



Policy Name	Complaints and Grievances
Approved by	FEAST Board inc. Trustees
Approval date	V.2 12th Oct '24
Next Review data	2026
Cross Reference	Whistleblowing Policy & Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and fair process for addressing complaints and grievances within FEAST. We are committed to ensuring that any issues or concerns raised by volunteers, trustees, members or other stakeholders are dealt with promptly, fairly, and confidentially.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers, trustees, contractors, and anyone working with or on behalf of FEAST. It covers grievances related to working conditions, treatment by colleagues or management, and any other issues arising in the workplace.

3. Definitions

- **Complaint:** A formal expression of dissatisfaction or concern about an aspect of the charity's operations or conduct.
- **Grievance:** A concern, problem, or complaint that an employee or volunteer has about their work, working conditions, or relationships with colleagues or managers.

4. Principles

- **Fairness:** All complaints and grievances will be handled in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner.
- **Confidentiality:** All information related to a complaint or grievance will be treated confidentially and shared only with those directly involved in resolving the issue.
- **Impartiality:** An impartial person (Team Leader/ Larder Manager or Trustee) will investigate the complaint or grievance to ensure unbiased handling.
- **Timeliness:** Complaints and grievances will be addressed promptly to prevent escalation and to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

5. Responsibilities

- **Management:** The management team and trustees are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented effectively and that all complaints and grievances are handled appropriately.
- **Volunteers:** All volunteers are responsible for raising any issues promptly and following the correct procedures outlined in this policy.

6. Procedure for Raising a Complaint or Grievance

1. Informal Resolution:

- Volunteers should first attempt to resolve the issue informally by discussing it with the person involved or their Team Leader or Larder Manager.
- If the issue concerns the Team Leader or Larder Manager the individual should speak to another member of management or a trustee.
- Many concerns can be resolved quickly through open and honest communication.

2. Formal Grievance:

- If the issue is not resolved informally, or if the individual prefers not to address it informally, they should submit a formal grievance in writing to their line manager or the complaints officer, Catherine Leeson via email to Catherine_leeson@yahoo.co.uk.
- The written grievance should include details of the issue, the parties involved, relevant dates times and locations and any steps already taken to resolve it.

3. Investigation:

- Receipt will be confirmed within 5 working days and an investigation will be undertaken.
- The investigation may involve interviews with the complainant, the subject of the complaint, and any witnesses.
- The investigator will review all relevant documents and evidence.

4. Outcome:

- After the investigation the outcome will be communicated to the complainant and the subject of the complaint.
- If the grievance is upheld, appropriate action will be taken to resolve the issue, which may include disciplinary action, mediation, or other remedies.
- If the grievance is not upheld, the reasons for this decision will be explained, and any next steps will be outlined.

7. Timeframes

- **Acknowledgement:** Within 5 working days of receiving the complaint or grievance.
- **Investigation and Outcome:** Within 1 month of acknowledging the complaint or grievance, or as soon as reasonably possible.

8. Confidentiality

FEAST will ensure that all complaints and grievances are handled confidentially. Information will only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis and with the consent of the parties involved, unless required by law.

9. Protection from Retaliation

No one who raises a complaint or grievance in good faith will suffer any form of retaliation or adverse treatment as a result. Any acts of retaliation will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

10. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or as necessary to ensure it remains effective, fair, and in line with current legal requirements.