

MP007: Issue 3

Complaints Procedure

Approved by Council

Date: August 2013

Review:

August 2015

Scope

This procedure defines how The Society records and responds to complaints. It defines the process, responsibilities and recording of complaints, the investigation of problems, response to the complainant and analysis and reporting for management corrective actions and process improvement purposes.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Purpose
3. Definitions
4. Responsibilities
5. Procedure

Appendix 1: The Complaints Process

Appendix 2: The Complaints Form

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Complaints are a valuable resource for improvement of The Society's processes and services to the members and meeting its objectives. A negative feedback or complaint if handled well can and will improve the perception of The Society. Conversely, a complaint ignored or handled badly can do much damage. Positive Feedback is also important and must be recorded and communicated because it will enhance moral and provides an opportunity to identify and build on successful initiatives and activities.
- 1.2 A complaint should always result in consideration of corrective action.
- 1.3 Feedback and complaint issues raised during meetings should be recorded in the minutes and progressed in subsequent meetings and should not be included in the system unless a response to an individual not present is required.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 To record all significant feedback and all complaints relevant to The Society's activities.
- 2.2 To respond to complaints in a timely manner to the satisfaction of The Society and where possible the complainant
- 2.3 To use the data from both negative and positive feedback to benefit The Society and the membership by identifying and implementing improvement to the systems and procedures. The objective is to avoid the recurrence of problems.

3. Definitions

3.1 Feedback

Any significant information relating to The Society's activities but in particular complaints and/or suggestions concerning the Distinctions processes should be considered as feedback and must be recorded.

3.2 Volunteers.

A volunteer for the purposes of this procedure is anyone acting for The Society in an unpaid official role including elected or appointed members of Council, members of assessment panels or any of the Society's committees.

3.3 Staff

For the purposes of this procedure staff are all paid employees of The Society including sub-contractors.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Volunteers and Staff

It is the responsibility of volunteers and staff as defined in sections 3.2 and 3.3 above to:-

- Be familiar with this procedure and to comply with it.
- Ensure that all complaints are recorded according to the system.
- Maintain strict confidentiality
- Assist in the investigation

4.2 President

- 4.2.1 Respond to major complaints.

4.2.2 Review each completed process for adequacy and completeness of investigation, corrective action and response

4.2.3 Sign off to denote completion

4.3 Director General

4.3.1 Receive all recorded complaints.

4.3.3 If necessary consult with the President, and if appropriate, depending on the seriousness of the issue, delegate actions as necessary.

4.3.4 Manage the investigation, response to the complainant, and corrective actions arising for the optimum benefit to the Society.

4.2.5 Approve the response to the complainant. In consultation with the President if necessary

4.2.6 Consider preventive actions i.e. applicability of the corrective action to related areas.

4.2.7 Report to Council on complaints received and Corrective Actions proposed and completed.

4.3 Distinctions Manager

Manage the investigation and response to complaints on the Distinctions processes as agreed with the Chair of the DAB, the Director General and/or the President.

5. Procedure

5.1 Receipt

5.1.1 The process is shown by the flow chart in the Appendix.

5.1.2 Anyone receiving a complaint must respond sympathetically and explain to the complainant that the Society has a formal system which is used to investigate and respond to complaints when it is appropriate

5.1.3 Record the following information using form MF009

- Name and membership number
- A brief description of the problem
- Any comments on the problem made to the complainant. (If possible comment should be avoided.)

5.1.4 Send the information (form) to Bath, attention of the Director General within 3 days of receipt.

5.2 Initial Response (complaints)

The initial response by the recipient should be:-

“The Society has a formal system for investigating and dealing with complaints. I will make a note of the problem and inform the Director General who will acknowledge receipt, look into your problem and reply to you. You can expect an initial response within 5 to 10 days”.

5.3 Investigation

Investigation of a complaint shall include the following:-

- A review of the facts surrounding the problem.
- Identification of the cause or causes.
- Identification of corrective actions to prevent recurrence.

- Consideration of other possible similar problems in related areas.
- A brief signed and dated written report covering the above.

5.4 Review, Analysis and Reporting

The purpose of review is to ensure that all complaints and positive feedback are dealt with to best effect and maximum benefit. Reporting should be to Council at regular intervals for information and for actions to be agreed or endorsed.

