

NORTHERN VISIONS COMPLAINTS POLICY

All serious complaints about possible breaches of the BBC's editorial standards in connection with specific programmes or items of content are handled by the Chairperson and Board of Directors.

If complainants are not satisfied with the Board of Directors' finding, and the complaint relates to Northern Visions content regulated by Ofcom, the complainant can refer the matter to Ofcom.

Ofcom will adjudicate on whether there has been a breach of the Ofcom Broadcasting Code.

If the complaint relates to online material, Ofcom will consider and give an opinion as to whether the material breaches Editorial Guidelines and may ask Northern Visions to reconsider the matter.

The Chairperson will monitor the implementation of this policy, collect information about required improvements, and will report all complaints and outcomes to the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis.

All staff and volunteers have access to training so that they are able to effect changes as necessary.

One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our users, members of the public or others who may want to comment.

Therefore we aim to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy and transparent as possible.

- That we deal with complaints appropriately and within the agreed time frame.

- We treat a complaint as any clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service, or organisation as a whole, which calls for a response.

- We respond in the right way -for example, with an explanation or an apology where we have got things wrong and if relevant and appropriate information on any action taken.

We have the right to refuse to accept a complaint where the complaint is clearly vexatious, malicious or motivated by racist, sexist, homophobic or other discriminatory attitudes, or where the complaint threatens or abuses

The decision as to whether a complaint is vexatious will be taken by the Chairperson in conjunction with the Board of Directors where necessary.

When a complaint identifies that something has gone wrong or has fallen below standards it is seen as an opportunity to improve and avoid a recurrence and it can allow for systems, policies, practices or procedures to be amended or put in place as appropriate.

The procedure covers complaints about the services that the organisation provides to the public, and complaints about the staff and volunteers involved in delivering those services.

Complaints regarding discrimination and victimisation will also be investigated under this complaints procedure.

Information about how to make a complaint will be made readily available.

Assistance, where possible, will be offered to all parties in a complaint procedure to ensure equality of representation.

All complaints should be dealt with in accordance with this policy, and the procedure outlined below.

In the first instance complaints should always be raised with the Programmes Director will only be escalated to the Chairperson and/or Board of Directors where the Programmes Director has been unable to resolve the complaint, or in cases where the issues raised are of a serious or sensitive nature and the Programmes Director feels it is necessary to bring matters to the Chairperson's attention.

Wherever possible we will try to respond and resolve the situation at an informal level. The matter will go no further unless the injured party is still dissatisfied, at which point the formal process will then begin.

Formal complaints should be made to the Programmes Director

By telephone 028 9024 5495

By email feedback@nvtv.co.uk

By post to 23 Donegall Street, Belfast, BT1 2FF

Complaints regarding individuals, or where a formal follow-up is required, must:

be in writing

be from an identified complainant

include the complainant's name and contact details

We acknowledge that in certain instances a complainant may wish to remain anonymous. In such incidences we will review the nature of the complaint and decide on follow up action if deemed necessary.

We aim where possible to address complaints promptly.

All complaints received will be logged.

We will acknowledge all complaints in writing within 7 working days from when the complaint is received.

The Programmes Director reviews the complaint to consider whether further investigations need to be carried out.

When investigating complaints the Programmes Director will ensure that:

They fully understand the complaint –this may require them to meet with or talk to the complainant.

They understand the response of staff or the situation in which the problem arose. This may involve interviewing or speaking to staff and volunteers, or reviewing any written information

When interviewing complainants, staff or volunteers, they should be offered the opportunity to bring someone with them.

As a result of the investigation actions may include:

Specific Improvements to service

Bringing together parties to mediate the dispute

Recommendations on staff training

The timescales for responding will be as follows:

In most cases we aim to provide a full response within 7 working days.

However, if this is not possible because, for example a detailed investigation is required, we will provide an interim reply explaining what is being done to deal with the complaint and providing a revised timetable.

A full response will generally be then sent in writing within 14 working days of the acknowledgement.*.

In some cases the complainant may have expressed a preference for a telephone discussion regarding the outcome. However, this will always be followed up by a written response so that both parties have a written record of the outcome.

Actions identified as a result of a complaint should be implemented within a reasonable timetable.

The following appeals procedure will apply in cases where the complainant is not satisfied with the initial response:

In cases where the complainant is dissatisfied with the response they have received they are entitled to appeal the decision within seven days of receiving the response to: Chairperson at the address above or by email feedback@nvtv.co.uk

In cases where the Programmes Director is the subject of the complaint the appeal will be referred to the Board of Directors.

Appeals will be responded to within 21 working days in writing.

In all incidences complaints will be recorded in Northern Visions internal complaints register.

These will then be included in the board reports and reviewed on a quarterly basis.

September 2020

Chairperson

*Please note that during the pandemic we have a greatly increased workload and we thank you for your patience.