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ASME Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy and Procedure	
Document No.	HR/CP/107
Revision No.	02
Authorised By:	Chair
Date:	Feb 2023
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ASME Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

The aim of this document is to set out how a compliment, comment or concern/complaint from any ASME member or the general public is dealt with by ASME, and to ensure that it is handled in the most appropriate and efficient manner possible.

1. Compliments

Everyone loves getting a compliment and ASME is no different! If you think that we did something well or exceptionally well, we'd love to hear from you! You can do this by completing the online form (example at the end of this document).

2. Comments

If you have any suggestions or comments on how we are performing or how we could do something differently, we will be pleased to hear from you. We will evaluate and consider any suggestions that you may have for helping us to improve our support to our members. You can do this by completing the online form (example at the end of this document).

3. Complaints

ASME is committed to providing a high quality, transparent and accessible service to all our members. In order to do this, we need you to tell us when we get things wrong. We want to help resolve your complaint as quickly as possible. We will listen to your concerns and complaints, treat them seriously, and learn from them so that we can continuously improve our service.

What is the difference between a Concern and a Complaint?

- a. A Concern** - is a comment or worry about a particular issue or situation. A concern can be expressed quickly and in complete confidence to the appropriate person in ASME. The process is kept informal with the aim of resolving the concern as quickly as possible.
- b. A Formal Complaint** - is an expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf. This is handled more formally in accordance with our procedure below.

What can you complain about?

- the quality and standard of service we provide
- the behaviour of ASME personnel (staff, Directors or Committee/Groups/Special Interest Groups) in delivering that service



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- any action, or lack of action, by ASME personnel (staff, Directors or Committee/Groups/Special Interest Groups) or others engaged in ASME business

All complaints, no matter what their nature, whether formal or informal will be treated in the strictest confidence.

What can't you complain about?

- routine first time request for a service
- results of awards and pre-set deadlines/timelines for these
- comments about our policies or policy decisions
- dissatisfaction or complaints expressed with our policies
- actions taken by others external to ASME
- matters that have already been fully investigated through this complaints procedure.

We have specific policies covering the following areas which are *not* included in this policy:

- Whistle-blowing
- Staff grievances
- Staff discipline

Our standards for handling complaints

You can make a complaint either by completing the Complaints Form [AF35 online form](#), by letter or email, or alternatively, if required by virtue of reasonable adjustments, in a different format (please refer to the last paragraph of this document).

- We treat all complaints seriously.
- You can expect to be treated with courtesy, respect and fairness at all times.
- We expect that you will also treat our staff dealing with your complaint with the same courtesy, respect and fairness.
- We will treat your complaint in confidence.
- We will deal with your complaint promptly and will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within five working days, where we have a return address. Wherever possible we will respond with a full reply within 20 working days but this will depend on personnel availability.



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- In a few cases we may not be able to send a full reply within 20 working days of receipt, for example if your complaint is very complex. If this happens, we will tell you the reason why and let you know when we will be able to reply in full, keeping you fully informed of progress.

We will not treat you less favourably than anyone else because of your:

- sex or legal marital or same-sex partnership status: this includes family status, responsibility for dependants, and gender (including gender reassignment, whether proposed, commenced or completed)
- sexual orientation
- colour or race: this includes ethnic or national origin or nationality
- disability
- religious or political beliefs, or trade union affiliation
- or any other unjustifiable factors, for example language difficulties, age, pregnancy and maternity.

Social Media

Concerns or complaints raised in the media (including social media) will be followed up by ASME. For complaints, the complainant will be asked to complete the online Complaints form, in order that their complaint can be addressed and logged.

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints will not be addressed but where possible, the complainant will be asked to provide details to the HR Manager which will be addressed and kept confidential.

Confidentiality


All concerns/complaints received will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, subject to the need to disclose information as required by statutory authorities, and/or as a result of statutory or legal obligations placed on ASME.

How to express a concern to us

If you have a concern, you can either email or telephone us at the contact details in the *Contacting Us* section below.

How to complain to us

If you wish to make a complaint, you can do so by completing the attached [online form AF35](#) or by email or letter.

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If you are disabled, and need a reasonable adjustment to ensure you can register your complaint, you can contact us alternatively by:

- telephone (one of our staff will help you by writing out your complaint)

Our contact details are in the *Contacting Us* section below. If you require different adjustments, let us know and we will try and put those arrangements in place where we can.

