

Catch22 policy

Complaints, Compliments & Feedback

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Catch22 reserves the right to amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

Policy Owner:	<i>Director of Governance, Risk & Compliance</i>
Queries to:	<i>Feedback@catch-22.org.uk</i>
Date created:	<i>July 2008</i>
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Catch22 group, entity, hub:	<i>Catch22</i>

Document Version Control & Changes

Version	Last modified	By	Changes Made
1.0	16/06/2023	Nick Thatcher, Head of Governance & Risk	Policy reviewed and refreshed. No substantial changes made.
1.1	12/05/2024	Nick Thatcher, Director of Governance, Risk & Compliance	Further detail provided on the page 10.
1.2	14/07/2025	Jamie Wright, Risk Assurance Project Coordinator	Policy reviewed. Updated appendices and local feedback logs.

1. Summary

This policy:

- safeguards the rights of individuals using our services, and ensures we improve services by learning from our errors and successes
- covers people who receive our services, people (other than our own staff) involved in the care or welfare of our service users, and any other organisation or individual on whom our services impact
- looks at making a complaint, the three complaint stages (local/informal complaint resolution, organisational/formal complaint resolution and panel hearing/appeals), in what circumstances we might suspend or not apply this policy, and related policies.

2. What is the policy about?

We welcome and support people to make complaints, comments and compliments about our services. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with our services and a request for us to put things right. Comments and compliments can be as valuable as complaints in highlighting areas for improvement or extending excellence in service provision. Our policy safeguards the rights of individuals using our services, and ensures we improve services by learning from our errors and successes.

3. Who is the policy for?

Our policy covers:

- people who receive our services
- our people other than our own staff* involved in the care or welfare of our service users (*sessional workers, volunteers, agency staff and contractors (these are not employees and therefore not covered by the Grievance Policy)
- any other organisation or individual on whom our services impact.

Complaints from our own employees are dealt with in line with other relevant policies (see section 12), for example our grievance policy.

Complaints in a prison setting are dealt with under the Prison Procedure which is attached at Appendix A.

Complaints relating to IR35 can be found attached at Appendix B.

4. Policy statement

We are committed to:

- improving the lives of all the people we work with, and to working with their families and carers, communities and other organisations to achieve this

- providing the best possible services for everyone we work with
- learning from our mistakes, and continuing to improve on what we do

Our handling of complaints and comments forms an important part of this approach. As part of our philosophy, we seek to deal positively and decisively with issues of concern, and so we:

- treat anyone making a complaint, comment or compliment with respect
- support anyone wishing to make a complaint to do so, keeping them informed of the process at all stages
- deal with all complaints as swiftly as possible, and maintain confidentiality as far as possible
- train all our staff to use this policy
- encourage managers to try to resolve complaints locally and informally, in discussion with the person making the complaint
- treat fairly staff about whom a complaint is made, in line with our employment policies
- review the effectiveness of our policy, and monitor the level and nature of complaints, comments and compliments.

5. Making a complaint

We make everyone we work with aware of this policy by giving them information on how to make a complaint or register a comment or compliment using a freepost form, via email or letter, and by providing an online form via our website.

Whenever possible complainants should be encouraged to put their complaint in writing however if this requirement would pose a barrier to the person making the complaint then a verbal complaint can be accepted. This should then be written up and sent back to the complainant for them to agree that it is an accurate record of the issue(s) they wish to have addressed.

A dedicated email address for Complaints is available for use feedback@catch-22.org.uk and is monitored every day except weekends and bank holidays.

Complaints made via a social media platform will not be responded to via an open platform. These will always be escalated through line management and to relevant SLT who will ensure

that the Communications team is alerted and treated as an organisational/national complaint due to the potential public relations issues involved. Staff must not engage in a discussion or debate in a public forum but invite the complainant to contact us directly using the feedback@catch-22.org.uk email address or by post.

In recognition of the communication methods available, except for complaints raised via a social media platform, the response will take the form used by the complainant i.e.

- Email – response by email (no letter attached)
- Letter – response by letter
- Feedback form – response as directed on the form
- Webform (website) – response by email unless directed otherwise

n.b. If a copy of a letter is to be sent by email, it must be in a non-editable form e.g. PDF in order to reduce the risk of subsequent misuse of the branded Catch22 logo/paperwork.

