



Glasgow Cognitive Therapy Centre Ltd

Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure

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WHO IS THIS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR?

Glasgow Cognitive Therapy Centre (GCTC) is primarily a training institution, but it also hires out consulting rooms to its own directors, tutors and supervisors and other independent therapists. This complaints procedure is not applicable to clients who may wish to complain about their therapist. If such clients have complaints to make they must make these directly to COSCA, BABCP or to BABCP whichever is the individual therapist regulating body. (*addresses supplied*). This procedure is for students on courses run by the organization.

Glasgow Cognitive Therapy Centre (GCTC) is committed to providing high quality services to our students from enrolment to graduation. We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. This document describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you about how we will handle your complaint, and what you can expect from us. A copy of this document is posted on GCTC's website under the heading 'Complaints Procedure'. It is also available on the wall along with other relevant policies.

WHAT IS A COMPLAINT? AND WHAT CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

You can complain about things such as:

- The quality and standard of any service we provide whether by members of staff, trainers, supervisors or by any volunteers.
- The quality of facilities and learning resources.
- The quality and standards of academic services and personal support services available to you.
- The quality and standards of administrative processes.
- Unfair treatment by a student or staff member.

Your complaint may involve more than one of GCTC's services or be about someone working directly on its behalf.

WHAT CAN I NOT COMPLAIN ABOUT?

There are some things we cannot deal with through our complaints handling procedure. These include:

- A routine first-time request for a service
- A request for information or an explanation of policy or practice
- A request under freedom of information or data protection legislation
- Requests for compensation from GCTC.

- Things that are covered by academic appeals, such as academic judgements and decisions.
- An issue which is being, or has been, considered by a court or tribunal.
- An attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision following an investigation.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

WHO CAN COMPLAIN?

Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by the services of GCTC can make a complaint, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. If you are making a complaint on someone else's behalf you will need their personal written consent.

HOW DO I COMPLAIN?

You can complain in person, by phone, in writing, or by email and it is easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly and directly to the service concerned. So please talk to a member of GCTC who can try to resolve any problems on the spot. If you are not satisfied after that, your complaint will normally be submitted in writing. However, if the complainant is unable to write for any reason then we will accept a complaint verbally in a meeting that is minuted by a member of staff. When complaining, tell us:

- Your full name and address.
- As much as you can about the complaint.
- What has gone wrong.
- How you want us to resolve the matter.
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THIRD PARTY AND ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

Complaints by third parties on behalf of a complainant should have the written consent of the complainant, unless for some reason that is difficult. The reason should be made clear, e.g literacy or language difficulties.

It is accepted that there may be occasions when a complainant wishes to remain anonymous. We have positioned a box in the kitchen in which anonymous complaints can be placed. Anonymous complaints should give as much information as possible or it could prove difficult to investigate.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR COMPLAINTS

It is also recognised that some individuals may find the process of complaining daunting for whatever reason and advice will be given to direct them to appropriate support.

We are committed to making our service easy to use for all. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help you access and use our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another

language or format, such as large font, or Braille, please tell us in person, contact us on 0141 332 0229 or email us at admin@glasgowcognitivetherapycentre.com

HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO MAKE A COMPLAINT?

Normally, you must make your complaint within a year of:

- Finding out that you have a reason to complain
- The event you want to complain about, or claim to be a breach of COSCA's Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice which can be accessed in COSCA's website (*address supplied*)

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

GCTC will endeavour to address all complaints within six months of the event complained about.

INVESTIGATING AND RESOLVING THE COMPLAINT ONCE IT HAS BEEN MADE

What happens when I have complained?

Our complaints procedure has two stages and throughout any process complete confidentiality will, as far as possible, be upheld.

Stage one: informal frontline resolution

GCTC encourages complaint resolution as soon as possible and as near to the source as possible, i.e. with the, supervisor, trainer, admin, or Director involved, and aims to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. Advice should first be sought informally, face to face, by phone, in writing or by email with the director, Heather Davis. This could mean a speedy apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem. This could result in resolution within five working days unless there are exceptional circumstances, but you may choose to bypass this stage, in which case the complaint moves on to formal investigation.