How we will record your complaint internally

All complaints and concerns will be logged into a central database to enable us to track and ensure all complaints have been addressed and any trends identified. The relevant person to whom the complaint is applicable will be contacted by our Complaint Focal Point for investigation, discussion and comment with the outcome logged in the database.

Complaints procedure

We have a two-stage service complaints handling procedure, as explained above. At each stage it will help us to resolve your complaint quickly if you can give us as much clarity and detail as possible, including providing any documents and correspondence and stating that you are making a complaint. If we do not have all the details required to deal with the complaint, we may contact you and ask you for further information.

Stage 1

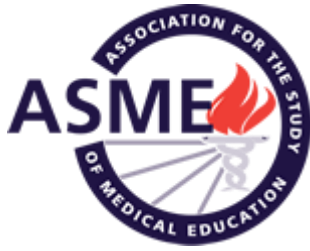
This is the first opportunity for us to resolve your dissatisfaction. You must make your complaint within 3 months of:-

- the event you want to complain about or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain

When complaining, tell us:-

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter

We would however encourage you to tell us about your concerns as soon as possible. We expect the majority of complaints to be resolved at this stage. On receipt of your complaint we will contact the relevant person in ASME and ask them to respond to your complaint.



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Stage 2

If you are dissatisfied with the response at stage 1, you may request a review. This will be carried out by either our Operations Manager or a responsible Director. Your request together with all subsequent correspondence relating to it should be sent to the addresses in the *Contacting Us* section.

