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Author(s):	Joanna Shakespeare
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ARTP Complaints Policy

1. Purpose

This policy is intended to ensure that ARTP handle complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff receiving or managing complaints from the public or membership made to or about us, regarding our activities, services and complaint handling.

3. Organisational commitment

ARTP views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- To make sure everyone at ARTP knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

4. Terms and definitions

4.1. Complaint

Expression of dissatisfaction made to or about us, our products activities, services or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.

4.2. Dispute

An unresolved complaint escalated either within or outside of our organisation.

4.3. Feedback

Opinions, comments and expressions of interest or concern, made directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, to or about us, about our activities, services or complaint handling where a response is not explicitly or implicitly expected or legally required.



5. Facilitating complaints

5.1. People Focus

We are committed to seeking and receiving feedback and complaints about our activities, systems, practices, procedures, and complaint handling. Any concerns raised in feedback or complaints will be dealt with within a reasonable time frame.

People making complaints will be:

- Provided with information about our complaint handling process.
- Provided with multiple and accessible ways to make complaints.
- Listened to, treated with respect by staff and actively involved in the complaint process where possible and appropriate, and
- Provided with reasons for our decision/s and any options for redress or review.
- Provided with an opportunity to make complaints anonymously if/where possible.

5.2. No detriment to people making complaints

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that people making complaints are not adversely affected because a complaint has been made by them or on their behalf.

5.3. Anonymous complaints

We accept anonymous complaints and will carry out an investigation of the issues raised where there is enough information provided.

5.4. Accessibility

We will ensure that information about how and where complaints may be made to or about us is well publicised. We will ensure that our systems to manage complaints are easily understood and accessible to everyone, particularly people who may require assistance. If a person prefers or needs another person or organisation to assist or represent them in the making and/ or resolution of their complaint, we will communicate with them through their representative if this is their wish. Anyone may represent a person wishing to make a complaint with their consent (e.g. advocate, family member, legal or community representative, member of Parliament, another organisation).

5.5. No charge

Complaining to us is free.



6. Responding to complaints

6.1. Early resolution

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at first contact with ARTP.

6.2. Responsiveness

We will promptly acknowledge receipt of complaints. We will assess and prioritise complaints in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the issues raised. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security the response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately. We are committed to managing people's expectations, and will inform them as soon as possible, of the following:

- The complaints process.
- The expected time frames for our actions.
- The progress of the complaint and reasons for any delay.
- Their likely involvement in the process, and
- The possible or likely outcome of their complaint.

We will advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to deal with any part of their complaint and provide advice about where such issues and/or complaints may be directed (if known and appropriate). We will also advise people as soon as possible when we are unable to meet our time frames for responding to their complaint and the reason for our delay.

6.3. Objectivity and fairness

We will address each complaint with integrity and in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner. We will ensure that the person handling a complaint is different from any staff member whose conduct or service is being complained about. Conflicts of interests, whether actual or perceived, will be managed responsibly. Internal reviews of how a complaint was managed will be conducted by a person other than the original decision maker.

7. Confidentiality

We will protect the identity of people making complaints where this is practical and appropriate. Personal information that identifies individuals will only be disclosed or used by the ARTP as permitted under the relevant data protection requirements.



7.1. Managing unreasonable conduct by people making complaints

We are committed to being accessible and responsive to all people who approach us with feedback or complaints. At the same time our success depends on:

- Our ability to do our work and perform our functions in the most effective and efficient way possible.
- The health, safety and security of our representatives, and
- Our ability to allocate our resources fairly across all the complaints we receive.

When people behave unreasonably in their dealings with us, their conduct can significantly affect the progress and efficiency of our work. As a result, we will take proactive and decisive action to manage any conduct that negatively and unreasonably affects us and will support our representatives to do the same in accordance with this policy.

8. Complaint management system

8.1. Introduction

Written complaints may be sent to ARTP at The Association for Respiratory Technology & Physiology, c/o Executive Business Support Limited, City Wharf, Davidson Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS14 9DZ or by e-mail at admin@artp.org.uk include complaint in the subject line.

Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 01543 442141/0845 226 3062 or in person to any of ARTP's Board or Council members or at any of our events or activities.

