



## **Complaints Policy**

**Approval date: 30th April 2024**

**Review Date: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2027**

## **Policy Summary**

This policy sets out how we handle complaints and positive customer feedback.

## **Equalities**

This policy fully complies with Lintel Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy.

## **Privacy**

This policy fully complies with Lintel Trust's Data Protection Policy, the General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR] and good practice.

## **Policy Owner**

Lintel Trust's Business Manager

## **Approved by**

Lintel Trust's Board of Trustees

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This policy has been devised to show how Lintel Trust responds to complaints and other customer feedback.

## **2. PRINCIPLES**

The following principles govern the operation of this policy:

- Customer feedback about the service we provide is welcomed, noted, acknowledged and reviewed
- Feedback received about policies, service quality and procedures is taken into account at the next relevant review
- Front line employees are encouraged to offer and implement immediate responses to complaints where appropriate and meeting the reasonable expectations of the customer

## **3. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that:

- Wherever practical, complaints are resolved informally by front line employees
- People providing feedback know that their comments will be used to evaluate the quality of our services and to influence reviews
- Where complaints are referred to external agencies we are able to provide records of each case to assist further investigation
- We produce clear and accurate final decisions on complaints
- People making complaints are advised clearly about the process and their opportunities to escalate the case to independent authorities

## **4. APPROACH AND METHOD**

The Lintel Trust Board of Trustees in its formal approval of the policy acknowledges that it accepts full responsibility for its implementation. Day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this policy lies with the most senior member of Lintel Trust staff. All relevant employees have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is applied as instructed.

The policy will be implemented using the following approaches:

- We shall devise systems and procedures for compliance with the policy

- We shall record positive feedback, constructive criticism and complaints impartially
- We shall review procedures at least every three years and implement measures to improve efficiency and customer satisfaction
- Complaints will be processed in accordance with the Model Complaints Handling Procedure issued by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman [SPSO] and adopted as the Lintel Trust Complaints Policy
- We shall provide training, information and support to staff to build confidence and skill in implementing the Complaints Policy

### **Lintel Trust Complaints Procedure**

Stage One	Complaint is received, recorded, and resolved by front line staff, or the person receiving the complaint.
Stage Two	If the matter is not resolved, it will be escalated to the Business Manager, who will send an acknowledgment within 5 working days of receipt. An investigation will take place and a response will be provided within 20 working days.  In the event that the Business Manager was the first point of contact, the complaint will be moved to Stage Three.
Stage Three	In a more complex case, if still unresolved, the matter will be taken to the SPA Director for further investigation. A full response will be provided within 20 working days.  At this stage the Lintel Trust Board will be notified of the complaint and action taken.
Stage Four	The complainant may escalate their complaint to the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

## **5. MONITORING, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING**

The following areas will be subject to monitoring:

- Provision of training and/ or information to staff
- The need for review of procedures
- Feedback will be analysed for trends in the nature and frequency of subjects mentioned

- Number of complaints, numbers resolved at each stage, numbers referred to OSCR or other external agencies, and any unresolved at the time of reporting
- Assessment of the extent to which complaints are resolved at each stage to the satisfaction of the complainer

Internally, management of complaints will be monitored by the Business Manager and reported upon to the SPA Director. If there are areas of significant concern, these will be dealt with by the SPA Director, who will ensure that the Business Manager reports such matters to the Lintel Trust Board and, if necessary, the LHCPG Board.

Any matter which demonstrates a serious failure of internal controls should also be reported immediately to the Business Manager.

Actions may be taken against employees or Board members who act in contravention of this policy in the performance of their duties or decision making on behalf of Lintel Trust. Actions could be measures to improve the individual's work performance, or disciplinary action, or other measures. Contravention of this policy should be understood to include contravention or disregard of any associated procedures and other guidance.

Audits of policy compliance may be conducted by the Internal Auditor and/ or the Strategy and Business Support Team. Audit results will be reported to the Audit Committee.

## **6. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

If after making a complaint to Lintel Trust, a complainer remains dissatisfied he/she may be able to refer the matter to the OSCR. Lintel Trust will advise complainers on the conclusion of a Stage 2 investigation that it is their right. Lintel Trust will also advise the complainer if a service other than OSCR would be more appropriate to consider the case.

## **7. REPEATED COMPLAINTS AND COMPLAINTS MADE IN AN UNACCEPTABLE MANNER**

A small minority of complaints may not be accepted. This will be the case when the same complaint has been addressed and we have given a final decision at the end of stage 2 of the CHP. We may also decline to consider complaints in which no clearly identifiable issue can be determined, or where the complaint continually raises new issues following completion of our investigations, or where the complainant's expectations are disproportionate to the issue raised.

## **8. POLICY AVAILABILITY**

This policy is available on request free of charge from Lintel Trust. A summary of this policy can be made available in a number of other languages and other formats on request.

## **9. POLICY REVIEW**

Lintel Trust undertakes to review this policy regularly, at least every three years, with regard to:

- Applicable legislation, rules, regulations and guidance
- Changes in the organisation
- Continued best practice

The review will be coordinated by Lintel Trust's Business Manager.