

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Bede House Association and its staff want to give the best possible service. However, sometimes things may go wrong and we would like to know about these things so we can try to put them right as soon as possible.

We aim to resolve complaints informally and on the spot wherever possible, by offering an explanation, apology or resolution.

Individuals can make a complaint on their own behalf, through a third party or via a representative. If necessary, we may verify that a representative is entitled to speak on your behalf.

Complaints can be made verbally, by text, email or in writing.

Matters that are not covered by this policy

In general, the following matters will not be logged or taken forward under the Bede Complaints Policy:

- Complaints relating to issues that occurred over 12 months ago and where the complainant has been aware of the issue for over 12 months.
- Matters that have already been considered under the complaints policy.

It may be more appropriate to deal with a complaint under a different procedure, such as the staff grievance procedure. In these cases the complainant will be informed of the procedure under which their complaint is being considered.

Who to complain to

The relevant Service Manager will attempt to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. Any Bede member of staff can accept a complaint and communicate it to the Service Manager.

If the complaint is about a Service Manager or not about a particular service, complaints can be addressed to the Bede Director.

If the complaint is about the Bede Director, it can be addressed to the Chair of Bede Council.

If the complaint is about the Chair, it can be addressed to the Vice-Chair of Bede Council.

Complaints can be emailed to admin@bedehouse.org. This email address is monitored by staff who are not directly involved in service delivery.

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, it will be taken forward as a formal complaint through the following procedure.

Formal complaints procedure

Stage 1

Formal complaints should be addressed directly to the Bede Director. If the complaint is about the Director, it can be addressed to the Chair.

It is helpful if you can include:

- Your name and contact details
- Name, position, and contact details of the person submitting the complaint on your behalf (if applicable)
- Details of the complaint including which service the complaint is about, who was involved and any relevant dates
- The outcome that you would like from your complaint

The Bede Director will acknowledge the complaint **within 5 working days**. They will establish an investigation plan in line with ACAS guidance on conducting investigations.

The Bede Director will aim to provide a full response **within one month of the acknowledgement**. If the complaint is complex, this can be extended by no more than 10 working days. The individual must be informed of any extension and the reasons for it.

The outcome will be confirmed in writing to the complainant in clear language and will include:

- confirmation of the complaint stage
- confirmation of the complaint being investigated
- the decision on the complaint
- the reasons for the decision
- the details of any remedy offered to put things right
- details of any outstanding actions
- details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if dissatisfied with the response

Stage 2 – Final stage

Stage 2 is a check that the decisions and actions taken at Stage 1 were thorough, reasonable and fair.

If the complainant is not happy with the outcome at Stage 1, the complaint is progressed to Stage 2.

The complainant must communicate their request for a Stage 2 review, to the Bede Director, within 5 working days of receiving the Stage 1 outcome decision.

The Bede Director will establish a complaint review. A Stage 2 complaint review cannot be conducted by the same individual who conducted the Stage 1 investigation. If the Bede Director conducted the Stage 1 investigation, they will escalate the complaint review to the Chair of Bede Council.

A final response will be provided to the complainant within one month of receiving the request. If the review is complex, this can be extended by no more than 20 working days. The individual must be informed of any extension and the reasons for it.