



COMPLAINTS POLICY

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UCKG HELPCENTRE COMPLAINTS POLICY

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God (also referred to in this policy as the UCKG HelpCentre, UCKG or the Charity) is a Christian organisation and registered charity in England and Wales. That aims to provide, in all its HelpCentres and related faith and outreach activities, an inclusive environment – in line with Biblical principles – where anyone can learn about and practice the Christian faith, and receive advice, guidance and practical assistance to life's problems. And, that expects the highest standards of conduct and behaviour from all its trustees, ministerial staff (that's bishops, bishops' wives, consecrated and non-consecrated pastors, pastors' wives, assistant pastors, universal biblical institute trainees, missionaries and any other ministerial staff in training), administrative staff, and all levels of volunteers at all times.

The Charity understands that there might be occasions where such high standards can be seen to not be met, leading church members, beneficiaries, companies/organisations it works with and the general public to become dissatisfied or concerned about certain aspects of the work of the Charity.

The Charity takes every complaint seriously, and is committed to ensuring that all complaints, concerns and issues raised by church members, beneficiaries, companies/organisations it works with and the general public are properly investigated in an unbiased, non-judgemental, transparent, timely and appropriate manner.

This policy is to:

- provide a fair complaints procedure that is clear and easy for anyone to use
- publicise the existence of a complaints procedure so that anyone knows how to make a complaint or raise a concern
- ensure that all complaints are investigated in a timely manner
- make sure that all complaints are resolved quickly, fairly and effectively, and that, wherever possible, relationships are repaired
- provide the complainant with easy to follow instructions on how to complain
- provide a fair complaints procedure ensuring the complainant is reassured their complaint is being dealt with seriously
- ensure the complainant understands that their concerns will be investigated and they will be informed of the findings of that investigation
- make sure that the Charity learns from all complaints and concerns raised and applies that learning without delay

The Charity will accept and process complaints received through an advocate or representative of a complainant. However, these must know the full details relating to the case and submit proof that they have been instructed by the complainant to act on their behalf.

In this policy, the reference to 'complainant' will include any advocate or representative that has been duly instructed by the complainant to act on their behalf.

2. AIMS AND PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The UCKG has an unwavering commitment towards its objectives of advancing the Christian faith and implementing general charitable purposes, understanding and embracing the pressures and high expectations placed on faith organisations in modern society.

The Charity believes and is committed to having an effective complaints management system that will help maintain and build stronger relationships with its church members, beneficiaries, companies/organisations it works with and the general public.

Handling complaints and concerns in a transparent and timely manner will:

- demonstrate the Charity's commitment to its objectives and its beneficiaries
- help the Charity find out about problems and resolve them
- enable the Charity to learn from any issues and prevent these from reoccurring in future

The Charity understands that there might be incidences where complaints will be unfounded and even vexatious. But, it expects that the majority will be made in good faith by people that care about the Charity and the preservation of its reputation and integrity. Perception is personal, and matters of perception can be challenging. Through its investigative process, the Charity will have care to accommodate, understand and address any complainant's perception of any specific situation, with the overarching view that without complaints or concerns being raised, an important learning curve would be missed by the Charity.

3. SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy is for use by anyone that is dissatisfied or has concerns about the conduct and work of the Charity and wants to make a complaint. It applies to all of the Charity's trustees, ministerial staff (that's bishops, bishops' wives, consecrated and non-consecrated pastors, pastors' wives, assistant pastors, universal biblical institute trainees, missionaries and any other ministerial staff in training), administrative staff, and all levels of volunteers. And, relates to all aspects of the work of the Charity – encompassing any and all of its ministerial (that's regular prayer services, special faith purposes and events, advice and guidance sessions, visits, faith groups, projects and initiatives, etc.), community groups and outreach, or administrative (including any trading subsidiaries and initiatives) work in the United Kingdom.

4. DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN

A complaint or concern is a verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the work of the Charity, that requires an investigation and response.

5. WHO CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT

Complaints may come from any individual, company or organisation who has a legitimate interest in the Charity's work – including church members and the general public, and any duly instructed advocates or representatives – if something is perceived to be wrong or having an adverse impact.

Advocates or representatives of a complainant must know the full details relating to the case and submit proof that they have been instructed by the complainant to act on their behalf.

