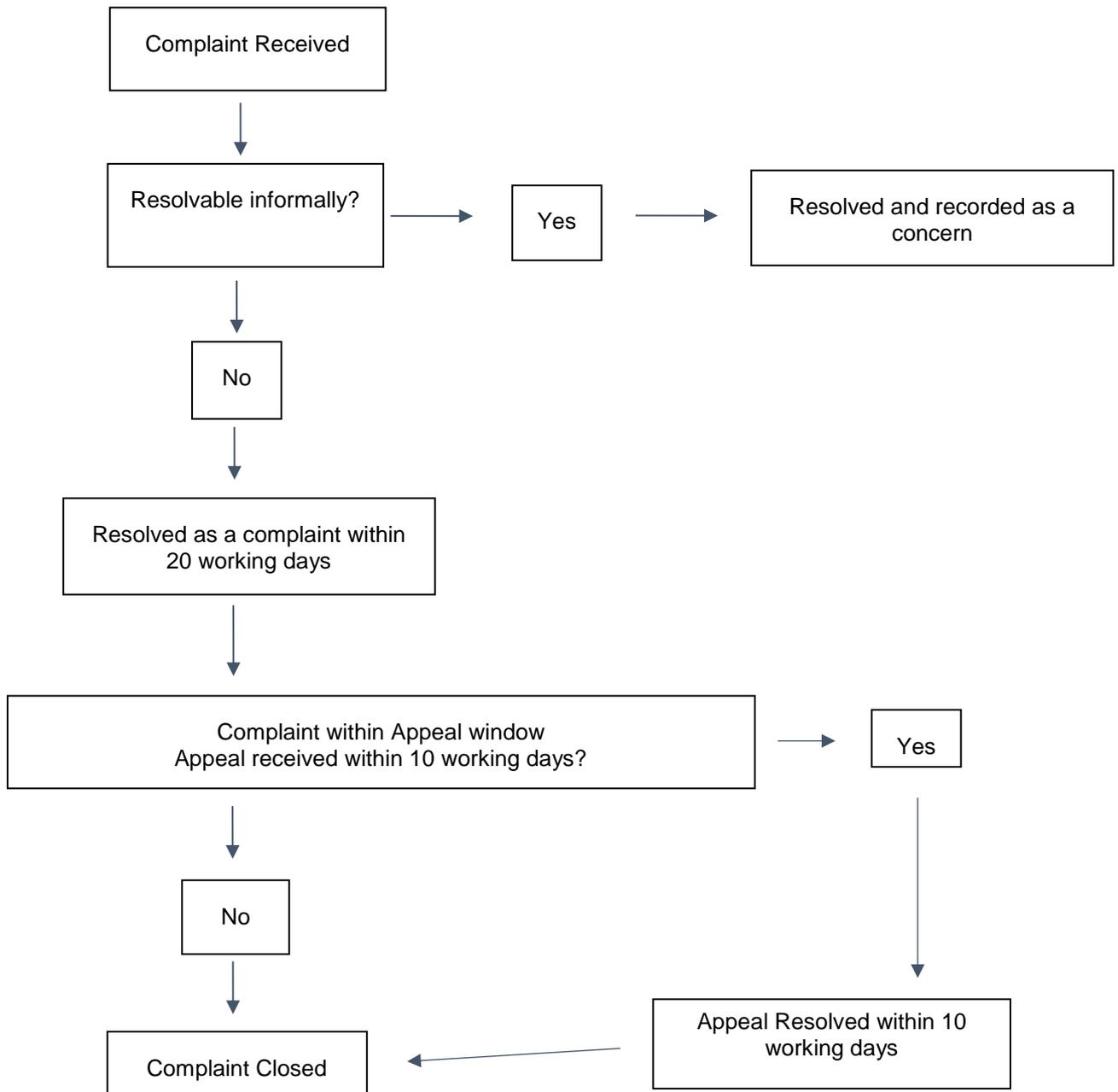
Review

Compliments should be reviewed regularly by management to enable trends and learning to be identified.