8.2. Receipt of complaints

Unless the complaint has been resolved at the outset, we will record the complaint and its supporting information. The record of the complaint will document:

- The contact information of the person making a complaint.
- Issues raised by the person making a complaint and the outcome/s they want.
- Any other relevant information.
- Any additional support the person making a complaint requires.

8.3. Acknowledgement of complaints



We will acknowledge receipt of each complaint promptly, and preferably within 5 working days. Consideration will be given to the most appropriate medium (e.g. email, letter) for communicating with the person making a complaint.

8.4. Initial assessment and addressing of complaints

8.4.1. Initial assessment

After acknowledging receipt of the complaint, we will confirm whether the issue/s raised in the complaint is/are within our control. We will also consider the outcome/s sought by the person making a complaint and, where there is more than one issue raised, determine whether each issue needs to be separately addressed.

When determining how a complaint will be managed, we will consider:

- How serious, complicated or urgent the complaint is.
- Whether the complaint raises concerns about people's health and safety.
- How the person making the complaint is being affected.
- The risks involved if resolution of the complaint is delayed, and
- Whether a resolution requires the involvement of other organisations.

8.4.2. Addressing complaints

After assessing the complaint, we will consider how to manage it. To manage a complaint, we may:

- Give the person making a complaint information or an explanation.
- Gather information from the product, person or area that the complaint is about, or
- Investigate the claims made in the complaint.

We will keep the person making the complaint up to date on our progress, particularly if there are any delays. We will also communicate the outcome of the complaint using the most appropriate medium. Which actions we decide to take will be tailored to each case and take into account any statutory requirements.

8.4.3. Providing reasons for decisions

Following consideration of the complaint and any investigation into the issues raised, we will contact the person making the complaint and advise them:

- The outcome of the complaint and any action we took.
- The reason/s for our decision.



- The remedy or resolution/s that we have proposed or put in place, and
- Any options for review that may be available to the complainant, such as an internal review, external review or appeal.

8.5. Closing the complaint, record keeping, redress and review

We will keep comprehensive records about:

- How we managed the complaint.
- The outcome/s of the complaint (including whether it or any aspect of it was substantiated), any recommendations made to address problems identified and any decisions made on those recommendations, and
- Any outstanding actions that need to be followed up.

We will ensure that outcomes are properly implemented, monitored and reported to the complaint handler.

8.6. Alternative avenues for dealing with complaints

The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx

8.7. The three levels of complaint handling

We aim to resolve complaints at the first level, early resolution. Wherever possible representatives will be adequately equipped to respond to complaints, including being given appropriate authority, training and supervision.

Where this is not possible, we may decide to escalate the complaint to the ARTP Chair. This second level of complaint handling will provide for the following internal mechanisms:

- Assessment and possible investigation of the complaint and decision/s already made, and/or
- Facilitated resolution (where a person not connected with the complaint reviews the matter and attempts to find an outcome acceptable to the relevant parties).

Where a person making a complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome of ARTP's review of their complaint, they may request that the complaint is reviewed at Council level.

9. Accountability and learning



9.1. Analysis and evaluation of complaints

We will ensure that complaints are recorded in a systematic way so that information can be easily retrieved for reporting and analysis.

Regular reports will be run on:

- The number of complaints received.
- The outcome of complaints, including matters resolved at the frontline.
- Issues arising from complaints.
- Systemic issues identified, and
- The number of requests we receive for internal and/or external review of our complaint handling.

Regular analysis of these reports will be undertaken to monitor trends, measure the quality of our service and make improvements. Both reports and their analysis will be provided to the ARTP Board and Council for review.

9.2. Monitoring of the complaint management system

We will continually monitor our complaint management system to:

- Ensure its effectiveness in responding to and resolving complaints, and
- Identify and correct deficiencies in the operation of the system.
- Monitoring may include the use of audits and complaint satisfaction surveys.

9.3. Continuous improvement

We are committed to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of our complaint management system. To this end, we will:

- Support the making and appropriate resolution of complaints.
- Implement best practices in complaint handling.
- Regularly review the complaints management system and complaint data, and
- Implement appropriate system changes arising out of our analysis of complaints data and continual monitoring of the system.





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Contributing Committees	
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ARTP c/o Executive Business Support
Unit E1, City Wharf, Davidson Road,
Lichfield, Staffordshire WS14 9DZ
Tel: 01543 442141 Fax: 0121 355 2420
e-mail: admin@artp.org.uk
www.artp.org.uk