

Complaints Procedure

1. Introduction

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction—however made—about the standard or quality of service, action or lack of action by the Society, its staff, officers, volunteers or representatives, affecting an individual or group receiving a service from the RSS.

2. Purpose of the Complaints Procedure

The primary purpose of this procedure is to address the concerns of the complainant. This may include:

- Providing an apology
- Offering an explanation
- Giving assurance that the matter has been investigated
- Taking action to prevent recurrence.

This procedure applies the following groups who wish to make a complaint:

- Members of the public
- RSS Fellows
- External organisations
- Partner organisations.

3. What Constitutes a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about:

- the standard of service provided by the RSS
- the behaviour or conduct of RSS staff, volunteers or representatives
- decisions made by the RSS or its representatives

This procedure does not cover:

- Appeals against decisions related to professional membership
- Disciplinary matters involving RSS members (covered under the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure)
- Whistleblowing (covered by Fraud and Whistleblowing policy)
- Complaints submitted anonymously without sufficient evidence.

4. Submitting a Complaint

Complaints should be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive of The Royal Statistical Society, info@rss.org.uk.

Please include:

- Your name and contact details
- A clear description of the complaint
- The impact on you
- The remedy you are seeking.

Complaints should be submitted within eight weeks of the incident or of becoming aware of the issue. Complaints received after this period may not be investigated unless there are reasonable grounds to support an investigation, such as it is in the public interest or represents a potential safeguarding issue.

5. Acknowledgement and Investigation

The RSS will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days, which may include a request for further information.

5.1. How Complaints Are Handled

The complaint will be investigated by the Chief Executive or delegated to a member of the Senior Management Team. Complaints about or involving the Chief Executive, will be handled by the President.

Stage 1: Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, we will attempt to resolve the issue informally through discussion or clarification. If this is not possible or satisfactory, the complaint will proceed to formal investigation.

Stage 2: Formal Investigation

A senior staff member or designated officer will investigate the complaint. This may involve:

- reviewing documentation
- speaking with relevant parties
- seeking clarification from the complainant.

A formal response will be issued within 28 working days of receiving the complaint or any additional requested information. If the issue is complex, an interim response will be provided with a revised timeline.

Stage 3: Appeals

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request a review by an Appeal Panel. This must be submitted in writing within 14 working days of the formal response, stating:

- why the response was unsatisfactory
- what outcome is being sought.

An appeal panel will be formed of individuals independent of the original investigation and will include at least one trustee.

6. Confidentiality and Monitoring

All complaints will be handled confidentially and fairly. The Society is committed to ensuring that no one is treated unfairly or suffers detriment as a result of raising a complaint. The RSS will monitor complaints to identify trends and improve services. An anonymised summary will be reported to the Executive Committee annually.

Version control

Author / Reviewer	Date	Version	Revisions
Stella Macaskill, Director of Professional Services	19 11 2025	0.1	

Document details

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