A complaint must be made as soon as possible – and no more than three months – after an incident has occurred. We may extend this time limit if:

- the complaint could not reasonably have been made earlier, and
- we can still investigate the facts
- we will not investigate where the subject of a complaint relates to events more than one year before the date we receive it.

Where a person we work with wishes to make a complaint about another organisation's services, we will assist them to do so in line with that organisation's complaints procedure.

Catch22 also recognises that in some circumstances other bodies may provide alternative routes for complaints and these will be dealt with as required depending on the nature and route of the complaint. In prisons, the process is detailed at Appendix A. Schools should refer to the School Complaints Procedure detailed in the Educational Complaints and Compliments Policy and for supplier CEST procedure it can be found in Appendix B.

Each service must maintain a local log of complaints received and outcomes, and review these at team meetings. The log is available for inspection by the relevant director, the Chief Officers Group and (where contractually agreed) commissioners and other third parties.

6. Categorisation of complaints

Under this policy complaints are classed under three categories:

- Stage one - local/informal complaints
- Stage two - organisational/formal complaints
- Stage three - appeals

The following criteria apply when determining which category a complaint falls into: -

Stage One: Local/informal complaints will -

- Be in writing or verbal and
- Not allege a serious breach of policy or standards and
- Not have been aired on social media and
- Be resolvable within the control of the local service.

Examples of locally managed informal complaints could include failure of a worker to alert a service user to a change of appointment time, breakdown of working relationship between service user and worker that can be resolved by either local intervention, mediation or change of worker, neighbour complaints about noise or nuisance which have not involved the police or local authority.

These complaints must be dealt with by the local responsible manager and logged on a complaints log held in the service to provide a record of the issue being raised and dealt with.

The local responsible manager must:

- explain when the complainant can expect a response (usually within seven working days)

- where the matter can be resolved locally, provide a thoughtful response based on an understanding of the full circumstances and the other options available to the complainant under this policy if they remain dissatisfied.

If the complainant is unhappy with the response and wishes to escalate then the complaint should be escalated through relevant line management to the applicable SLT. Relevant documentation should be attached so that it can be reviewed and, if necessary investigated further, as a Stage Two - organisational/formal complaint.

Stage Two: Organisation/formal complaints will -

- Be in writing (this may include verbally given complaints that have been written up and agreed as an accurate record with the complainant) and/or
- Allege a serious breach of policy or standards including, but not limited to:
 - Recruitment and selection
 - Safeguarding
 - Health and safety
 - Operational malpractice

and/or

- Have been made on a social media platform (complaints aired via social media have the potential to cause organisational reputational damage and so must be addressed as an organisational/formal complaint) and/or
- Have escalated from a local/informal complaint because the complainant is unhappy with the response or the issue is ongoing
- Any complaint where there is an indication that it has been shared with the local MP, Regulator, local authority, the Media or any other indication of external body or reputational impact

Stage Three – Appeals:

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the result of the stage two - organisational/formal complaint process, they can appeal in writing. They must do this within 28 days of receiving the response, explaining why they are dissatisfied with the result.

An appeals panel will be formed, comprising of:

- Relevant hub director not previously involved in the complaint (this may be the commissioning director if they have delegated the initial complaint management)
- Chief Officer (*should the complaint sensitively require it*)
- an independent person from an unrelated part of the business, Head of or above. (In very exceptional circumstances an external person may be invited to be part of the panel – this decision will be made by a nominated COG member or relevant director. An example of this would include inviting a local authority commissioner or other relevant person to be part of the panel if the complaint is part of the delivery of a statutory service e.g. leaving care).

The panel will review all the information available and undertake any extra investigation they deem necessary, which may include talking to the complainant. The panel may recommend mediation if members believe this will resolve the dispute. The Panel must write to the complainant within seven days of the panel meeting, outlining its findings.

The panel must review the complainant's appeal using the balance of probabilities to determine if the original investigation overlooked any issues or did not thoroughly examine the facts. The panel can make one of three decisions –

- Uphold the appeal concern and overrule the initial outcome
- Partially Uphold the appeal concern and partially over rule the initial outcome
- Not Uphold the appeal concern and agree to the initial findings.

In some services e.g. social care services, if the complainant is still unhappy with the outcome of their complaint, they may refer the complaint to the local authority or to an external ombudsman for further review.

