**Disability Rights UK**

**Complaints Policy**

Our complaints procedure provides instructions to individuals and organisations that wish to make a formal complaint to Disability Rights UK. It is important to remember that complaints can provide us with useful feedback about ways in which we might improve our services.

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring appropriate and timely responses to complaints are provided in accordance with this policy, delegated to the Head of Advice & Information, or other managers in their absence, as appropriate.

**What to do if someone wishes to make a formal complaint**

Disability Rights UK endeavours to receive complaints in a spirit of openness, and to ensure we can learn from the feedback we receive. However, we wish to avoid formal complaints wherever possible by dealing with expressed dissatisfaction promptly and informally. This should be done by the member of staff dealing with the area of work concerned. In the absence of that member of staff, or if specifically requested by the complainant, their line manager will deal with the matter. Where an informal approach has not completely dealt with the matter and the person wishes to make a formal complaint, staff are to follow the procedures which apply to each stage of the complaints and suggestions procedure. A central complaints file will be created, and held by the Head of Advice & Information.

### In all cases

Throughout the process of dealing with a formal complaint staff should remain aware that communication with the complainant is to be in a suitable format wherever possible.

1. Send a copy of the complaints policy to the complainant.
2. Set up both an electronic and paper file to contain all correspondence to and from the complainant while the complaint is being dealt with. The file should also have a cover note to be completed by the member of staff who is dealing with the complaint.
3. Written records are to be maintained once the complaint has been received.
4. Staff should always inform their line manager of the formal complaint.
5. All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with our confidentiality policy.
6. All complaints about individual members of staff are to be passed to the relevant line manager.
7. Where a deadline for response cannot be met the complainant should be informed as soon as possible in advance, and given another date by which they will receive a response.

Where the complaint is about a member of staff the line manager will:

1. Discuss the complaint with the member of staff concerned taking into account any evidence available and decide on the appropriate next course of action, if any.
2. Write to the complainant with the outcome of the complaint.

**Stage one**

Once the complaint file has been set up and all relevant staff have been informed, the member of staff dealing with the complaint will:

1. Investigate the matter by considering the issues raised by the complainant.
2. Discuss the matter with their line manager to ensure all aspects of the complaint are fully covered.
3. Respond to the complaint within ten working days.

In the event that the complainant does not feel that the matter has been dealt with fully they may wish for the complaint to be looked at again be someone else. In this case the complainant is to be directed to stage 2 of the complaints and suggestions procedure.

### Stage two

If the complaint is at this stage then it will need to be passed to a line manager to deal with. The member of staff who has been dealing with the complaint to date will pass the complaint file to their line manager stating:

1. What the original complaint was
2. Details of the handling of the complaint to date

The line manager will investigate the matter through discussion with the relevant member(s) of staff and respond to the complainant within ten working days. If this deadline cannot be met then the complainant should be informed and notified of an achievable date.

### Stage three

It should be a rarity for a complaint to reach stage three. If the complainant feels having had responses through stages one and two, that the matter has still not been resolved, then the file is to be referred to the Head of Advice & Information.

1. What the original complaint was
2. Details about the handling of the complaint to date.

The Head of Advice & Operations will investigate the matter and respond within ten working days. In the event that the Head of Advice & Information is unavailable, another member of Disability Rights UK’s leadership team will be appropriate.

If the complaint is about the Chief Executive then the complaint is to be directed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees who will respond within ten working days whenever possible. If this isn’t possible, the complainant is to be advised of a realistic timescale for receipt of a response. If by letter, the correspondence should be addressed to: Chair, Board of Trustees, Disability Rights UK, Plexal, 14 East Bay Lane, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London, E20 3BS and marked “Private and Confidential”. Email address to be used is [feedback@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:feedback@disabilityrightsuk.org).

The Head of Advice & Information also holds the complaints folder; all paper copies of complaints will be stored here. The Head of Advice & Information will also advise on where non-paper, such as electronic, records are to be stored.