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## NFER Policies and Procedures

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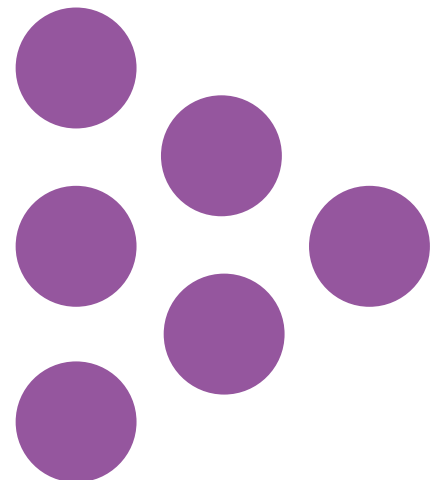
# Complaints Policy and Procedure

## National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)

Restricted

December 2024

Version Control	Update Date	By who
1	October 2011	Stella Harding
2	December 2018	Stella Harding
3	April 2021	Louise Wiseman
4	December 2024	Charlotte Hussein



**Please note:** this policy is currently under review and will be updated in due course. As such, should a complaint be raised, NFER may choose to handle this under the amended version of this policy; you will be notified by the Complaint Officer should this be the case.

## Introduction

NFER is committed to conducting educational research, information and development activities of the highest quality. Our aim is that all our dealings with you or your organisation are courteous and effective.

If you are not happy with any aspect of the way the Foundation conducts its business, or you consider that we have fallen short of the level of service that you would expect, we would like to know. Many complaints can be sorted out at an early stage by discussing the problem with a member of staff.

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## 1 Summary

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) is committed to conducting educational research, information and development activities of the highest quality. Our aim is that all our dealings with you or your organisation are courteous and effective.

If you are not happy with any aspect of the way the Foundation conducts its business, or you consider that we have fallen short of the level of service that you would expect, we would like to know. Many complaints can be sorted out at an early stage by discussing the problem with a member of staff.

In the first instance and if applicable, please contact the person or team with whom you have direct contact. They will have a clear understanding of your needs and will be able to deal with your query or issue more efficiently. Please give us your name, contact details and identify the nature of your complaint when you get in touch and we will endeavour to respond to your query within 5 working days of receiving it.

However, if after discussing your concerns in this way you remain dissatisfied, you can make a formal complaint.

If you wish to make a formal complaint, we will aim to respond to straightforward enquiries within 20 working days of receipt. If your query is a complex one then we will send an interim reply within 20 working days specifying when you can expect a full response. We will be clear about who is dealing with your enquiry, and how it will be dealt with. You can expect your enquiry to be:

- handled respectfully and sensitively
- treated in confidence and within current information and data protection legislation
- responded to in full and within the timescale specified.

We will aim to bring about a fair and satisfactory resolution. We will also draw upon the experience and feedback to improve our level of service in the future.

We welcome suggestions and ideas to help us improve our procedures. If you have any suggestions or questions please contact the Complaints Officer (see below).

## 2 Formal Complaints Procedure

### 2.1 Making a formal complaint:

The Foundation has a Complaints Officer who is able to assist you. You can contact her by e-mail.

Charlotte Hussein

E-mail: c.hussein@nfer.ac.uk

## 2.2 Provide information

To help us deal with your complaint promptly and appropriately, it would be helpful if you could provide the following information:

- the department/service of the NFER and the name of the person (if known) involved in your complaint
- a clear description of the content of the complaint
- an indication of whether this is the first complaint or a follow up to an earlier complaint which has not been resolved satisfactorily
- your full contact details including a phone number.

Critical comments will not be treated as a complaint unless formally lodged as such.

## 2.3 The Process

The Complaints Officer will coordinate the complaints process:

- You will be sent an acknowledgement within five working days of receipt of your complaint. A full written reply will be sent by the Complaints Officer within 20 working days of the receipt of the complaint, or she will advise you if it is going to take longer and why.
- If your complaint is about the areas of work for which the Complaints Officer has responsibility, a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) will coordinate the investigation.
- If your complaint cannot be resolved at this level and you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you may contact the Chief Executive to look at your complaint. She will respond to you, in writing, within a further 20 working days. The Chief Executive's decision is final.
- If your complaint is about the Chief Executive, the Complaints Officer will support the Board in carrying out an investigation. A full written reply will be sent by a member of the Board of Trustees within 20 working days of the receipt of the complaint. The Board's decision is final.

## 3 Complaints Privacy Notice

To process your complaint, we will need to process your personal information. The following information sets out how we do that.

### **3.1 What information are we collecting?**

We will collect, directly from you, your name, contact details, and information about the nature of your complaint. We will not collect more information than is necessary to deal with your complaint and we will not retain it for longer than is necessary.

### **3.2 What is the legal basis for its processing?**

The legal basis for processing personal data is covered by:

- GDPR Article 6 (1) (f) which states that ‘processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller or by a third party except where such interest are overridden by the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject which require protection of the personal data’.

Our legitimate interest for processing your personal data is to respond and deal with your complaint.

### **3.3 Who will personal data be shared with?**

Data will not be shared with third parties. It will not be stored or transferred outside of the European Economic Area (EEA)

### **3.4 How long will personal data be retained?**

Your contact details and details of your complaint will be deleted one month after its resolution. We will retain, on an anonymised basis, information regarding the reason for your complaint to monitor the quality of our performance going forward.

### **3.5 Can I stop my personal data being used?**

NFER handles personal data in accordance with the rights given to individuals under data protection legislation. If at any time you wish us to withdraw your data or correct errors in it, please contact our Compliance Officer, ([compliance@nfer.ac.uk](mailto:compliance@nfer.ac.uk)).

In certain circumstances, data subjects have the right to restrict or object to processing. They also have the right to make a subject access request to see all the information held about them. NFER will cooperate fully when a subject access request (SAR) is made. To exercise these rights, please contact our Compliance Officer.

If you have a concern about the way NFER processes your personal data, we request that you raise your concern with us (see the details above). Alternatively, you can contact the Information Commissioner’s Office, the body responsible for enforcing data protection legislation in the UK, at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

## 4 Updates

We may need to update the information we provide about how your data is processed when dealing with a complaint. We therefore recommend that you revisit this information from time to time. The date when this privacy notice was last updated is shown in the footer at the bottom of this document.