

# Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy

Whatever your relationship with us has been, Relate aims to give you a good experience. Whatever service you've had or been involved with, we genuinely want to hear feedback – compliments help us to do more of what works, concerns and complaints help us to improve. You might be a client, a referring agency or maybe someone attending one of our training or development programmes - anyone can get in touch to give us feedback.

We log all feedback, whatever it is, so that when it's a compliment, we can share the good news and when it isn't, we can make sure that we learn and develop. There might be times too when we escalate the issue ourselves for example if we feel there is an immediate concern around someone's safety or if there may be a quality assurance concern.

## For Compliments

Hearing positive feedback helps us to build on what we already do

Most of the time we really help and support the people who come to us. Perhaps we've made things feel more manageable or helped you work through difficult issues. Perhaps you've referred someone and they've told you they had a good experience with us. Maybe you've really enjoyed being part of one of our training and development opportunities. If any of these apply, it would be great to know, so please get in touch. You can phone, e-mail, write in, and speak to the person or people providing the service or use:

[Feedback.NTC@relate.org.uk](mailto:Feedback.NTC@relate.org.uk)

## For Concerns and Complaints

Sometimes we don't get it right. Sometimes we make mistakes or maybe don't explain things as well as we might have done. If you feel that's the case, then please tell us straight away or as soon as you can so we sort out whatever's worrying you as quickly and as efficiently as possible. The sooner you let us know something isn't right, the sooner we look into what's worrying you.

## Stage 1

### Sorting something out

Whatever you want to tell us, the best place to start is to feedback directly to the relevant service provider. Depending on what's concerning you, this might be the practitioner, service delivery or operations manager or if you're one of our students, then the Head of Training. You can write, email or phone and they will do their best to help because we genuinely want to sort things out with you. Any Relate person supporting you with your complaint will treat you courteously and efficiently and so that we can get to the bottom of things as quickly and as helpfully as possible, we would request that you respond to us in the same way.

You can also use the general feedback e-mail: [Feedback.NTC@relate.org.uk](mailto:Feedback.NTC@relate.org.uk)

Which ever method you choose, please let us know what is concerning you and whether you are:

- A current client
- A client who has finished work with Relate
- You are attending group training or a development programme
- You are an external organization or referrer into one of our services
- You are not the client but are concerned about the service a client has received or is receiving

Whoever you get in touch with (unless it's resolved straight away, e.g. you've discussed your query and feel happy with the outcome so nothing more needed) will acknowledge your enquiry within 48 hours (or 72 hours if it's at a weekend).

Within fifteen working days of that acknowledgement, you should have had a reply either answering your query, or explaining what we're doing to follow things up. If for any reason we can't keep to this time frame, maybe because a key person involved in the concern or complaint is on leave or away sick, we'll let you know and keep you up to date with what's happening. Sometimes we might ask to talk with you again to make sure we've properly understood what you're unhappy about.

Once we've looked at what's worrying you, we'll offer you an explanation, clarification or an apology.

We'll also let you know to whom you can write or email if you don't agree with the outcome of the complaint. This is an appeal. The person to whom you write will carefully review

whether our procedures have been properly carried and if not, what else we are now going to do about the concerns you have raised.

## Stage 2

Although most matters are completed at stage 1, there may be occasional circumstances where it could be helpful to take a concern or complaint further. This might for example be where the concerns that have been raised are exceptionally complex. You can request this stage or we may decide to implement it ourselves. You don't have to take part if you choose not to and you can request to be notified of the outcome subsequently – should you so wish.

Any stage 2 investigation will be undertaken by a member of Relate staff who is independent of the people who have already considered it. They may ask to speak with you and will also speak to the relevant Relate staff. They will keep you fully informed about what's happening and then provide you with the outcome.

We'll always do our best to keep you up to date and respond to you in a timely manner and with efficiency and courtesy to reach the fairest outcome. Sometimes though, either due to sickness or staff leave it may not be possible to get back to you with the outcome within that time frame but they will always keep you fully informed about when you can expect a decision.

Again, if you do not agree with the outcome you can request an appeal.

## Requesting an appeal

Whether your complaint is investigated at stage 1 or at stage 2, if you're not happy with the outcome of your complaint you can ask that a senior member of Relate looks at whether the complaints process has been properly followed.

The person handling the appeal will decide if the complaint has been conducted in line with our complaints policy and procedure. They will aim to do this within fifteen working days of your request. If for any reason it's not possible to do this, they will keep you fully informed about when you can expect to hear the outcome of your appeal.

If your complaint is about mediation and is not resolved within the organisation you can ask the Family Mediation Standards Board to consider the complaint if certain criteria are met. Details available on request.

Remember – if you're not happy, please tell us. The sooner we know, the sooner we can sort things out.

## Relate London North West & Herts, Mid Thames & Bucks Contact details

Address:

The Gables  
St Mary's Road  
Hemel Hempstead  
Herts  
HP2 5HL

Phone:

0300 003 2324

Email for counselling:

[Appointments.ntc@relate.org.uk](mailto:Appointments.ntc@relate.org.uk)

Email for mediation:

[Mediation.ntc@relate.org.uk](mailto:Mediation.ntc@relate.org.uk)

General feedback e-mail:

[Feedback.ntc@relate.org.uk](mailto:Feedback.ntc@relate.org.uk)

Address:

The Gables,  
St Mary's Road  
Hemel Hempstead  
HP2 5HL

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