

COMPLAINTS POLICY



What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, either written or spoken. A complaint can be made by an individual or a group. You may wish to complain if you are not satisfied with the service you have received from Axis or the way you have been treated by Axis representatives, such as volunteers or staff.

Principles of Axis' Complaints Procedure

- Axis recognises that complaints are an important part of user feedback
- All complaints will be investigated fully and fairly
- Complaints will be dealt with in confidence
- If the person making the complaint is not happy with the result of the response to their complaint, they will have the right to appeal.

Axis is committed to ensuring that its services are of the highest quality. This procedure enables Axis to respond to complaints in a fair and proper way and to know when and why people are not satisfied with its services, so they can be improved.

Who can make a Complaint?

This procedure is for members of the public who have received any form of service from Axis.

It does not cover complaints made by Axis staff, volunteers and trustees who need to follow agreed grievance, disciplinary or other internal procedures details of which are available in the Axis Staff or Volunteer Handbooks.

Section A - Complaints about Axis

There are four stages that you can go through to try and resolve any problems. If you need a sign or community language interpreter or have literacy problems, please let us know and every reasonable effort will be made to provide appropriate assistance.

The four stages are:

Stage one (Informal)

Speak to the individual(s) concerned or their line manager and try to resolve the complaint informally. The individual concerned is required to tell you their name and who their line manager is if you ask them. However, you can also refer to the Chair, Mr. Hakan Gokce at hakan.gokce@axiseducationaltrust.org to find out an appropriate manager for you to contact.

If you are not satisfied with the response you have received at stage one (informal) you should then use stage two of this procedure.

Stage two (formal)

1. Outline the details of your complaint by letter or email and send it to the Trustees, Axis Educational Trust, 16-17 Grand Arcade, London, N12 0EH or email trustees@axiseducationaltrust.org.

Your complaint will be acknowledged in the same format it has been received (ie, by letter or email) within seven working days from the date it is received. This acknowledgement will contain the following information:

- o Name, address and telephone number of the person who will investigate the complaint
 - o The date the investigation will start
 - o What support you can receive during the process of the complaint, e.g. making information accessible, access to interpreters.
2. You will receive a full response in writing within 21 working days from the start of the investigation from the person appointed to investigate the complaint. The response will include the following information:
 - o Details of the investigation
 - o A decision about whether the complaint was upheld or not
 - o The reason for the decision
 - o The redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you e.g. an apology, additional help or directing to other sources of advice or support
 - o Any other action that may be taken in light of the complaint
 - o If it is not possible to provide a full answer to your complaint within 21 working days, the letter/email will outline reasons why and give a date by which a full answer is expected.

Stage three (Appeal)

1. If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint then outline the reasons for your dissatisfaction by letter or email within seven working days of receiving it to the Chair of the Trustees.
2. An Appeal Panel normally of three members, including a trustee where appropriate, will be convened to consider your appeal. The Chair will be responsible for ensuring the panel is appropriately representative. Panel membership will be restricted to people who have had no previous involvement in the complaint.
3. Members of the Appeal Panel will:
 - o Read through the necessary papers
 - o Speak to relevant individuals involved with the complaint
 - o Make a final decision.
4. The chair of the Appeal Panel will write to you within 28 working days of receiving your appeal, to confirm:
 - o The final decision about the complaint
 - o The reason for the decision

- The redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you e.g. an apology, additional help or directing to other sources of advice or support
- Any action that may be taken in light of the complaint.

Review of the process

1. If, once you have been through stages 1 to 3 of the complaints procedure, you are not satisfied that Axis has followed the process properly and dealt with your complaint fairly, then you can outline the reasons for your dissatisfaction by letter or email within 21 working days of receiving the Appeal Panel report. This should be sent to the Chair of the Trustees to request a review of the complaint handling process, not a further investigation of the complaint.
2. The Chair will make arrangements for a review of the complaint handling process, and will inform you of how the review will be carried out.
3. The decision of the process review will be final. The Chair will communicate in writing within 28 working days of receiving your appeal:
 - Whether or not the procedure has been followed properly and fairly
 - The reason for the decision
 - The redress, if appropriate, which will be offered to you
 - What action may be taken in light of the review.

Time Limits

In circumstances where time limits cannot be met due to unforeseen circumstances, you will be notified in writing. The reasons for the delay with adjusted timescales will be supplied by the person responsible for handling the complaint.

Taking a complaint further

If, after following this procedure, you wish to take your complaint further, there are several regulators you can refer to.

The Charity Commission

This is the regulator for charities in England in Wales. You should contact them if you are unhappy with how Axis has dealt with your complaint:

<http://forms.charitycommission.gov.uk/contact-us/general-enquiries/report-a-concern-about-a-charity/raising-concerns-about-a-charity/>

If your complaint concerns Axis Scotland, you should contact the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR): <http://www.oscr.org.uk/charities/raise-a-concern-about-a-charity>

[Next Review Date: September 2024](#)