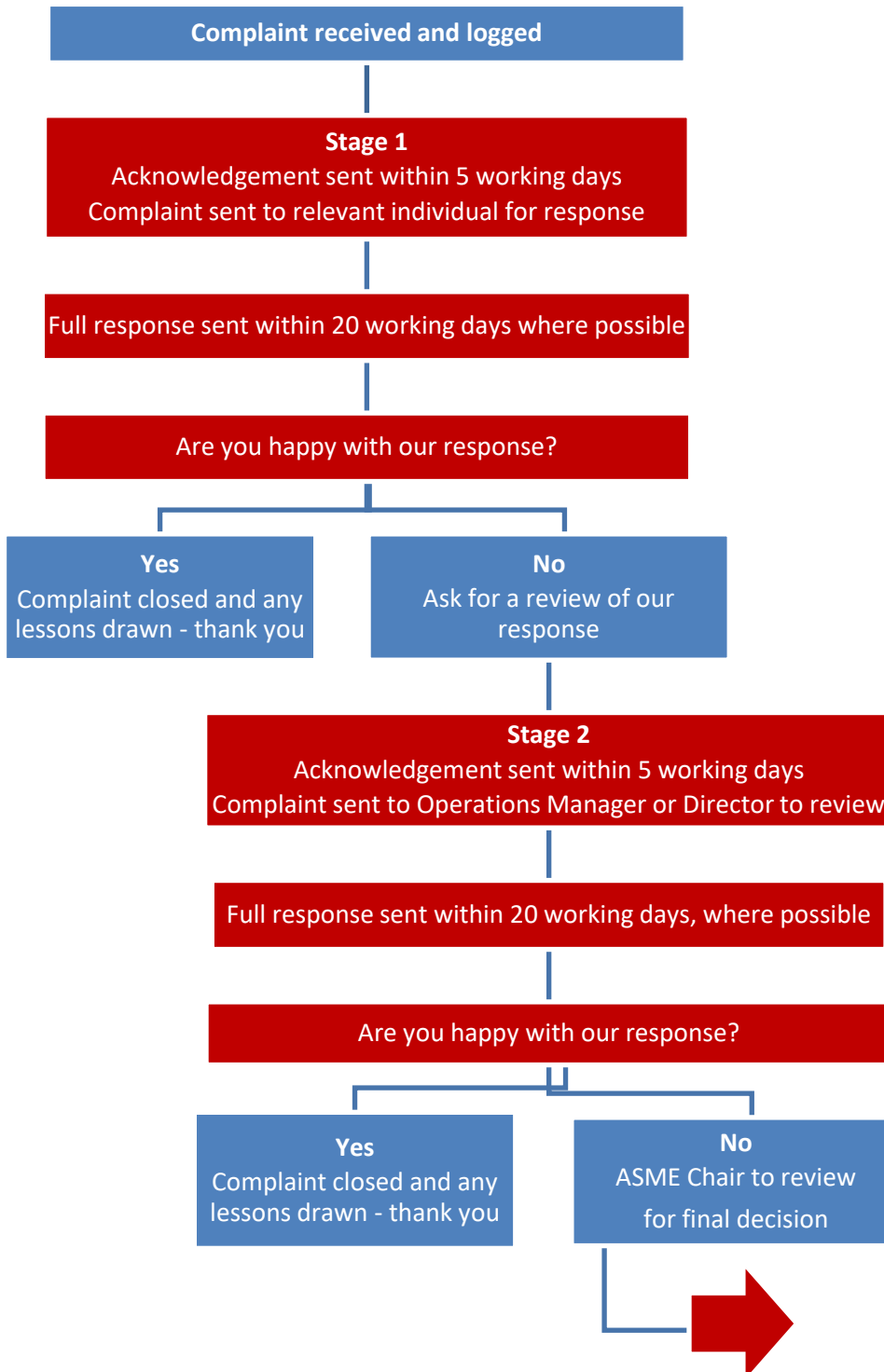
If you are still dissatisfied


If having followed the two internal stages of our complaints procedure you remain dissatisfied, you can ask to have your complaint reviewed by our Chair.



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How we will respond to your complaint



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Timescales

Stage 1

We will acknowledge complaints within 5 working days of receiving each complaint. We aim to send a full response within 20 working days of receiving each complaint, but this will depend on the availability of personnel.

If you make a complaint in person to a member of our staff (at an event or meeting), we will record your complaint in writing within 3 working days, and acknowledge it within 5 working days thereafter. We will then deal with your complaint in accordance with our policy for written complaints.

Stage 2

We will acknowledge complaints within 5 working days of receiving each complaint. We aim to send a full response within 20 working days of receiving each complaint, but this will depend on the availability of personnel.

Extending time limits

We aim to complete our investigation into all complaints received within the timescales set out above. However, in a limited number of cases - for example, if a complaint is very complex or requires further breakdown, it may be necessary to extend the time limit to ensure we have all the information necessary to deal with it. If this is the case we will keep you informed of progress with the investigation, the reasons for the delay, and inform you of next steps.

Remedies

When we get things wrong we will act to:

- accept responsibility and apologise
- explain what went wrong and why, and
- put things right by making any changes required
- learn lessons from mistakes and change policies and practices where proportionate and sensible to do so

The remedy applied needs to be proportionate and appropriate to the failure in service, and take into account what redress people seek when they complain. An apology is generally the most appropriate action, but other actions may also be necessary in some circumstances.



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List of remedies

- A full apology, explaining what happened and/or what went wrong. (an apology is not an acceptance of liability under Section 2 of the Compensation Act 2006)
- Remedial action, which may include reviewing or changing a decision on the service given to an individual complainant
- Provide the service required in first instance (immediately, if appropriate)
- Putting things right (for example a change of procedure to prevent future difficulties of a similar kind, either for the complainant or others)
- Training or supervising of ASME personnel or a combination of both

Recording complaints

Concerns and Complaint details, outcomes and actions taken are recorded by us and used for service improvement.

We value your feedback and expect to use it to help us to:

- get things right in the future if we have not done so already
- become more member focused
- be more open and accountable
- act fairly and proportionately
- seek continuous improvement

We will handle your information so that it is only processed and retained appropriately and legally, in line with data protection legislation.


Contacting us

All complaints and requests for review under our complaints procedure should be sent as follows:

Via our website www.asme.org.uk/complaints

By email: complaints@asme.org.uk

By letter: ASME Complaints Dept
ASME
Suite 1A, Q Court
3 Quality Street
EDINBURGH
EH4 5BP

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If you are unable to contact us in writing as above, and require a reasonable adjustment because you are a disabled person, you may contact us as follows:

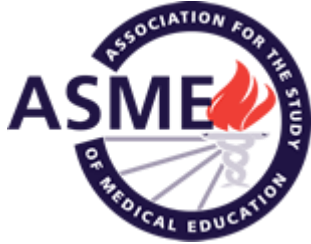
Telephone: 0131 225 9111

Reasonable adjustments and alternative formats

We are committed to equal opportunities and our aim is to make our complaints policy easy to use and accessible to all of our members. We will take reasonable steps to accommodate any reasonable adjustments you may have to enable you to access this policy or to receive responses to complaints in other formats, and provide such assistance as you may reasonably require.



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NAME	
ADDRESS	
TELEPHONE/EMAIL	
DATE	
OUTLINE DETAILS OF YOUR COMPLIMENT, COMMENT OR COMPLAINT	
DESIRED OUTCOME	
SIGNATURE	