If you are unsure how to categorise or deal with a complaint, contact the Feedback mailbox who will assist.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 Complaint Administrator

Will –

- ensure that the complaint mailbox is monitored, and relevant Business Directors are notified of any complaint made centrally
- provide basic procedural advice such as response timings
- be the first point of contact for organisational complaints
- manage the recording of all centrally made complaints

7.2 Commissioning Manager

Will -

- be the relevant Director for the area the complaint is made or implicated in, however can should they see fit delegate to another Senior Manager in their hub.
- be responsible for assigning an Investigating Officer should the complaint be complex or involve a several people. They will advise the Complaint Administrator of the appointment.
- Agree a set of terms of reference for the investigation
- Together with the Investigating Officer craft a complaint response

7.3 Investigating Officer

Will –

- be a manager from the same hub but not be involved in the allegations
- be responsible for undertaking the investigation
- If necessary, arrange to meet the complainant and any other relevant people (including witnesses) to collate statements and establish the facts.
- then write a report and discuss their findings with the relevant director or delegated authority.
- the director, or delegated authority, will give the Complaints Administrator an analysis of the cause of the complaint, and report any action taken or recommended.

8. Process

8.1 Acknowledgement

The Complaints Administrator will usually acknowledge an organisational/ formal complaint within one working day of receiving it (maximum three working days). This acknowledgement sets out the next steps and when the complainant can expect to hear more (normally within 28 days). If the investigation is going to take longer, either the Complaints Administrator or the relevant SLT business leader will write to give the expected completion time and explain the

reason for the delay.

8.2 Investigation

Terms of Reference

The Commissioning Manager will agree a terms of reference for investigation which will establish the objectives and scope of the investigation. These terms of reference must be written to allow the investigator to establish whether the allegations are

- Upheld
- Partly upheld
- Not upheld

Investigation Report

The investigation report will set out and determine whether there is evidence to show a breach of policy or standard, or negligence, misconduct or deliberate wrong-doing on the part of an individual or individuals relating to the complaint.

Templates can be found [here](#)

8.3 Response

When the investigation is complete, the director will decide, or approve, how to respond to the complainant. The complainant will be written to with the outcome of the complaint including whether their complaint has been upheld, partly upheld or not upheld. This response should come from the director or delegated authority. This response may be restricted for reasons of confidentiality or data protection (for example, if the staff member involved is subject to disciplinary action). The response will be copied to the:

- complainant's advocate (if they had one)
- service/project manager and/or assistant director or head of service
- Feedback inbox.

Please note: not all complaints require a formal investigation process to be applied. If the complaint can be resolved with evidence/information that is readily available, then it is in all

interests to close the complaint as quickly as possible. If however there has been a serious breach of policy or standards and/or the nature of the complaint indicates that there may be disciplinary action that could arise if the allegation is found to be upheld, then a formal investigation must be carried out.

9. Suspension/non-application of procedure

A complaint will not be considered, or further considered, through this procedure where in relation to the substance of the complaint:

- It has been withdrawn by the complainant, unless the Charity decides that there is merit in pursuing the complaint, e.g., to identify any lessons learnt
- It repeats a complaint that has previously been considered through the complaint's procedure
- It is being or has been investigated by an independent body and/or in accordance with the arrangements set down by the commissioner of the relevant service;
- Following a request for clarification from Catch22 it remains unclear;
- There is reason to believe that the use of the complaint's procedure may be damaging to the interests/well-being of a child or vulnerable person;
- The charity does not have the powers to grant the outcome the complainant is seeking (in these cases the complainant will be directed to the organisations/agencies who are able to make the relevant determination);
- The complainant is vexatious and/or frivolous in that they have persistently made or continued to pursue a complaint which after investigation is found to have no substantive basis and/or there is reason to believe such complaint has not been made in good faith/is a part of campaign of harassment against individual workers. In determining whether a complaint is vexatious, the complaint(s) and responses should be reviewed by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer (or equivalent grade) to ensure that all issues have been addressed.
- Where the subject of complaint relates to events more than one year before the date the charity receives the complaint;
- The complainant has stated in writing that they are taking or intends to take proceedings to court or tribunal.
- The charity has been notified that any person is conducting an investigation in contemplation of criminal proceedings; or

- The charity has been notified that criminal proceedings are pending

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Chief People Officer will jointly determine any complaint which should be subject to suspension/disapplication of process for one of these reasons and the complainant (and relevant commissioner, where appropriate) will be informed.