5.5 Final Response

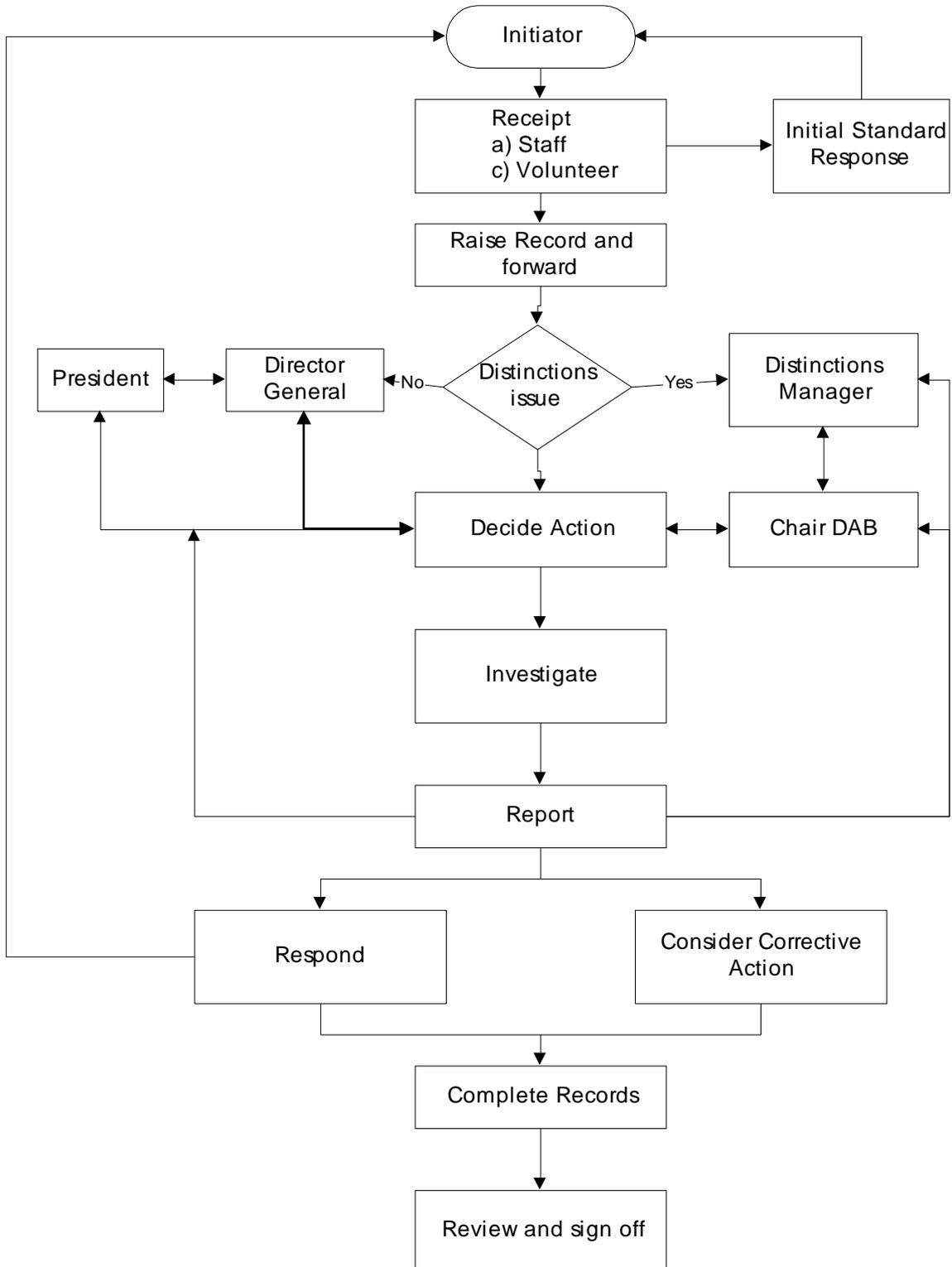
The Director General shall respond to the complainant or agree and delegate a response action as appropriate to the seriousness of the complaint. The target timescale for response is 30 days.

5.6 Distinctions Feedback

Issues raised at Advisory Days or Workshops or in 'one to one' should be resolved at the meeting and not recorded in the system unless there are general lessons to be learned or concerns to be resolved.

Appendix 1

The Feedback Complaints Process



Appendix 2

The Royal Photographic Society Complaint Form		Reference No:
Received From: Membership Number: Address:		Recorded By:
Tel:	FAX:	Email:
		Date:
Summary of the Complaint		
Initial Response:		
By:		Date:
Final Response:		
By:		Date:
Investigation Report:	Justified: Y/N	Category:
By:		Date:
Corrective Action:		
By: Verified:		Completion Date: Date:
Related Areas:		
Final Review: By:		Date: