

Complaints Policy: Staff/External audiences

Ecologia Youth Trust (EYT) views the principles of accountability and transparency as the core of good governance; ensuring that stakeholders can hold the organisation accountable is essential for improving operational quality of work. This document outlines procedural process for complaint management within programme areas and ensuring that EYT is able to learn and improve programme delivery, undertake regular review and manage complaints fairly for all stakeholders involved.

When does the policy apply?

The policy applies to all stakeholders such as staff, supporters, partners, beneficiaries and members of the public (including individual, company or other entity). We have a separate policy for young people. Complaints, which are already subject to current investigation by any regulatory body, legal or official authorities in the UK or other countries in which EYT operates are not applicable.

Our policy is:

* To provide a fair complaints procedure, which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
* To make sure everyone at EYT knows what to do if a complaint is received.
* To make sure that Ecologia’s staff feel safe at work, free from bullying and harassment
* To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
* To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
* To gather information, which helps us to improve what we do.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about EYT and its working partners, related to its activity or lack of activity or the complaint handling process itself. For example:

* Concern about project delivery
* Concern about fundraising approaches
* Concern about behaviour of staff or volunteers
* Concern about lack of action regarding a request made to EYT

Principles of Complaint Handling

When handling and managing complaints EYT will:

* Treat each complainant with respect and take complaints seriously
* Ensure that complaints are investigated and responded to in a timely manner, complainants will be kept informed of the progress of their complaint.
* Provide clear information regarding the process for handling complaints and any decisions reached.
* Address complaints in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner throughout the complaints-handling process.
* Limit specific details to those who need to know in order to respond and following relevant data protection requirements.
* Implement investigations where actions are required as a result of complaints.
* Ensure complainants have the right to provide feedback and inform them of processes for doing this.

How to make a complaint

Written complaints may be posted to Growing2gether, Findhorn Hive, 567 West Whins, The Park, Forres, IV36 3SH or sent by e-mail to g2gadmin@ecologia.org.uk

Verbal complaints may be made by phone to +44 (0) 1309 250268 or in person to any of EYT’s staff at our office or at any of our events or activities.

What Information should a complaint include:

Every complaint should include the name and contact details of the person making it, along with full details of the issue being complained about along with supporting documentation or evidence required to understand the complaint being made.

What happens after a complaint is made

Complaints will be recorded and passed to a Director and the circumstances around the issue will be investigated. He/she will provide a response.

EYT will acknowledge all complaints within 14 days of receipt and tell the complainant of the outcome of the investigation within 30 days of receiving the complaint. In the event that the investigation cannot be completed within this timeframe the complainant will be informed, in writing about when they can expect a full response.

Unresolved complaints are escalated to the Board of Trustees for a response within 14 days.

Staff Grievance procedure

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| The disciplinary rules which apply to employees are 3 warnings, two verbal & 1 written before dismissal after he/she has been employed by Ecologia Youth Trust for 2 consecutive years. Before 2 years, no reason for dismissal is required by law. |
| If an employee has a grievance about his/her employment he/she should apply in the first instance to the Director International or Director Scotland. If he/she is dissatisfied with any disciplinary decision which affects him/her, or feels unable to address this to one of the Directors, he/she should apply to a local trustee, in person or in writing if preferred. |
| Subsequent steps in the firm's disciplinary and grievance procedures are a discussion with the Directors and a local trustee together with a support person if requested, followed by a meeting with an objective outside management supervisor if necessary.  |

External Stage

The complainant can complain to the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) at

any stage. Information about the kind of complaints OSCR involves itself in

can be found on their website at: http://www.oscr.org.uk/complaints

When will Ecologia Youth Trust not respond to a complaint:

Where complainants harass staff, behave abusively or pursue unreasonable complaints, EYT reserves the right to withdraw or modify its complaints process. A decision about what constitutes a persistent, habitual or vexatious complaint will be taken by the Director Scotland.

Review & Responsibility

We aim to regularly review this policy. Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation regarding Growing2gether lies with Ecologia Youth Trust’s Director Scotland.

Signed…………………………….. Date…………………………..

Name and position………………………………………………….

Reviewed…………………………..Date…………………………..

Name and position………………………………………………….