10. Local complaints monitoring and management accountability

Operational directors, assistant directors, and heads of are responsible for carrying out an annual review of service complaints logs to ensure that these are being maintained and used to track complaints resolution and share organisational learning. Service Managers are likewise responsible for ensuring that complaints, comments, and compliments are discussed in team meetings so that all staff have the opportunity to participate in discussions about service improvements and share learning.

Each service will have a designated Feedback Champion responsible for keeping the local Feedback Log up to date whenever complaints arise. They will also ensure that all relevant information is accurately recorded as per the log. Feedback Champions are expected to highlight any significant issues or emerging trends in local complaints to the central Feedback Team, enabling appropriate support and investigation. Additionally, they should escalate any unresolved complaints that require progression to a Stage 2 Organisational/Formal complaint.

Templates of local complaint and compliment logs can be found [here](#). However Feedback Champions will have specific access granted to their relevant service(s) logs within our centralised storage location.

11. Compliments and other feedback

Catch22 welcomes compliments and other feedback on the services we provide and the people who work for us. These can be recorded locally or sent through to the feedback@catch-22.org.uk for central recording. All positive feedback must be acknowledged within 3 working days and, where it relates to an individual, the content

should be shared with that person at the earliest opportunity.

Suggestions for improvement not relating to a complaint must also be acknowledged and manager should reflect in their response the consideration they have given or will give to the suggestion. If appropriate, the response should include a brief outline of changes made, to be made or why the change cannot be actioned as appropriate.

