

Queen's Park Bangladesh Association Complaints Policy & Procedure

1. Introduction

Queen's Park Bangladesh Association (QPBA) 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. We are committed to providing high quality services to our membership and members of the public who use the Charity's services or engage with us.

Our aim is to resolve issues of dissatisfaction as close to the initial point of contact as possible and to conduct thorough and fair investigations of complaints so that, where appropriate, we can make evidence-based decisions on the facts of each individual case.

The purpose of this policy is to:

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

2. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of QPBA. This could concern the day-to-day running of the charity or may refer to the behaviour or conduct of a member of the QPBA team (staff and/or volunteers). If your complaint is related to the safety of a child/ children, or concerns a matter that could put a child/children at risk, then we will follow the procedures outlined in the QPBA Safeguarding Policy.

3. Where Complaints Come From

Complaints may come from any beneficiary, client or resident and from both adults and children. A complaint can be received verbally, online, by phone, by email or in writing. This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should use QPBA's Discipline and Grievance policies.

4. Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

5. Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Coordinator

6. Making a complaint

You can complain in person, by phone, in writing, or by email. It is easier for us to resolve complaints if you raise them as soon as you become aware of the issue, and directly to the service concerned. Please talk to a member of staff within the department you are complaining about so that they can try to resolve any problems on the spot.

When complaining, please tell us:

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

If you have relevant documentary evidence to support your complaint, it should be submitted with the complaint form. The evidence submitted should be as concise as possible and relevant to the complaint. Unreasonable quantities of evidence or evidence which is deemed not to be relevant to your complaint may not be considered. The complaint form and any supporting documents will be seen by the person investigating your complaint, by anyone named in the complaint and by relevant staff in the department(s) being complained about. Once completed, this form should be submitted;

By email: info@queensparkba.org

By post: QPBA, Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Rd, London W2 5ES

7. Complaints procedure

If you receive a complaint (whether written or verbal), you must:

- Note the facts of the complaint.
- Request the complainant's name, address, email contact and telephone number on the complaint form.
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to QPBA.
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by email or by post so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

For further guidelines about handling verbal complaints, see Appendix 1.

8. Resolving Complaints

8.1. Stage one

In many cases*, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed on to the Coordinator within one week.

On receiving the complaint, the Coordinator will record it in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, they delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints should be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached.

Ideally, complainants should receive a definitive reply within two weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

The only exception to this is if the charity has reasonable cause to believe the complainant is vexatious. If this is the case, the complaint will still be logged, with evidence given for why this is believed to be the case. The Coordinator and Chair of the Management Committee will be notified of any such complaints.

**If the complaint concerns a safeguarding matter, then the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed and we will follow the procedures outlined in the QPBA Safeguarding Policy.*

8.2. Stage Two

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint be reviewed at the Board level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chair of Trustees who should deal with all Stage 2 complaints.

The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply. The Chair of Trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within two weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

9. Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

Appendix 1

Practical Guidance for Handling Verbal Complaints

- Remain calm and respectful at all times when handling a complaint.
- Listen - allow the person to talk about the complaint in their own words.
- Be aware that sometimes a person just wants to "let off steam".
- Don't debate the facts in the first instance, especially if the person is angry.
- Show an interest in what is being said.
- Obtain details about the complaint before any personal details by completing the complaint form.
- Ask for clarification wherever necessary.
- Show that you have understood the complaint by reflecting back what you have noted down.
- Acknowledge the person's feelings (even if you feel that they are being unreasonable) - you can do this without making a comment on the complaint itself or making any admission of fault on behalf of the organisation e.g. "I understand that this situation is frustrating for you".
- If you feel that an apology is deserved for something that was the responsibility of your organisation, then apologise.
- Ask the person what they would like done to resolve the issue explain about the complaint form that must be completed and submitted.
- Be clear about what you can do, how long it will take and what it will involve.
- Don't promise things you can't deliver.
- Give clear and valid reasons why requests cannot be met.
- Make sure that the person understands what they have been told.
- Wherever appropriate, inform the person about the available avenues of review or appeal.

QPBA Complaint Form

Personal Details

First Name:	
Surname/family name:	
Address:	
Email:	
Telephone:	

Your Complaint

A. Please provide a summary of your complaint below (300 words max).

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B. Please describe what action you have taken to pursue the complaint to date (200 words max)

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C. Please provide a brief explanation of the issue(s) you consider to be unresolved (400 words max).

D. Please explain how you would like your complaint to be resolved (200 words max).

E. If you are submitting a complaint more than six months from when you first became aware of the problem, please provide a brief explanation for the delay (200 words max).

Supporting documentation

Do you wish to submit any supporting documentation for consideration? Yes | No

If "Yes", please tick here to indicate that what you have submitted is complete ☐

Signature: _____

Date: _____