



Members First

Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy

Our key aims are to:

Act quickly and efficiently to put things right if something goes wrong.

Use customer feedback to improve our services and focus on the needs of our customers

1. Members First

Feedback from the clubs, schools, academies, and student and instructor members gives us all opportunities to learn and improve. We must value feedback about our services and recognise the right of our customers to make a complaint, compliment or comment about our services.

We are committed to listening to the views of people who use our services and will respond quickly and efficiently to that feedback. To do this we have now introduced an electronic monitoring system that handles the process and reports information on all complaints across the BNMAA membership.

2. Our complaints policy

We are committed to trying to resolve things that go wrong as soon as possible and give customers an outcome that they are satisfied with. Our priority is to resolve concerns wherever possible without the need for a formal complaint. The first step should always be for the customer to talk to an officer to try to reach an agreement.

Where we can't resolve problems we want to make sure that it is easy for anyone to make their complaint, and to tell us how things can be improved. They need to know that making a complaint will not result in any reduction or loss in service. We want to treat complaints positively, and, where possible, leave users feeling satisfied about their experience of making a complaint to us.

To achieve this, it is our policy:

- To make it easy for the members to get in contact with us, by phone, in writing, by e-mail or by visiting in person
- That ALL feedback should be treated with equal importance
- To respond quickly, within agreed published timescales:

3. Who are our members?

Our definition of a member is: "If you are a subscribing customer contact us for any reason, or you are affected by anything we do, you are one of our members".

We will:

- A. Encourage easy access - customers can give feedback online, in writing, in person, or by phone
- B. Record and analyse all complaints, compliments and suggestions
- C. Use plain language in all communications
- D. Set and monitor targets for responding to feedback
- E. Contact the customer where we cannot resolve a complaint straight away, giving them a named contact officer, phone number, e-mail address and target date for a response
- F. Keep customers informed when we cannot send them a response within our target time
- G. Inform customers about their right to escalate a complaint when dissatisfied with our response
- H. Review each piece of feedback carefully to establish what lessons we can learn and if we can improve our services as a result.

4. What is a “compliment”?

A compliment is when a customer gives us feedback about how we exceeded expectations in delivering a service.

5. What is a “comment”?

When a customer comments, or offers an idea on how we can improve our delivery of a service, but does not want to make a complaint.

6. What is a "complaint"?

It is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about:

- A. our policy
- B. our service standards or quality
- C. our staff attitude or customer access
- D. our contractors
- E. any form of discrimination

It is NOT:

- A. The first request for action or for a service.
- B. The first request for information or explanation.
- C. A complaint could include one or more of the following problems:

- ✚ We delay in providing a service
- ✚ We fail or refuse to provide a service
- ✚ We provide a poor quality service or make a mistake
- ✚ We provide an inappropriate service
- ✚ We remove or withdraw a service
- ✚ We charge an inappropriate cost for a service
- ✚ An employee's behaviour causes upset
- ✚ A policy unreasonably disadvantages a customer
- ✚ We unfairly discriminate against a customer
- ✚ A customer is unable to access a service

7. What complaints are excluded from our policy?

We recognise that some complaints will be handled using other processes, including:

- ✚ An employee's complaint about personnel matters including pay, pensions, disciplinary and grievance issues
- ✚ A complaint that will be handled using our "Whistle Blowing" procedure
- ✚ A complaint about a service where we have no responsibility, such as district council services
- ✚ A complaint about a decision where a statutory appeal body or tribunal has been established to examine the case, such as school admissions or Special Educational Needs or planning applications
- ✚ A claim for damages that should be handled as an insurance claim
- ✚ A complaint about contract-related issues where an arbitration procedure already exists
- ✚ school curriculum complaints - these should be made directly to the school

8. The Feedback Process

8.1 How will we deal with a compliment?

o When a member instructor receives a compliment they will immediately record the details on the appropriate form. The instructor or the BNMAA will aim to acknowledge this within 2 working days.