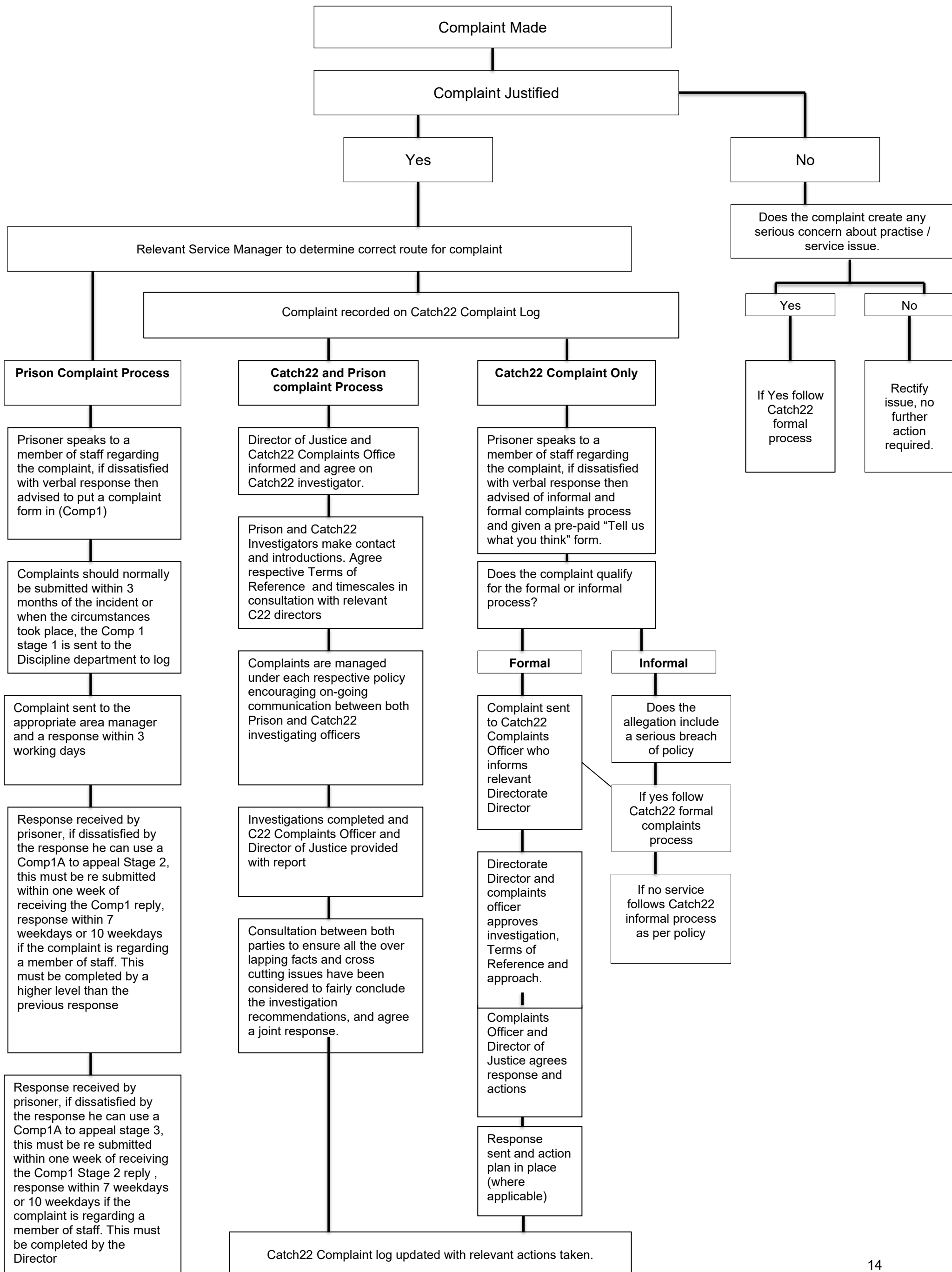
12. Related policies & documents

The following policies and documents may need to be read alongside this policy in certain circumstances and are relevant to it. All these documents can be found in 4policies.

- Whistle-blowing policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Grievance policy
- Disciplinary policy
- [Good Complaints Handling – A guide for services](#)
- Data Protection policies
- Code of Conduct policy

Appendix A

Complaints Procedure for Prison Based Services



Appendix B

IR35 CEST Disagreement Procedure

Under the IR35 regulation suppliers can, if they wish, appeal any engagement outcome as a result of a completed CEST. Below set outs Catch22's procedural expectation.

How to raise a concern?

A supplier can raise a concern both verbally and/or in writing. They must however do the following -

Verbally

To do so verbally a concern must be made to the relevant lead administrator responsible in the first instance for completing and sharing the Status Determination Statement. It will then be shared through to the purchasing team for review.

In Writing

To raise a concern in writing a supplier must use the feedback@catch-22.org.uk mailbox detailing their concern, specifying on what grounds they wish to appeal their outcome.

What happens next?

Any disagreements received will be reviewed and managed by the CEST Decision Panel (CDP), with input from the relevant Administrator. The membership of the CDP will comprise of Catch22's Chief Finance Officer (CFO), Head of Financial Management, Processing Team Leader and/or if relevant the Multi Academies Trust's CFO and has the responsibility for considering the points of any concern made and make a decision as a result.

The Response

A response will be made within **45 calendar days**, beginning with the day the representations are received, not from when the SDS was issued. The response will inform the supplier that the original SDS have been either unchanged or considered incorrect and will provide a new SDS with the date this new SDS became applicable and state that the previous SDS is withdrawn.

All concerns will be recorded centrally through the complaints log.

Annex 1: Equality Impact Assessment

Catch22 is committed to always: avoiding the potential for unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and, foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool for identifying whether or not strategies, projects, services, guidance, practices or policies have an adverse or positive impact on a particular group of people or equality group. While currently only public bodies are legally required to complete EIA's, Catch22 has adopted the process in line with its commitment to continually improve our equality performance.

1. Summary

This EIA is for:	Complaints Compliments & Feedback
EIA completed by:	Director of Governance, Risk, & Compliance
Date of assessment:	July 2025
Assessment approved by:	n/a

Objectives and intended outcomes
This EIA has been completed in order to ensure that the implications and potential impact, positive and negative, of the Catch22 Complaints, Compliments & Feedback policy for all staff have been fully considered and addressed, whether or not the staff members share a protected characteristic.

2. Potential Impacts, positive and negative

Equality Area	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Summary
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies equally to all members of staff regardless of age. It's not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on any member of staff because of their age.
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies equally to all members of staff regardless of health/disability. Arrangements are in place to address issues of literacy which may make written communication difficult.
Pregnancy & Maternity/paternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	It's not considered that the policy positive or negatively impacts on pregnant women or on staff on maternity or paternity leave,.
Race (incl. origin, colour and nationality)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies equally to all members of staff regardless of their race, origin, colour or nationality. It's not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively in these respects.
Gender and Gender Re-assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies equally to all members of staff regardless of their gender at any given time. It's not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on any member of staff because of gender.
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies equally to all members of staff regardless of their sexual orientation. It's not considered that the policy includes any guidance or rules that may impact either positively or negatively on any member of staff because their sexual orientation.

3. Negative impacts and mitigations

Negative Impact	Mitigation	Owner