



Granton Information Centre

Complaints Procedure

1. Purpose and scope

This procedure explains how clients, former clients, representatives and other service users can complain about advice, information, representation, customer care or another aspect of the service provided by Granton Information Centre (GIC). Employment matters raised by staff are dealt with under GIC's internal employment procedures.

2. Our commitment

Everyone has the right to complain. Making a complaint will not affect a person's current or future access to GIC's services. Complaints will be treated seriously, fairly, sensitively and as confidentially as possible. Information will only be shared with those who need it to consider and respond to the complaint.

GIC aims to resolve concerns promptly, put matters right where appropriate and learn from complaints to improve its services.

3. Help and accessibility

A complaint can be made verbally or in writing. A person will not be required to put a complaint in writing. GIC can help record a verbal complaint and will make reasonable adjustments where required. This may include accepting a complaint in another format, using an interpreter or allowing a representative to assist.

4. Informal resolution

Where appropriate, a concern may be resolved informally through discussion, explanation or immediate action. A person may ask to speak to the relevant GIC Manager (Advice Service Manager, Office and Administration Manager, Executive Manager). If the matter cannot be resolved informally, or the person would prefer not to use the informal route, it will be handled as a formal complaint.

5. Making a formal complaint

A formal complaint can be made:

- by email to info@gic.org.uk, with 'Complaint' in the subject line;
- by telephone or in person, by asking to speak to the relevant GIC Manager (Advice Service Manager, Office and Administration Manager, Executive Manager);
- by letter to Granton Information Centre, 134-138 West Granton Road, Edinburgh, EH5 1PE; or
- by requesting and completing a GIC complaints form.

The complaint should explain what happened, why the person is dissatisfied and what they would like GIC to do. GIC will not reject a complaint solely because some of this information is unavailable.

6. Complaints made on behalf of another person

A representative may complain on someone else's behalf. Before discussing confidential information, GIC may ask for the client's consent or other evidence that the representative is authorised to act. This will not prevent GIC from recording or considering a general concern about its services.

7. How formal complaints are handled

7.1 GIC will record the complaint and acknowledge it within five working days.

7.2 The complaint will be allocated to the relevant Manager, provided that person has not been directly involved in the matter. A complaint about the Executive Manager will be handled by the Chair of the Management Committee. Where there is another conflict of interest, the Chair will appoint a suitable person who has had no previous involvement.

- 7.3** The investigator may contact the complainant for further information, review relevant records and speak to staff or other people involved. The complainant and any staff member who is the subject of the complaint will be given a fair opportunity to provide relevant information.
- 7.4** GIC will aim to issue a full written response within 30 calendar days. If this is not possible because the matter is complex or further information is required, GIC will explain the reason for the delay, provide an updated response date and keep the complainant informed. Where regulatory rules require an earlier or absolute deadline, GIC will comply with that deadline.
- 7.5** The response will explain the findings, whether the complaint is upheld in full or in part, any action GIC will take and how to request a review. Where appropriate, GIC will apologise and take reasonable steps to put matters right.

8. Review of the complaint

A complainant who remains dissatisfied may request a review within four weeks of the date of GIC's response. The request should explain why they remain dissatisfied.

The review will be arranged under the direction of the Management Committee and conducted by a person who has had no previous involvement in the complaint. GIC will acknowledge the review request within five working days and aim to provide the review outcome within 20 working days. Any unavoidable delay will be explained and a revised response date provided.

9. Independent review

If the complainant remains dissatisfied after the internal review, they may ask within four weeks for the matter to be considered by an independent person. The Management Committee will appoint a suitably experienced person who is independent of GIC and has had no previous involvement in the complaint. The independent reviewer's remit and expected timescale will be confirmed in writing before the review begins.

10. Complaints about personal information

Complaints about how GIC has collected, used or shared personal information will be considered under this procedure and GIC's data-protection arrangements. A person who remains dissatisfied may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

- Website: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>
- Telephone: 0303 123 1113

11. Financial Ombudsman Service

Where a complaint concerns a regulated debt-advice activity that falls within the jurisdiction of the Financial Ombudsman Service, GIC will explain this in its final response. The complainant may normally refer the matter to the Financial Ombudsman Service if they are dissatisfied with GIC's final response or if GIC has not issued a final response within eight weeks.

A referral must normally be made within six months of the date of GIC's final response. The Financial Ombudsman Service will decide whether the complaint falls within its jurisdiction.

- Website: <https://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk/>
- Telephone: 0800 023 4567
- Email: complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk

12. Recording, monitoring and learning

The Office and Administration Manager will maintain a complaints register recording the nature of each complaint, relevant dates, the outcome and any action taken. Complaint records will be stored securely and retained in accordance with GIC's retention arrangements.

Anonymised complaint information and trends will be reported to the Management Committee at least annually. Agreed improvements or corrective actions will be assigned to an appropriate person and monitored to completion. This procedure will be reviewed after any significant issue and at least every three years.

13. Contact details

Initial complaints should be addressed to the relevant GIC Manager or the Chair of the Management Committee at Granton Information Centre, 134-138 West Granton Road, Edinburgh, EH5 1PE. Email: info@gic.org.uk