6. COMPLAINTS THAT ARE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS POLICY

The following complaints will not be dealt with under this policy:

- a complaint by any administrative staff about any matter of their employment with the Charity (please refer to the Charity's Staff Handbook or contact the HR Department)
- a complaint or concern from any trustee, ministerial staff, administrative staff, or any level of volunteer (please refer to the Charity's Whistleblowing Policy)
- a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults (please refer to the Charity's Safeguarding Policy accessible via uckg.org/safeguarding-policy/)

- a complaint or any request relating to any of the Charity's databases (please refer to the Charity's Privacy Policy accessible via uckg.org/privacy-policy/)
- a complaint or concern relating to fundraising (please refer to the Charity's Fundraising Policy accessible via uckg.org/fundraising-policy/)
- a comment, remark or criticism with no response expected or required

7. HOW TO COMPLAIN

A complaint can be made through any of the following contact details:

- via e-mail: complaints@uckg.org
- via web form: uckg.org/complaints/
- via post: C/O Complaints
UCKG HelpCentre
Office Suites
24 Coleridge Road
London N4 3NP
- via telephone: 020 7686 6000 (24 hour helpline)

Please, note that complaints made verbally in person or by phone, will require that the details of the complaint be written and confirmed by the complainant as being a correct account of the verbal complaint.

All complaints, whether made in writing or verbally, will be taken seriously and dealt with swiftly, and complainants will receive a full, written response, as detailed in section 11.3. of this policy.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaints will be handled in the strictest of confidence in accordance with the Charity's Privacy Policy accessible via uckg.org/privacy-policy/.

The Charity will make sure that confidentiality will be maintained in a way that only those involved in the actual investigation of the complaint will know its contents. And, that disciplinary procedures will be applied should any trustee, ministerial staff, administrative staff, or volunteers disclose any details to anyone that is not involved in the investigative process.

9. RESPONSIBILITY

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the senior management of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God.

10. TIMESCALES FOR MAKING A COMPLAINT

All complaints must be made within 30 days of the event leading to the complaint or when the complainant becomes aware of a cause for complaint or any concern relating to the work of the Charity.

The Charity understands that it is inevitable that there will be complaints that will be reported outside of the above timeframe. And, it is committed to assessing each case on its merits and acknowledges that it might still be possible to investigate a complaint when there is good reason for the same to default on the above timeframe.

11. THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS

11.1. STEP 1 – RECEIVING COMPLAINTS

A complaint or concern can be submitted to the Charity via the contact details advertised for that purpose in section 7. of this policy.

On receiving a complaint, by whatever contact point a complainant chooses to use, the same will be recorded in the Charity's complaints log. If not all relevant details are communicated in the complaint, the Charity will contact the complainant and request any additional information and any supporting evidence.

An acknowledgment e-mail will be sent to the complainant within 5 working days from the date all required information and supporting evidence is provided to the Charity. The acknowledgment e-mail will detail the next step in the process and related timeframe.

11.2. STEP 2 – ASSIGNING COMPLAINTS

The Charity will assess the details and supporting evidence submitted by the complainant and assign the complaint resolution to the person or department within the Charity that is better qualified or equipped to successfully resolve it.

It is expected that the assignment of the complaint resolution by the Charity will be done immediately following the acknowledgement e-mail being sent to the complainant. In any event, the assignment of the complaint resolution will be completed no later than 3 working days from the date the acknowledgment e-mail is sent to the complainant.

11.3. STEP 3 – RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

Upon being instructed by the Charity to lead the complaint resolution process, the assigned person or department will immediately contact the complainant confirming the instruction and providing details of the next steps. From this point forward, all exchanges relating to the complaint must be exclusively between the complainant and the person or department assigned to the complaint resolution process. The e-mail complaints@uckg.org must be kept copied in on all exchanges, and if there are any other e-mails that must be copied in, the complainant will be informed about them.

The person or department assigned the complaint resolution process will conduct all assessments and investigations swiftly without delay and in an unbiased, non-judgemental, transparent and appropriate manner. It will keep the complainant updated on progress at regular intervals, with the target of providing a final report on its findings no later than 30 working days from the date of being assigned the complaint resolution process.

If for good reason, the person or department assigned the complaint resolution process realises their assessments and investigations require a longer work period than expected, making the 30 working days target to provide a final report unrealistic, it will immediately inform the complainant in writing via e-mail. Making sure to provide the complainant with updated details of the process and the expected new target date.

The final report into the complaint will be provided in writing via e-mail and include a summary of findings, the outcome and learnings together with the next steps should the complainant desire to take their complaint further.

12. **VERBAL COMPLAINTS**

The Charity understands that anyone can make a verbal comment or remark about the work of the Charity without the intention of it being a complaint, even when such comment or remark have a negative connotation. And, that establishing whether the verbal comment or remark were indeed a complaint, and as such be treated as a formal complaint, becomes extremely important.

If someone makes a verbal comment or remark with a negative connotation, whether in person or over a telephone conversation, that sounds like a complaint, to any of the Charity's trustees, ministerial staff, administrative staff or any volunteers, these will be prompted to clarify whether they are making or wish to make a formal complaint. If the reply is affirmative and that the comment or remark are to be treated as a formal complaint, the trustee, ministerial staff, administrative staff or volunteer will proceed to take notes that will enable them to produce a written account of the complaint, that will then be sent to the complainant for confirmation that the same is a correct account of their verbal complaint. The complainant's confirmation will then initiate the process detailed in section 11. of this policy.

All verbal complaints made over the phone to the 24 hour helpline 020 7686 6000 will automatically be recorded and submitted to complaints@uckg.org triggering the process detailed in section 11. of this policy.

13. **ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS**

The Charity understands that making a complaint requires a lot of will power from a complainant and that some complainants might feel hesitant and cautious and not want to reveal their identity. At the same time that the Charity appreciates this and welcomes anonymous complaints, it cannot ignore the fact that anonymity carries the practical consequence of limiting assessments and investigations where further information is required, thus preventing a complete and fair investigation.

Nevertheless, the Charity is committed to and will ensure that anonymous complaints will always be properly investigated in an unbiased, non-judgemental, transparent, timely and appropriate manner.

14. **MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS**

The Charity is committed to assessing and investigating, and will accept, any and all complaints that are made in good faith. However, any and all complaints made on the basis of intolerance or discrimination, and malicious or vexatious complaints, will not be tolerated.

The Charity reserves the right to not commit time and resources to assess and investigate any and all complaints made on the basis of intolerance or discrimination, and malicious or vexatious complaints. Except where – in order to protect its trustees, ministerial staff, administrative staff, or any volunteer – such complaints must be investigated in a manner that exposes such malicious intent.

Complaints and concerns raised in good faith will always be properly investigated in an unbiased, non-judgemental, transparent, timely and appropriate manner.

15. **APPEALING FOR A REVIEW OF THE COMPLAINT OUTCOME**

The Charity is committed to resolving complaints quickly, fairly and effectively, and that as a consequence, wherever possible, relationships are repaired. It is the Charity's objective that the final report into a complaint will satisfactorily resolve the issue for all parties concerned.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint resolution process, they may appeal for a review of the complaint outcome. To trigger the appeal, the complainant will need to reply to the e-mail with the final report into the complaint – within 5 working days from the date of the final report – noting their dissatisfaction and that they require a review of the complaint outcome. The Charity will then, within 3 working days from the date the appeal request is made, appoint an officer that will review the complete complaint resolution process and related outcome.

It must be noted that the appeal for a review of the complaint outcome is not a reinvestigation of the original complaint. As such, it should not include new evidence, unless the complainant could not, with reasonable diligence, have provided the same evidence when the complaint was first submitted.

The complainant will be provided an appeal report no later than 10 working days from the date an officer is appointed to conduct the review of the complaint outcome. The appeal report is the final outcome that the Charity will provide to the complaint.

16. **MONITORING AND LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS**

The Charity is committed to resolving complaints and learning from each of them and therefore its senior management will carry out regular reviews of the complaints log and the handling of all complaints. The review's aim will be to highlight all learnings from the complaints resolution process and improve or implement safeguards in order to prevent similar issues occurring in future.

