



RCN Foundation Complaints Policy & Guidelines

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The RCN Foundation is committed to delivering the highest standards in all our work and we value feedback from our supporters, beneficiaries, partners, and the public. We recognise that sometimes we may fall short of expectations, and when that happens, we welcome the opportunity to listen, learn, and improve.
- 1.2. The RCN Foundation is committed to:
 - Treating all complainants with respect and fairness
 - Ensuring accessibility to the complaints process
 - Learning from complaints to improve our work and services
 - Providing information in alternative formats on request
- 1.3. This policy sets out the process for how individuals can raise a complaint, how we will investigate and respond, and how complaints will be used to improve our work. It is compliant with guidance from the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and the Fundraising Regulator.
- 1.4. This complaints policy applies only to the RCN Foundation, a registered charity and independent member of the RCN Group. It does not cover complaints relating to the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), RCNi, or any other current or future members of the RCN Group. If your complaint relates to the RCN or, another Group entity, please refer to their respective complaints procedures or visit www.rcn.org.uk for more information.
- 1.5. Complaints relating to Trustees, External Advisers, Grant Reviewers or any other volunteers will be investigated in line with the RCN Foundation's Disciplinary Policy and Complaints Procedure for Volunteers.
- 1.6. Complaints concerning staff will be managed under RCN Group People and Organisational Development policies. This ensures fairness, transparency, and that the appropriate procedures are followed depending on the subject of the complaint.

2. Definition of a Complaint

- 2.1. A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the RCN Foundation, its staff, trustees, or advisors, which requires a response.
- 2.2. Complaints may relate to:
 - Fundraising activities
 - Grant application or award processes
 - Digital communications or marketing materials
 - Behaviour or conduct of staff or volunteers
 - General concerns about the way the Foundation operates

3. How to Make a Complaint

3.1. You can make a complaint in the following ways:

Email: rcnfoundation@rcn.org.uk

Phone: 020 7647 3645

Post: RCN Foundation, 20 Cavendish Square, London, W1G 0RN

3.2. We recommend that complaints are made via email so that we can be clear about the nature of the issue. If you need support to make a complaint, we are happy to assist or accept complaints via a nominated representative, provided we have received your consent that we may communicate with them on your behalf.

4. Our Complaints Process

4.1. We aim to resolve complaints quickly, fairly, and sensitively.

4.2. Stage 1 – Informal Resolution

Where possible, we aim to resolve issues immediately. A member of the team will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and aim to provide a full response within 10 working days.

4.3. Stage 2 – Formal Review

If you are not satisfied with the response or the matter is complex, you may request a formal review. This will be conducted by a senior staff member or the RCN Foundation's Director. You will receive a written acknowledgment within 5 working days and a final response within 20 working days.

4.4. Stage 3 – Escalation

If you remain dissatisfied after our internal process, you may escalate the complaint to an external regulator as follows:

- **Fundraising complaints:**

Contact the Fundraising Regulator at www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk or 0300 999 3407.

- **Serious concerns about the charity:**

Contact the Charity Commission at www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity

5. Confidentiality and Data Protection

5.1. All complaints will be handled with appropriate sensitivity and in line with our Privacy Policy. Personal data will be processed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

5.2. A record of the complaint and all communications relating to the complaint will be stored by the Foundation for one year.

6. Monitoring and Learning

- 6.1. We record all formal complaints and regularly review trends to identify areas for improvement. A quarterly report on complaints, including the number and type received, is submitted to our Board of Trustees and shared with the Fundraising Regulator if requested.
- 6.2. Possible outcomes of a complaint may include an apology, corrective action (such as process improvements or retraining), disciplinary action in line with staff or volunteer policies, or referral to an external regulator or authority. All outcomes will be proportionate, fair, and communicated in writing to the complainant

7. Regulatory Compliance

- 7.1. The RCN Foundation is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Charity Number: 1134606) and Scotland (SC043663) and is committed to upholding the principles of good governance, transparency, and accountability set out in the Charity Commission's guidance.
- 7.2. We are also registered with the Fundraising Regulator, the independent regulator of charitable fundraising in the UK. We adhere to the Code of Fundraising Practice, which sets the standards for fundraising across the sector.
- 7.3. If you are not satisfied with how we have handled your complaint and it relates specifically to fundraising, you can contact the Fundraising Regulator in the following way:
 - Website: www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk
 - Phone: 0300 999 3407
 - Email: enquiries@fundraisingregulator.org.uk
- 7.4. If your complaint raises a serious concern about the RCN Foundation as a charity — such as risk of harm to beneficiaries, significant misuse of funds, or serious governance failures — you can contact the Charity Commission in the following way:
Website: www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity
- 7.5. We take our responsibilities seriously and will cooperate fully with both the Charity Commission and the Fundraising Regulator as part of any investigation.
- 7.6. The RCN Foundation reserves the right to appoint an independent organisation to review any complaint and/or appeal, where it considers this appropriate to ensure fairness, transparency, and impartiality in the handling of the matter.