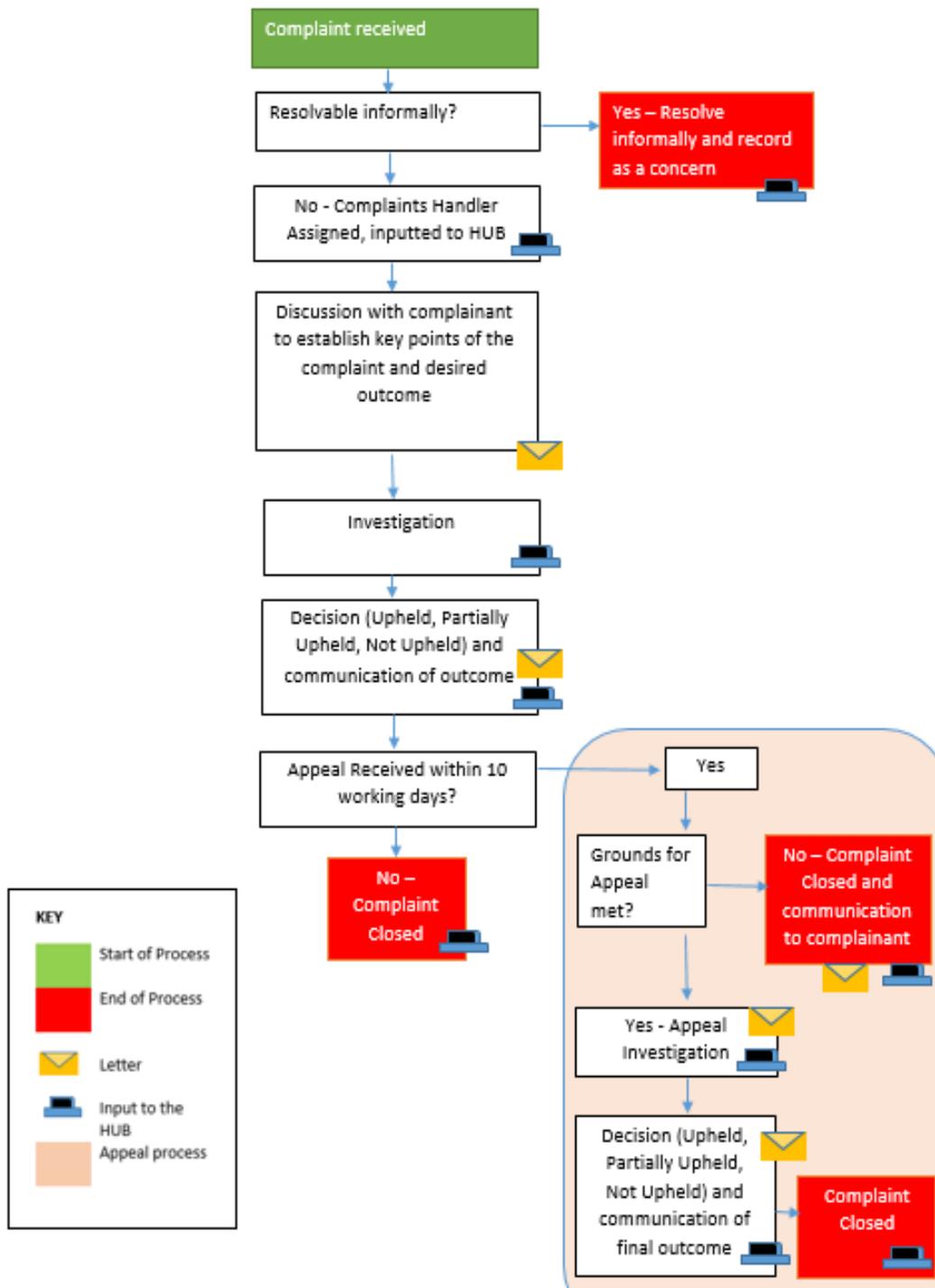
Appendix 1a: Complaint, Concern, Comment or Compliment?



Appendix 1b: Complaints and Appeal Handling Process – Simplified



Appendix 1c: Complaints and Appeal Handling Process



Appendix 1d: Ombudsman and Alternative Complaint Options

Complainants should be informed of any alternative complaint options available to them, when we receive their complaint. When we inform a complainant of the outcome of an appeal, they should also be signposted to an appropriate alternative agency. Services are responsible for identifying the relevant alternative complaint options, such as Ombudsman or service commissioners.

Examples of Ombudsman and Alternative Complaint Options and wording to use in correspondence, is listed below. This list is not exhaustive, and Complaint Handlers should ensure they are aware all of the relevant alternative complaint options for their service.

CQC Registered Services

Example text to be included in complaints to services that are registered with CQC:

[Service Name] is registered with and regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC cannot investigate individual complaints about providers, but is happy to receive information about services at any time.

You can contact the CQC at:

Care Quality Commission National Correspondence
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA

Tel: 03000 616161

Web site: www.cqc.org.uk

Complaints about how we've handled personal information

If someone is unhappy with how EDP has dealt with their personal data they can complain to EDP and/or an independent place. The independent place for complaints about personal data is the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO will review the complaint and in most instances share this with EDP, asking us to respond directly to the Complainant. Complainants should be aware that it can take several months for EDP to receive their complaint letter from the ICO. By complaining directly to EDP we are able to respond more quickly to their complaint, however they do have the right to take their complaint to the ICO at any time.

