

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The UK Branch of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is not a large-scale provider of direct services but does interact with external agencies and individuals. We aspire to excellence, treating everyone that we deal with in a consistently fair, transparent and courteous manner but there may be occasions when we fall short of this aspiration. If you are unhappy with your contact with the Foundation, we want to hear about it so that, with your feedback, we can improve our performance.

Complaints should be distinguished from criticisms of or disagreements with Foundation funding decisions.

In receiving a complaint we will aim to:

- deal with your complaint quickly;
- handle it fairly and politely;
- look into it fully;
- resolve the problem where possible.

We hope that most problems can be resolved informally with your usual contact. If, however, you are unhappy then you can use our complaints procedure as follows.

Stage 1

All complaints will be referred to the Office Manager, who is the Foundation's complaints co-ordinator and who can be contacted by letter, telephone or email. The contact details are given at the end of this document.

What can you expect from us:

- We will send you a letter telling you that we are looking into your complaint. We will send this letter within 5 working days of receiving your complaint. We will tell you: when you can expect a full reply and the name of the person who will be dealing with your complaint.
- We aim to give a full reply within 10 working days. Usually we can do this but if your complaint is complicated, it may take longer. If this happens, we will let you know within 10 working days explaining why a full reply will take longer, what we are doing to deal with your complaint, when you can expect an answer.
- If we agree that you had a good reason to complain, we will apologise and try to put things right as soon as we can. If we disagree or cannot put things right, we will tell you why.

Stage 2

If you are not happy with our reply, please contact the Office Manager who will at this stage involve the Director. You should explain why you are not happy with our reply and what action you think we should take.

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What can you expect from us:

- The Director will take a fresh look at the complaint and carry out an investigation. We will write to you with the results of the investigation within 15 working days.
- If the Director thinks you had good reason to complain, we will apologise and take action to put things right as soon as possible. If he disagrees or we cannot put things right, we will tell you why.

Stage 3

If you are not happy with the reply at stage 2, please contact us again. You should explain why you are not happy with our reply and what action you think we should take.

What can you expect from us:

- We will arrange a meeting of a Review Panel to look at your complaint. We will invite you to this meeting and you may bring along a friend or advocate for support.
- The Chair of the Review Panel will write to you with the decision of the Review Panel within 10 working days of the meeting.
- If the Panel thinks you had good reason to complain, the Chair will apologise and take action to put things right as soon as possible. If the Panel disagrees or we cannot put things right, the Chair will tell you why.

Redress

In most cases we hope that the complaint is resolved to the complainant's satisfaction by a sincere apology and remedial action. However, where the complainant has been caused excessive worry, distress or other inconvenience, remedy may be appropriate. The Director will determine the form and level of remedy.

Persistent complaints

We reserve the right to refuse to deal with complaints that are pursued in an unreasonable way.

Contacts

Office Manager/PA to the Director
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