

Anxiety UK

Complaints Policy & Procedure

1. Introduction

This policy outlines Anxiety UK's commitment to handling and dealing with complaints made to Anxiety UK in relation to their delivery and provision of services.

Scope & Summary

For the purposes of this policy, a complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about a service, act, omission, or decision, made either verbally or written, and whether justified or not which requires a response.

Roles

Anxiety UK's Chief Executive will monitor the implementation of this policy and will report all complaints and outcomes to the Board of Trustees on a quarterly basis.

How to make a complaint

Complaints can be made via email or post. If you decide to make a complaint using the postal service, we cannot take any responsibility for loss of documents, therefore we recommend the use of email.

When can you make a complaint?

We require complaints to be submitted as close as possible to the event that the matter relates to. For the avoidance of doubt this must be within 3 months. Anxiety UK reserves the right to extend this timeframe if it is believed the delay is due to reasonable causes or circumstances.

Complaints process.

Upon receiving a complaint Anxiety UK commits to:

- Acknowledging the complaint in writing within 5 working days.
- Assigning an ID and log the details of the complaint.
- Following the complaints process set out below.

Communication and confidentiality.

Anxiety UK is committed to ensuring the protection of personal data, we therefore will not:

Communicate with any party other than the complainant unless agreed otherwise in writing.

Discuss the details of a complaint over the phone unless we are satisfied that we are speaking to the complainant. If we are unable to verify a person's identity over the phone, we will communicate only in writing.

Personal data will be retained in line with our privacy policy, this can be found at www.anxietyuk.org.uk/privacy-notice/

Anxiety UK will not share any details of a complaint with a service provider of Anxiety UK unless it is necessary to complete an investigation. If Anxiety UK needs to share details it commits to ensuring that the 3rd party has a confidentiality agreement in place.

All complaints will be kept confidential to the parties concerned.

Where issues raised are of a particularly serious nature, the details of the complaint will normally be made known to the CEO who will discuss the matter with the Board of Trustees as necessary.

Complaints recorded in Anxiety UK's internal complaints register, including any evidence gathered during an investigation, will be retained for 7 years.

Anxiety UK is committed to providing a quality service and achieving the highest standards. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our clients, members of the public or others who may want to comment. Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

1. Making a complaint is as easy and transparent as possible.
2. We deal with complaints appropriately and within the stated time frame when reasonably possible.
3. We treat a complaint as any clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service, or organisation, which calls for a response.
4. We respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation or an apology where we have got things wrong and, if relevant and appropriate, provide information on any action taken.
5. We reserve the right to not accept a complaint where the complaint is clearly vexatious, malicious, or motivated by racist, sexist, homophobic or other discriminatory attitudes, or where the complaint threatens or abuses Anxiety UK staff/volunteers. Additionally, a complaint will not be accepted when it is believed that the complaint in question has already been dealt with. The decision as to whether a complaint is vexatious will be taken by the Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Board of Trustees where necessary.
6. When a complaint identifies that something has gone wrong or has fallen below expected standards, it is seen as an opportunity to improve and avoid a recurrence and it can allow for systems, policies, practices, or procedures to be amended or put in place as appropriate.

This procedure covers complaints about the services that the organisation provides to the public, and complaints about the staff and volunteers involved in delivering those services. Complaints regarding discrimination and victimisation will also be investigated under this procedure.

Information about how to make a complaint will be made readily available. Assistance, where possible, will be offered to all parties involved in a complaint to ensure equality of representation.

2. Complaints Procedure

2.1 How to make a complaint?

Wherever possible we will try to resolve any matter on an informal basis. Where this is not possible, we will follow the formal complaints process.

Formal complaints should be submitted as follows:

- Preferably via e-mail: info@anxietyuk.org.uk
- Or via post to

Anxiety UK
Nunes House
447 Chester Road
Manchester M16 9HA

If post is used, we recommend using a tracked service as we are unable to take any responsibility for loss of documents through the postal network.

Complaints regarding individuals, or where a formal follow-up is required, must:

- be in writing.
- be from an identified complainant.
- include the complainant's name and contact details.

We acknowledge that in certain instances a complainant may wish to remain anonymous. In such incidences we will review the nature of the complaint to aid a decision on the most appropriate course of action.

Complaints against third party providers.

Complaints regarding external service providers will be referred to their own complaint's procedure. Where appropriate, complainants will be informed of the complaint's procedures or other professional bodies.

2.2 What happens next?

We aim where possible to address complaints promptly.

- All complaints received will be given an ID number and logged onto the Anxiety UK Complaints Register.
- We will acknowledge all complaints in writing within 5 working days of when the complaint is received.
- Anxiety UK will review the complaint to consider whether further investigations need to be carried out.

When investigating complaints, Anxiety UK commits to ensure that:

- The complaint is fully understood – this may require the need to talk to the complainant.
- The response of staff to the situation in which the problem arose is understood. This may involve discussing the matter with Anxiety UK employees, volunteers, or third-party providers in addition to reviewing any written information.

As a result of any investigation, actions may include:

- Specific improvements to services.
- Bringing together parties to mediate the dispute.
- Recommendations regarding staff training.

Timescales for responding.

- Following our acknowledgment and acceptance of a complaint, we aim to provide a full written response within 28 days. However, if this is not possible because, for example, a detailed investigation is required, we will provide an interim reply explaining what is being done to deal with the complaint and provide a revised timetable.
- In some cases, the complainant may have expressed a preference for a telephone discussion regarding the outcome. This will always be followed up by a written response so that both parties have a written record of the outcome.
- Actions identified because of a complaint will be implemented within a reasonable timeframe.

2.3 Appeals Procedure

The following appeals procedure will apply in cases where the complainant is not satisfied with the initial response:

- In cases where the complainant is dissatisfied with the response they have received, they are entitled to appeal the decision within 7 days of receiving the written response to:

Via email – info@anxietyuk.org.uk

- Appeals will be responded to in writing within 14 working days.
- In all cases, complaints will be recorded in Anxiety UK's internal complaints register.

3. Useful Links

Anxiety UK's Terms and Conditions: [Terms and conditions - Anxiety UK](#)

4. Useful Organisations.

Citizens Advice Bureau: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

