



Empowered Learning Trust Client Complaint Procedure

Purpose

Empowered Learning Trust (ELT) is committed to providing the best possible service we can. We recognise that sometimes clients will feel they have cause to complain about the service they receive. We are always ready to receive compliments and complaints because they help us improve the services we provide.

Any person may make a complaint to Empowered Learning Trust. All complaints will be treated with fairness, integrity and respect with consideration to ELT values.

ELT aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively. We will:

- Aim to put things right quickly for our clients when they go wrong
- Keep our clients informed of the progress of their complaint and the results of any investigation
- Seek to learn from any complaint to improve future performance
- Set performance targets for responding to complaints and monitor our performance against these targets

Where possible, every effort will be made to understand the complaint and reach a mutually satisfactory response for the customer and ELT. Not every complaint will produce an agreeable outcome.

Procedure

a. Publicised Contact Details for Complaints:

Written complaints may be sent to Empowered Learning Trust at PO Box 33, Reporoa. 3060 or by e-mail at empoweredlearning@xtra.co.nz

Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 027 2935150 or in person to any of Empowered Learning Trust's staff, volunteers or trustees at the office address.

Receiving Complaints

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have.

Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded. The person who

receives a phone or in person complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to Empowered Learning Trust (for example: client, member)
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

b. Resolving Complaints

Stage One

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the board within one week.

On receiving the complaint, the Trust Manager records it in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, they delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within a week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Stage Two

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the board chairperson.

The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within [a week] of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when

the complainant can expect a reply.

The board chairperson may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.

The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution. [You may wish to name a particular avenue here such as a national body or other independent organisation]

External Stage

The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage.

Information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: <https://www.charities.govt.nz/charities-in-new-zealand/making-a-complaint/>

c. Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair should not also have the Chair as the person leading a Stage Two review.

d. Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.