If your complaint is about the Director then you can immediately refer the complaint to the Independent Complaint Person

Stage two: Formal investigation

The complainant should write to the Director (*see details above*) to ask for a formal investigation.

Investigation of the complaint will usually be undertaken by the Director or by an associate appointed by them, provided that they have no conflict of interest in the process. The investigating director will acknowledge your complaint and discuss your complaint with you within seven working days and following that you will be told what is proposed to be done about it and what the estimated timetable of stages is likely to be.

If the complaint is unusually complex or raises a wider complex problem within GCTC the directors may appoint an ad hoc panel of experienced individuals with no conflicts of interest in the proceedings and assembled for the purpose of investigation and resolution and both the complainant and anyone complained about will be notified of this in writing, by telephone or by email.

All parties involved in the stage two process will declare any conflict of interest to the investigators and will ensure that the complainant and the complained against and/or their representative will not come into contact at any time in the process of the investigation. At some point or at several points

the complainant or their representative will have the right to access the principal investigator or meet with the complaints panel and be accompanied by a supporter of their choice.

Both the complainant and the complained-against will be informed regularly of progress and of the estimated time of resolution. All efforts will be made to produce a final resolution within 21 days unless the circumstances of the complaint emerge as unusually complex. Throughout we will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress and if our investigation will take longer than 21 working days, we will tell you. However, the maximum time to be taken for any investigation or decision will be six months.

It should be noted that the complaints manager (Director) can halt the complaints process at any stage should it emerge that legal action is underway.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

Within 28 days of receiving notification of the completion of stage 2, an appeal can be made by any party involved, the complainant, the complained against, any participant in the investigation or any external supporter of these, to the GCTCs independent complaints person and it will be his/her decision as to whether and when it will be heard. The independent complaints person will consider the information already gathered and the reported findings; will decide if further investigation is necessary and will report back their findings to the complainant within 21 days.

CARRYING YOUR COMPLAINT TO AN EXTERNAL PROFESSIONAL BODY

Finally, if this does not meet with satisfaction you are advised that you can submit a complaint to COSCA under its Complaints Procedure, available on its website.

Whenever there has been a formal complaint an Outcome Report will be sent by GCTC to COSCA and COSCA will verify that the GCTC's complaints procedure has been followed and that the outcome is lawful, reasonable and properly explained (see 1.22 in COSCA's complaints procedure, accessible on its website). The Outcome Report will be sent within 28 days.

OUTCOME OF SUCCESSFUL COMPLAINT

Should the complaint be upheld there are various sanctions that can be applied..

If the complaint is about course procedures not being followed then this will be rectified immediately by the Directors who will offer a written apology and take steps to ensure procedures are adhered to. If there are personal complaints re tutors that are upheld the steps taken will reflect the issues complained about. These could range from a written apology to removal of that tutor/supervisor from teaching/ supervision. Such sanctions will be applied by the Directors who will also monitor the implementation of the sanctions by formally putting such sanctions on their regular meeting agendas on a monthly basis. When the sanctions are completed this will be communicated in writing to the complainant, and the complained against.

VARIATIONS TO THIS POLICY

GCTC reserves the right to terminate, replace, or vary this procedure.

The **Complaints Handling Policy** will be included in the **student handbook** and will be communicated to students as part of the induction process.

COSCA'S COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A copy of COSCA'S complaint procedure can be provided on request and found on the COSCA website.

The Independent Complaints Officer is

Maggi McAllister MacGregor

maggi01@btinternet.com

07946 168727

DIRECTORS

Heather Davis

heather@glasgowcognitivetherapycentre.com

07889827832

01413320229

PROFESSIONAL BODIES

COSCA

16 Melville Terrace

Stirling

FK82NE

t: 01786 475 140 f: 01786 446 207

BACP

15 St John's Business Park

Lutterworth

Leicestershire

LE1& 4HB

bacp@bacp.co.uk

01455 883300

BABCP

Imperial House

Hornby Street

BuryBL9 5BN

babcp@babcp.com

01617054304

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