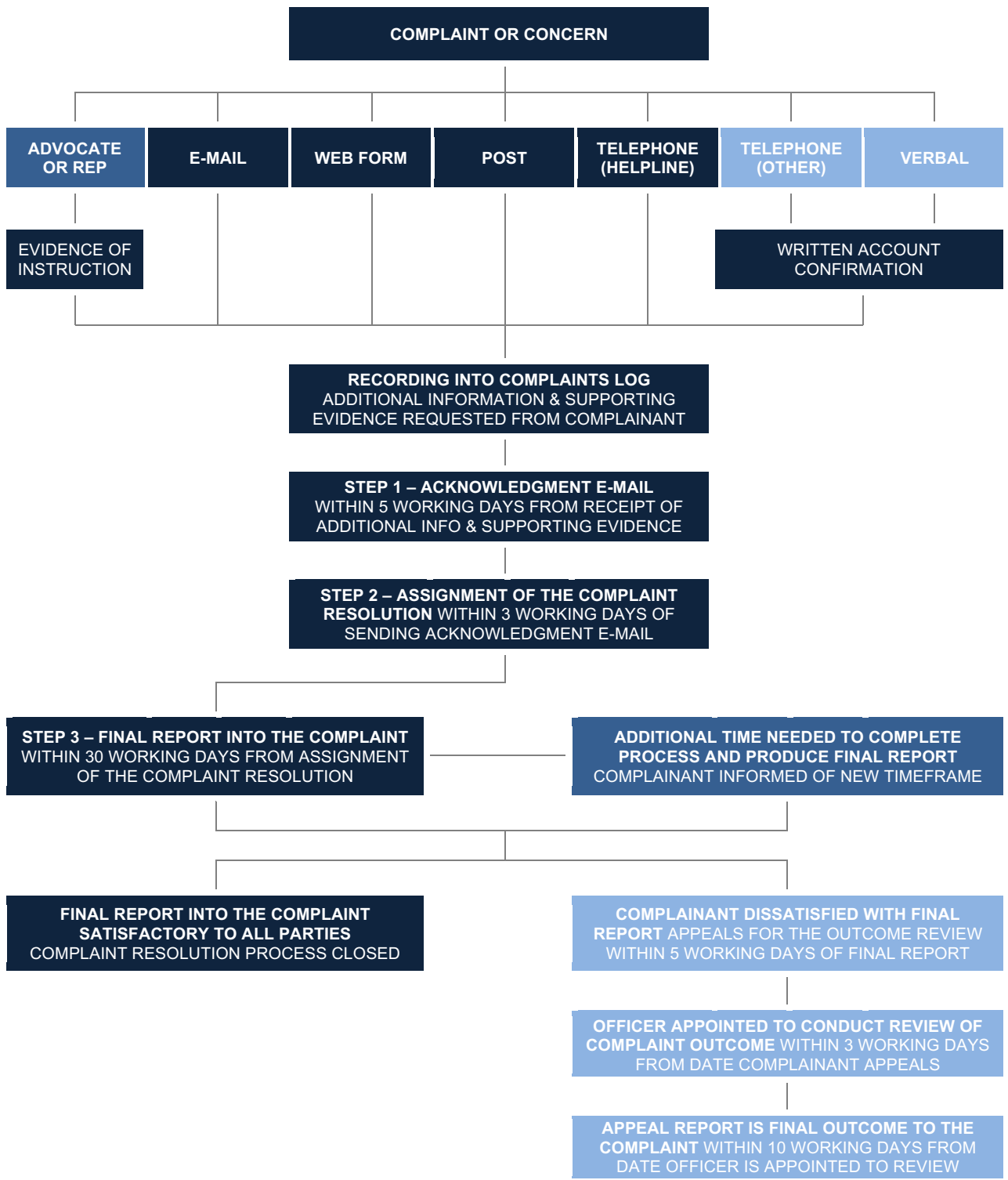
17. **RECORDS OF COMPLAINTS**

Records of complaints will be kept for 5 years, in line with the Charity's Privacy Policy, after the last contact with the complainant. The Charity will securely destroy all records of a complaint when the 5 years from the date of the last contact with the complainant have elapsed. The Charity's Privacy Policy is accessible via uckg.org/privacy-policy/.

18. **REVIEWING THIS POLICY**

This policy will be revised annually or whenever there is a learning experience that makes it mandatory to amend/update the policy. The Legal Department is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy.

THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS GRAPHIC



VERSION CONTROL SHEET

Version	Created by	Approved by	Valid from
01 for the year 2023	Legal Department	Senior Management	Fri 11 Aug 2023