

Complaints/dispute Policy and Procedure

We aim to provide a high standard of service for all our users. If you are not totally satisfied, then we also are not satisfied and will endeavour to do all we can to rectify this. Nottingham Women's Centre feels it is essential that users of our services do have a clear, effective and easily understandable procedure through which any complaints can be dealt with. We see this as a **positive step to ensure continuous improvement in our services and will always be welcomed.**

The following general principles will be followed by all members of Nottingham Women's Centre:

1. Nottingham Women's Centre staff will not be defensive when complaints are made.
2. We will listen and we do care.
3. We will ensure complete confidentiality at all times.
4. We shall do all we can to resolve the situation as speedily as possible.

Any user making a complaint has the right to be represented and supported throughout the process if they so wish

Stage 1

Anyone wishing to make a complaint is encouraged in the first place, to do so informally and directly with the member of staff concerned. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue at this stage. If you are still dissatisfied with the response or if you feel this stage is not appropriate, or where the complaint is of a particularly serious nature requiring a formal response, the procedure at stage 2 should be followed.

Stage 2

A formal complaint, in writing should be addressed in the first place to the CEO, who will discuss the matter with the relevant member of staff for a reply. If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, or if you feel this stage is also not appropriate, the procedure at stage three should be followed and you will be given a copy of the complaints procedure for your guidance.

Stage 3

The details of the complaint and/or your reasons for dissatisfaction should be addressed in writing to the Chairperson. Following any necessary investigation the Chairperson will reply within 21 days of receipt. If the matter is still not resolved to your satisfaction the final appeal procedure at stage four should be followed.

Stage 4

At your request the complaint will be referred by the Chairperson to next meeting of the Board of Trustees, who will consider the matter and reply with their decision to you. The decision of the full Board shall be final and will be given to you, in writing, within seven days of their meeting.

At all stages of this process you may be assisted and accompanied by another person. The time limit may be altered by mutual agreement.

In the unavoidable absence of the Chairperson, the complaints procedure can be operated at stages three and four by an Acting Chairperson nominated by the Board of Trustees.