



COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Date agreed by Board of Trustees:	16 November 2020
Review Date:	November 2023
Responsible committee:	Board
Responsible officer:	Chief Executive

Introduction

The Thackray Museum of Medicine (TMM) is committed to providing a level of service which meets the satisfaction of all visitors to the Museum and users of our services. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our visitors, users, customers and stakeholders, including responding positively to complaints and by putting mistakes right.

TMM is a member of the Museum's Association and seeks to abide by the Code of Ethics for Museums, in particular with regard to upholding the highest levels of institutional integrity and personal conduct at all times.

TMM aims to ensure that:

- making a complaint is a simple process.
- all complaints are treated as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response.
- complaints are dealt with promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially.
- responses to complaints are handled correctly, for example, giving an apology or explanation where we have got things wrong, or information on action taken.
- we learn from complaints and use them to improve our service.
- Complaints and outcomes are properly recorded and monitored.

TMM recognises that many concerns will be raised informally and dealt with quickly, and our aim is to resolve complaints informally where possible, by:

- listening courteously to the complaint and arriving at as full an understanding of the problem as possible.
- courteously explaining the situation.
- taking action to put things right if appropriate.
- escalating the complaint if the complainant is not satisfied.

However, if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, the formal complaints policy should be followed.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, TMM defines a formal complaint as 'any expression of dissatisfaction that relates to the TMM's work and that requires a formal response'.

Within this definition, 'TMM's work' is understood to encompass all aspects of its business, including facilities and services, communications and the conduct of its officers, employees and volunteers.

Complaints which do not require a formal response (e.g. minor complaints or those that can be quickly and satisfactorily resolved through normal operations) are dealt with through the TMM's operational quality standards and systems.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Museums Association's Code of Ethics for Museums.

Responsibilities

TMM's formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

TMM's responsibility is to:

- Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing.
- Maintain a log of formal complaints and outcomes, reported annually to the Board of Trustees.
- Respond within a stated period of time.
- Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint.
- Take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- Bring their complaint in writing to TMM's attention within a month of the issue arising.
- Explain the problem as clearly as possible, including any action taken to date.
- Allow TMM a reasonable time to deal with the matter.
- Recognise that some circumstances may be beyond TMM's control.

All TMM staff are responsible for acknowledging any complaints received and managing them according to the procedure set out in this policy.

The Chief Executive of TMM is responsible for overseeing all complaints and ensuring that appropriate actions are taken to improve TMM's service. For more serious complaints, this may include escalation to the Board and/or inviting third parties to support scrutiny and resolution of the complaint.

Privacy and confidentiality

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and TMM maintain confidentiality, although the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Complainants will be made aware of any situations which may make confidentiality impossible.

The personal data of complainants will be managed according to TMM's GDPR policy, and all data kept for no longer than 2 years from resolution of the concern.

Complaints procedure

TMM acknowledges that complaints may be received through a variety of channels:

- Verbally from visitors to the Museum
- Verbally over the telephone
- Written on a feedback form during a visit to the Museum or an event.
- Written in email or letter to the info@thackraymuseum.org account or direct to a named staff contact.
- Contact form submitted through the TMM website.
- Written post on social media

If the concern cannot be resolved informally through these channels, the complainant will be asked to make their concern known formally by email or letter, marked confidential, to the contact details below:

Complaints
Thackray Museum of Medicine
141 Beckett Street
Leeds
LS9 7LN

info@thackraymuseum.org

The complaint will be **logged and acknowledged within 5 working days**. A formal response will be issued **within 20 working days** (if this is not possible within the time stated, the complainant will be notified, and the reasons given).

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to their concern, an internal review can be requested by contacting the Chief Executive of the Thackray Museum of Medicine, Edward Appleyard, at the above address.

November 2020

Appendix

Internal Protocols for review and escalation of serious complaints.

Qualifying Disclosures

Complaints relating to serious misconduct will be treated in line with the existing TMM's policy for employees, suppliers and contractors reporting legitimate concerns about 'qualifying disclosures'. These are defined as concerns made in the public interest, relating to any of the following being committed by employees or officers of the museum:

- A criminal offence
- A miscarriage of justice
- An act creating risk to health and safety.
- An act causing damage to the environment.
- Damaged breach of any other legal obligation; or
- Concealment of any of the above

Principles

Where a complaint relates directly to any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees or officers of the museum, the following principles will be adhered to:

- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the museum's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- The TMM reserves its right to seek redress in law for any malicious, or deliberately false allegation, or vexatious complaint, and to disclose details where there are grounds for believing the law to have been broken.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, employees should not agree to remain silent, they should report the matter to the Chief Executive Officer (or, in the case that the person in authority in question is the CEO, to the Chair of the Board of Trustees).

Procedure

The Line Manager of the person who is the subject of the complaint will carry out an initial investigation. If the subject of the complaint is the Chief Executive or a Trustee, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will carry out the initial investigation. If the subject of the complaint is the Chair, a task and finish group of Trustees will be formed to carry out the initial investigation.

Once reported, the complaint will then be investigated in full and, on conclusion of the investigation, the museum will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to any appropriate government department or regulatory agency.

If disciplinary action is required against any employee of the museum, the line manager (or the person who carried out the investigation) will ensure that the disciplinary procedure is invoked where appropriate.

On conclusion of any investigation, the complainant will be told the outcome of the investigation and what has been done or is proposed to be done about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

If the complainant reasonably believes that the appropriate action has not been taken, he/she should report the matter to the proper external authority. The Public Interest Disclosure Act sets out a number of bodies to which qualifying disclosures should be made, for example, HM Revenue & Customs.

END.

Review date	Reviewed by	Reason for amendments	Amendments
15/04/2024	Lee Dutton	Name change	CEO