8.2 How will we deal with a comment?

- ✚ When a member receives a comment they will immediately record the details on the appropriate form.
- ✚ We will aim to acknowledge this within 2 working days. We then aim to send a response to the customer within 10 working days that either explains how we will implement the suggestion or investigate it further if necessary or why we are unable to implement the suggestion.
- ✚ We will keep the customer informed about any delays

8.3 How will we deal with a complaint?

Stage 1: Local Resolution

We aim to deal with all complaints at the point of service delivery.

When a complaint is received by a member of staff they will

- ✚ Immediately enter it onto the appropriate feedback form
- ✚ Try to resolve the problem straight away or within 24 hours
- ✚ If it cannot be resolved straight away the complaint will pass to Stage 1 instructor resolution

Stage 1 – Instructor resolution

Once entered for Instructor resolution on the system the complaint will automatically be passed to the most appropriate directorate complaints officer who will initiate this stage and will:

- ✚ We will aim to acknowledge this within 2 working days with the contact details of the person dealing with the complaint and the deadline for the response.
- ✚ We then aim to resolve the issue within 10 working days.

Stage 2

If the person making the complaint is not happy with the response they receive at stage 1, they can ask for the complaint to be considered by the Head of Profession who will, at his discretion, either investigate the complaint in person, or ask a senior officer who has not previously been involved in the complaint to carry out an independent investigation.

- ✚ The complaints officer will aim to send an acknowledgement within 2 working days with the contact details of the person dealing with the complaint and the deadline for the response.
- ✚ We then aim to resolve the issue within 10 working days.

Stage 3

If the person making the complaint is not happy with the response they receive at stage 2, they can ask for the complaint to be considered by the Director of the service who will, at his discretion, either investigate the complaint in person, or ask a senior officer who has not previously been involved in the complaint to carry out an independent investigation.

The Group Director will arrange a review of the complaint if

- ✚ A customer complains when they are dissatisfied with the previous service investigation
- ✚ We unreasonably fail to carry out an investigation
- ✚ A senior Instructor requests an independent review

The Group Director will aim to:

- ✚ Send an acknowledgement within 2 working days with the contact details of the person dealing with the complaint and the deadline for the response.
- ✚ Resolve the issue within 25 working days.

What action can we take to put things right when things go wrong?

If we make a mistake, we will apologise and try to take some practical action to put things right. We may ask the customer to suggest what they would like us to do. We will always try to put the customer back to the position that he or she would have been in but for our mistake. We will also try to ensure that the same mistake does not happen again.

We may decide that one or more of the following can be done to put things right:

- ✚ Provide or change a service to the customer
- ✚ Provide an explanation or information to the customer
- ✚ Review customer literature (leaflets, website, poster and so on)
- ✚ Review a policy or procedure
- ✚ Arrange training or guidance for employees
- ✚ Employee action (such as standards setting or change of key worker)

The response to the complaint should:

- ✚ show genuine regret that someone has felt it necessary to complain, and to be courteous, honest, helpful and open
- ✚ to deal with any complaint as close to the source of the problem as possible
- ✚ explain what we will do to put things right and what we will do so that it will not happen again
- ✚ Keep the customer informed about any delays
- ✚ Inform the customer about their right to complain to the next stage if they are dissatisfied with our response

9. Vexatious Complaints

We want to treat complaints positively, and, where possible, leave users feeling happy about their experience of making a complaint to us.

A complaint can be regarded as vexatious when it has been considered and found to be unjustified, but when the person making the complaint is:

- ✚ not prepared to accept that conclusion, and
- ✚ persists in making the same or a substantially similar complaint.

Continuing to respond to such complaints can take up a significant amount of resources in time and money and can thereby detract from the service that can be provided for others.

If a complaints officer considers that a complaint has become vexatious, they can ask their senior Instructor for support in dealing with the complaint. The senior Instructor, in consultation with their Group Director and advice taken from legal services, may decide not to pursue the complaint any further. The person making the complaint will be informed of this decision.