

COMPLAINTS POLICY



The Spinal Injuries Association takes very seriously all complaints made in respect of the services it provides and/or treatment of individuals accessing those services. Whilst we at all times strive to ensure that the quality of services being delivered and professionalism of those delivering them are of the highest possible standard, we accept that there may be times when service users are not entirely satisfied and may wish to tell us about it.

Should you wish to complain about any aspect of SIA's services, or feel you have been treated unfavourably or discourteously by a member of SIA staff, please follow the steps below to raise the matter with us:

Stage 1 (Informal Complaint)

Ask to speak to the Executive Director or, in his absence, the Deputy Director and discuss your complaint with them. This can be done by telephone, email, or in person (by prior appointment), whichever is appropriate. The Executive or Deputy Director will investigate the matter on your behalf and put their findings in writing to you. If you remain dissatisfied, or where it is not possible to use Stage 1 (eg because it is not possible for you to contact us in working hours, or to visit) then please use Stage 2 below.

Stage 2 (Formal Complaint)

Send your complaint to the Executive Director in writing, giving as much detail as possible. If there is some reason why you cannot send a written complaint, please let us know. We will arrange for you to speak to the Executive Director (or in his absence the Deputy Director) in person or by telephone. The purpose of this interview will be solely to put your complaint in writing. You will be sent a copy and asked to sign it.

The Executive Director will then investigate the complaint and attempt to resolve it. SIA will ensure that you get a response in writing within a month of your formal complaint being received. The response will say what investigations have been carried out and what action, if any, is proposed to resolve the matter. The response will normally be in writing.

If you are not satisfied at this stage you should ask for the matter to be dealt with under Stage 3 of the Complaints Procedure.

Stage 3 (Complaints Panel Hearing)

If you say that you are not satisfied with the response to your formal complaint, the Executive Director will immediately refer your complaint to the SIA Governing Council's Complaints Panel, sending copies of the complaint and any related materials to Panel members. The Chair of the Panel will inform you of what is being done.

The Complaints Panel will normally consist of the Chair (or one of the Vice Chairs in his/her absence), the two Vice Chairs and one other Council member.

Where applicable the Panel will contact any staff member(s) involved in the complaint for their account of the matter. Staff members will be given the opportunity to put their point of view by written statement or by presentation to the Panel.

Where a complaint involves a matter of policy or procedure, the Executive Director, along with relevant staff member(s) should put their point of view.

The Complaints Panel will notify you of its views and its decision within a month of being notified of the complaint. It will also notify its findings to the Governing Council.

Stage 4 (Governing Council)

If you are still not satisfied you may ask the Complaints Panel to refer your complaint to the Governing Council. Your complaint will be added to the agenda of the next scheduled Governing Council meeting after your referral. The Council will be presented with copies of the complaint and any related materials.

The Chair of the Governing Council will inform you of its decision within a week of the Council meeting.

Recording and Monitoring Complaints against SIA

All complaints will be kept on file, including those that were resolved informally. We regard the recording of complaints as good practice to enable us to monitor them. This will help us to identify and remedy any weaknesses in SIA's systems and procedures or in staff training.