

Complaints Policy

Responsible Officer	Director	Policy Approved	Trustees
Review Required	Annual	Date	25 th February 2025
Complaints Policy			

1. Background

- 1.1. SCL's mission is *'to inspire those who are homeless or socially isolated by providing safe creative spaces. SCL offers opportunities for guests to access services that encourage their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. We are a diverse and inclusive community who are learning to reflect on our experiences, that through this, personal lives may be transformed and empowered.'*
- 1.2. Ensuring we deal with complaints and feedback in a positive way is at the heart of our mission. SCL's defined impact through use of the Transformational Index (TI) is 'Inspiration within SoundCafe multiplies its creativity and feeds its diversity, while regular reflection leads to the empowerment of both its' guests and of its' volunteers.'
- 1.3. SCL sees a complaint as the opportunity to learn from a situation and to find positive steps about how we can improve and mitigate a re-occurrence.

2. Definition

2.1. A **complaint** is

- a statement in which an individual or organisation expresses their dissatisfaction with a particular situation.
- any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of SCL.

3. Policy

3.1. SCL adopts the following principles when addressing any complaint:

- provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and accessible to all
- publicises the policy so that anyone knows how to make a complaint in a way that is suitable for them
- ensures that all staff, volunteers and Trustees are aware of how to deal with a complaint
- investigates and deals with all complaints in a fair and timely manner
- wherever possible complaints to be resolved and relationships maintained in a positive and supportive manner
- recognition that we operate in a diverse community and that every person is an individual with different needs, preferences and abilities. This to be recognised when handling any complaint.

4. Scope

- 4.1. Complaints can be made by any individual or group who have an issue with the service or practices adopted by SCL.
- 4.2. It is our policy not to investigate anonymous complaints. However, where an anonymous report relates to a safeguarding issue then this will be dealt with in accordance with SCL Safeguarding Policy. Where possible every effort will be made to identify and support any individual, so they feel empowered and supported to make a complaint and have their voice heard.
- 4.3. Safeguarding complaints will be referred to the statutory authorities when the criteria for reporting are met.
- 4.4. This policy does not cover issues or concerns that relate to services provided by partner agencies working with SCL. In this instance information will be provided to an individual to signpost them to the appropriate agency policy.

5. Format of Complaints

Written Complaints

- 5.1. Complaints in writing should be made to the Director, SoundCafe Leicester, c/o St. Martins House, 7, Peacock Lane, Leicester, LE1 5PZ or via email rachel@soundcafe.org.uk. If the complaint is about the Director then it should be made to the Chair of Trustees either at the same address or email soundcafeleics@gmail.com.

Verbal Complaints

- 5.2. Where a complaint is received on the telephone or in person, the person receiving the complaint will:
 - write down the facts of the complaint and confirm the details back to the complainant to ensure they agree with the information noted down
 - take the complainants contact details including, name, address, contact telephone number
 - clarify the relationship of the complainant to SCL or any of its staff, volunteers or Trustees.
 - advise the complainant of the complaints policy and next steps
 - ask the complainant to confirm the details in writing as they are able
 - confirm our confidentiality policy and that details of the complaint will only be made available on a 'need to know' basis

6. Complaints Procedure

- 6.1. SCL is committed to working to high standards, we value complaints and use the information from them to help us improve our services. If something goes wrong and an

individual or group are not treated in a way they would expect we will encourage them to inform us.

6.2. In the first instance we will try to resolve any complaint made informally at the time it is raised. If we are unable to resolve at the point a complaint is raised or the issue is more complex than identifying an immediate response, the complaint will be addressed through a formal process.

6.3. The Director of SoundCafe will be advised of the complaint and will:

1. acknowledge the complaint within a week of receiving it
2. advice will be given on the timescale within which you as the complainant should receive a response, at the latest within one month of making the complaint
3. where a complaint is made against an individual that person will be seen by the Director and another member of staff or if appropriate Trustee. In this instance, it may be possible for the identity of the complainant to be withheld from the individual about whom the complaint has been made
4. in the event the complaint is about the Director this will be handled by two Trustees
5. a written response will made to the complainant, outlining the findings and any appropriate action taken
6. where a complaint cannot be fully investigated within the initial timescale advised, a holding letter or email will be sent
7. in the event that a complainant is not happy with the response received from the Director they can put an appeal in writing to the Chair of Trustees. The Trustee Board will appoint an independent person where there is an identified conflict of interest between the Chair of Trustees and the complainant.

6.4. In the event a complainant believes that SCL is not addressing their complaint or the complaint relates to SCL not 'doing what it claims to do' then a formal complaint can be made to the Charity Commission <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>