

# IDS Complaints procedure

## Policy statement

Receiving feedback and responding to complaints is an important part of improving IDS' accountability. Ensuring our stakeholders can hold us to account will improve the quality of our work in all areas.

## Scope

This policy applies to the Institute of Development Studies and is global in its application. A complaint can be made by any supporter, partner organisation, visitor, short course participant, community or individual with whom we work, or any member of the public whether an individual, company or other entity, in the UK or anywhere else in the world.

Alternative routes exist for IDS staff (who should use the relevant IDS Procedure, such as the Grievance Procedure, Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy, or the Whistleblowing Policy) and for IDS postgraduate students (who should use the University of Sussex Complaints Procedure for Students).

## Definitions

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standards of service, actions or lack of action, by IDS or its staff and associated personnel<sup>1</sup>. It is a criticism that expects a reply and would like things to be changed. Complaints could include the following (which is not an exhaustive list):

- Concern from someone we work with about the quality of programme delivery
- Concern from a member of the public or supporter about a particular approach or action
- Concern about the behaviour of staff or associated personnel

A complaint has to be about some action for which IDS is responsible or is within our sphere of influence.

A complaint is **not**:

- A general inquiry about IDS' work
- A request for information
- A contractual dispute
- A request to amend records e.g. to correct an address, cancel a donation
- A request to unsubscribe from an IDS service e.g. a campaign newsletter or email

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<sup>1</sup> Contractors, suppliers, volunteers etc.

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The complaints procedures do not apply to complaints that are subject to current investigation by any regulatory body or other legal or official authorities in the UK or other countries in which we operate. Such issues will be dealt with by the relevant regulatory body.

The complaints procedure does not replace the Whistleblowing Policy.

## Procedures for making a complaint

It is hoped that most complaints or concerns about IDS' work or behaviour can and will be dealt with informally by staff at a local level. However, it is recognised that not all issues can be resolved in this way and that a formal complaints mechanism is required for those occasions when an individual or organisation wishes to make their complaint a matter of record and to receive a formal response.

### How to make a complaint

All formal complaints should be made in writing either directly from the individual or organisation making the complaint or via someone acting on their behalf. See below for details about to whom to address a complaint.

### How to make a complaint

In the first instance a complaint should be addressed to the Company Secretary, Tim Catherall, on T.Catherall@ids.ac.uk.

The Company Secretary will review the complaint and may pass it to another area of the institute to consider further and address. The process to consider a complaint will vary depending on the nature of the issue, but could include an investigation, review of relevant paperwork, a meeting or meetings, and a decision on how to address the complaint. Where required, the Institute will report serious issues to external bodies, including the Police and the Charity Commission.

We will respond in writing to any complaint within 30 days setting out how IDS intend to address the complaint.

If your complaint relates to the Company Secretary you should contact the IDS Director, Melissa Leach, on M.Leach@ids.ac.uk.