

SOP no.		Version		Effective date	
Owner		Approver		Review date	

Purpose

To make sure every customer complaint is acknowledged quickly, looked into fairly, resolved where we can, and recorded, and that we learn from complaints to stop the same problem happening again.

Scope

Every complaint from a customer or client, in person, by phone, email, letter, online review or social media, about our products, services, staff or policies. It applies to every member of staff.

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Any staff member	Listens, records the complaint, resolves it on the spot where they can, and passes on anything they can't.
Complaints owner (manager)	Acknowledges, investigates and resolves complaints, keeps the customer updated, and closes the record.
Owner or senior manager	Handles escalated complaints, reviews trends every month, and makes sure fixes are carried out.

Definitions

Complaint: Any expression of dissatisfaction with our products, services, staff or handling of a complaint, where a response is expected.

Resolution: What we do to put things right, such as an apology, a repair, a replacement, a refund or a change to how we work.

What you need

- The complaints register, log or system
- Template acknowledgment and response messages
- Approval limits for refunds and goodwill gestures

Procedure

1. Listen and thank the customer

Let the customer explain without interrupting, thank them for telling you, and say sorry for their experience. Don't argue or blame.

2. Resolve it on the spot if you can

If the fix is simple and within your authority, such as a replacement or a small refund, do it straight away and record it.

3. Record the complaint

Log the customer's details, the date, what happened in their words, what they want, and any action taken, the same day.

- The customer's name and how to contact them
- The date, the channel and the staff involved
- What happened, in the customer's words
- What the customer wants to happen
- What was done straight away

4. Acknowledge it

If it isn't resolved on the spot, acknowledge it in writing within the time your policy sets, often one or two working days, with who is handling it and when they'll hear back.

5. Investigate

Gather the facts from staff, records and the customer. Stay fair and open-minded, and keep the customer updated if it takes longer than promised.

- Talk to the staff involved
- Check receipts, bookings, messages and camera footage where relevant
- Ask the customer for anything missing

6. Decide on a fair resolution

Decide what to do based on the facts and your policy, within your approval limits, and get approval for anything above them.

7. Respond to the customer

Explain what you found, what you'll do and when, in plain language. Tell them how to escalate if they're not satisfied.

- Say sorry where we got it wrong
- Explain what we found and what we'll do
- Give the date it'll be done, and who to contact

8. Escalate when needed

Pass to a senior manager if the customer isn't satisfied, the complaint is serious, or it involves a legal claim, safety or a staff member's conduct.

Caution: Complaints about safety, discrimination, privacy or a possible legal breach go to a senior manager straight away. Some may need reporting to a regulator.

9. Close and record the outcome

Record the resolution, the date and whether the customer accepted it, then close the complaint.

10. Review trends and fix causes

Each month, review complaints by type, product, site and cause, and agree changes to stop repeats.

Records

- The complaints register, with every complaint, action and outcome, kept for as long as your policy and local rules require.
- Correspondence with the customer.
- Approvals for refunds and goodwill gestures above staff limits.
- Monthly complaint trend reviews and the changes made.

Related documents

- Customer service standards

- Refunds and returns policy
- Privacy policy
- Cash handling procedure

Revision history

Version	Date	What changed	Approved by