Example text to be included in appeal outcome letters to people who have complained about how EDP has handled their information:

If you are unhappy with the outcome of this appeal, you can ask the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to consider your concern. If you decide to contact the ICO, you should do so within 3 months of this letter.

The ICO is the UK's independent body set up to uphold information rights. If the ICO decides that an organisation has failed to comply with the law, it will provide advice and instruction to help them get it right in the future. You can contact the Information Commissioner's Office between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday, by:

Telephone: 0303 123 1113 or

Live chat on their website: <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/live-chat/live-chat-individuals/>

Complaints about EDP Fundraising Activities

Example text to be included in appeal outcome letters to people who have complaint about EDP's Fundraising activities.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of this appeal, you can ask the Fundraising Regulator to consider your concern. If you decide to contact the Funding Regulator, you should do so within 2 months of this letter.

You can contact the Fundraising Regulator by:

- Completing their online form: <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/complaints/make-complaint>
- Emailing complaints@fundraisingregulator.org.uk
- Calling 0300 999 3407 (Mon to Fri, 09.30 am – 4.30 pm)
- or sending a letter to:

Fundraising Regulator
2nd Floor

CAN Mezzanine
49-51 East Road
London
N1 6AH

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Appendix 2 – How to give feedback about our service

Your compliments, comments, suggestions and complaints are important to us. This feedback tells us what we're doing well and how we can improve our services.

If you're happy with the service you have received, or if you have a suggestion, you can

- speak to a member of staff, volunteer or manager
- leave your feedback in one of our suggestion boxes in reception
- call or write to the service, or to our Head Office – letting us know which person or service this is about

How to make a complaint or tell us about a concern

Speaking to your worker directly is usually the quickest way of dealing with your concern.

You can also contact the office to speak to a Team Leader or Service Manager.

Delete service as appropriate



REACH – 0800 043 4656

Reach East - 45 Bargates, Christchurch, BH23 1QD

Reach North - Woodcock Court, Queens Street, Gillingham, SP8 4DZ

Reach West - Weymouth Coffee Tavern, 24 High West St, Weymouth, DT4 8JH



Together - 0800 233 5444

Together Exeter, East and Mid Devon - Magdelene House, Grendon Road, Exeter EX1 2NJ

Together South - Templer House, Scott Close, Newton Abbot, TQ12 1GJ

Together North - Units 3, 4 & 6 Riverside Court Castle Street, Barnstaple, EX31 1ET

If you would feel more comfortable, you can also contact EDP's Head Office at:

EDP Drug & Alcohol Services

Basepoint Business Centre, Yeoford Way, Marsh Barton, Exeter EX2 8LB

Email: info@edp.org.uk

If someone tells us that they are unhappy about the service they have received, and we aren't able to resolve it at the time, it will be handled as a complaint. Anyone affected by the way we deliver services can follow this process to make a complaint, except staff, who should follow the EDP Grievance Process.

We will encourage and support you through the complaints process. We will ensure that you are not negatively affected if you make a complaint, or if someone complains on your behalf.

A representative may complain for the affected person with their consent, or if the affected person needs help to complain and cannot give consent because they lack capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

If you are not happy about making a complaint yourself and you do not know someone who can talk or write to us on your behalf. We will provide, as far as is reasonably practical:

- any help you need to understand the complaints procedure; or
- advice on where you may get that help
- practical support like arranging interpretation or signing services

What isn't a complaint?

- An initial request for service
- Asking for an explanation of a policy or a decision
- An issue that has its own appeal process

How we handle complaints

We will acknowledge your complaint in **3 working days** and give you the name and contact details of the Complaint Handler. That person will have enough seniority and experience to deal with the issues raised by the complainant. Staff will not investigate complaints against themselves. The Complaint Handler will usually contact you for further information, ask you how you would like your complaint to be resolved and how you would like to be informed of the outcome. We will keep you informed about the progress of the investigation. We aim to have all complaints investigated within **20 working days** unless we agree a different time scale with you.

When we have finished investigating, we will contact you to discuss the outcome, and then write to you with:

- what we have found
- any action we are taking
- our suggestions to resolve your complaint

*If you are not satisfied with how we dealt with your complaint, you can appeal the outcome within **10 working days**. Appeal will not be accepted simply because you are unhappy with the outcome. Appeals will be accepted if:*

- *You are concerned that there was a weakness in the original complaint investigation, or*
- *You have new information relating to the original investigation that should be investigated*

*The Appeal Handler will be more senior to the person who investigated the original complaint and will have the authority to resolve the issues highlighted within the complaint and appeal. We will let you know the outcome of an appeal within **10 working days**.*

The appeal is the final stage of our Complaint Process. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, we will provide you with details of alternative complaint options, such as an Ombudsman or regulators.

Anonymous complaints

We deal with anonymous complaints under the same procedure; however it is better if you can provide contact details so we can tell you the outcome of our investigation.

Vexatious and Repeat Complaints

We will not investigate complaints about an issue already investigated and where appeal has been exhausted, or complaints made to intentionally cause disruption or annoyance.

We can provide this information in other languages or in other formats on request.

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Appendix 3 – Compliments or Complaints record form

Name of the person making the compliment/complaint			
Address			
Telephone Number		Email	
Name of the person completing the form (if different)		Their role	
Which service or project is the compliment/complaint about?			
Details of the Compliment or complaint (continue on a separate sheet if needed)			

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Appendix 4 – Complaint Appeal Form

Please fill in this form if you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint and feel you have grounds for appeal.

Your Name.....

Complaint Reference.....

Grounds for Appeal

We treat all complaints seriously and try to investigate them thoroughly and fairly. We can't consider an appeal simply because you disagree with the outcome of your complaint. The reason needs to fall into one of the categories below. Please tick below the grounds for your appeal

- You don't feel the complaint was investigated properly (please include below why you believe this to be the case)
- There is new information that should be investigated (please include below why this information has only now become available)

Please provide further information about your reason for appeal stated above (continue on an extra page if needed)

Please return this form and any supporting documents to the person who handled your complaint (their contact details are on the letters we sent you) within 10 working days of the date of the letter advising you of the outcome of your complaint.

Signature Date

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Appendix 5 – Receipt of complaint

[INSERT your name]

[INSERT office address]

[INSERT Complainant's name]

[INSERT Complainant's address]

[INSERT Date]

Dear [INSERT name]

Your complaint [INSERT Ref]

Thank you for telling us about your complaint. I'm sorry to hear you are unhappy with the service you have received from us. Following our discussion, I understand your complaint is that [INSERT your understanding of the complaint, using a bulleted or numbered list if there is more than one point]. Please let me know if I have misunderstood your concerns.

I will investigate your complaint as a matter of urgency and will be in touch with a full response within 20 working days of the date of this letter.

Please do contact me again in the meantime if I can be of further assistance, my contact details are below.

Yours sincerely,

[INSERT Signature]

[INSERT Name]

[INSERT phone number]

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Appendix 6 – Outcome of Complaint

[INSERT your name]

[INSERT office address]

[INSERT Complainant's name]

[INSERT Complainant's address]

[INSERT Date]

Dear [INSERT Name],

Re: Outcome of your complaint [INSERT ref]

I have completed my investigation into your complaint. My findings are that -

[INSERT the points of the complaint, and for each point state whether the point is Upheld, Partially Upheld or Not Upheld and the reason why]

Therefore, I have

Upheld / Partially Upheld / Not Upheld your complaint. [Delete as applicable]

[INSERT apology for things that were upheld / partially upheld if appropriate]

We have taken the following action in response to your complaint [INSERT the things done to address the complaint]

Thank you once again for bringing your complaint to our attention. I hope you are satisfied with this outcome. However, I've included a form to complete and return within 10 working days if you are dissatisfied with outcome, and feel you have grounds for appeal.

Yours sincerely,

[INSERT Signature]

[INSERT Name]

[INSERT Phone number]

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Appendix 7 – Receipt of Appeal

[INSERT your name]

[INSERT office address]

[INSERT Complainant's name]

[INSERT Complainant's address]

[INSERT Date]

Dear [Name]

Re: Receipt of your Appeal [INSERT ref]

I write to confirm receipt of your appeal on the grounds that -

[INSERT the complainant's grounds for appeal]

I will look into your appeal as a matter of urgency and notify you of the outcome within 10 working days.

Yours Faithfully,

[INSERT Name]

[INSERT Signature]

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Appendix 8 – Outcome of Appeal

[INSERT your name]

[INSERT office address]

[INSERT Complainant's address]

[INSERT Date]

Dear *[INSERT Complainant title (Mr / Mrs / Miss etc.) and Complainant Name]*,

Re: Outcome of your Appeal [INSERT ref]

I write to notify you of the outcome of your appeal.

[INSERT the following, depending on the grounds for appeal]

I have reviewed the original investigation and found that the investigation met our expectations

I have reviewed the original investigation and found that the investigation should have considered *[INSERT]*. I have now considered this information, and following this have decided

Therefore your complaint is upheld on appeal / partially upheld on appeal / not upheld

I have considered the additional information you provided. Given this new information I have decided to uphold your complaint on appeal / partially uphold you complaint on appeal *[INSERT why]*

I have considered the additional information you provided. Despite this new information I have decided to uphold your complaint on appeal / partially uphold you complaint on appeal *[INSERT why]*

[INSERT apology if appropriate]

We will take the following action following this appeal

[INSERT action to be taken if appropriate]

[If not upheld provide information for complainant to raise concerns externally]

Yours Faithfully,

[INSERT Name]

[INSERT Signature]