

Guide to the General Teaching Council for Scotland Complaints Procedure

This leaflet is available in alternative formats on request.



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About our Work

The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) is the independent professional body which maintains and enhances teaching standards and promotes and regulates the teaching profession in Scotland. It is funded from the annual registration fees paid by registered teachers and not from the public purse.

The strategic aims of the General Teaching Council for Scotland are:

- ❖ to contribute to the development of a world-class educational system in Scotland;
- ❖ to maintain and to enhance professional standards in schools and colleges in collaboration with partners;
- ❖ to be recognised as an advocate for the teaching profession.

About our Complaints Procedure

GTC Scotland is committed to maintaining a high standard of service in carrying out its functions. We welcome all feedback and take very seriously complaints about the standard of service or work we have provided. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our service or work, we would like to hear about it so that we can investigate your complaint and have the opportunity to put matters right. We will use your comments and feedback to improve our service.

Matters Outwith the Complaints Procedure

The following matters fall outwith the scope of the GTC Scotland complaints procedure:

- ❖ If you are a registered teacher or applicant for registration whose case is being considered or heard within the GTC Scotland panel process and you are unhappy with a related decision, this is subject to the appeals process as set out in the relevant rules (see the Publications (Rules) and the Appeals sections of our website at www.gtcs.org.uk);

- ❖ If you wish to submit a complaint against a registered teacher in relation to misconduct, please visit the **Fitness to Teach** section of our website at www.gtcs.org.uk.

Is there a time limit that applies to complaints?

We want to hear about your concerns as soon as possible and where possible at least within one month of the issue or incident that you are unhappy with.

We do not consider or investigate a complaint which relates to matters which happened more than 12 months before the complaint is made.

How do I make a complaint?

Stage One

If you have already been dealing with a member of staff or department in the GTC Scotland office, start by contacting that person or department and putting the problem to them. If you do not know who to contact, get in touch with Customer Services (email: customerservices@gtcs.org.uk) and they will be happy to help you.

Often complaints can be resolved immediately and informally in this way. However, if the matter cannot be resolved, or if you are not satisfied with the response at this stage, this leads to Stage Two of our procedure.

Stage Two

You should complete our service complaints form. This is available online at our website at: www.gtcs.org.uk or on request from the Complaints Officer (e-mail: complaints@gtcs.org.uk).

Your completed form will be passed to the Complaints Officer. The Complaints Officer will aim to acknowledge receipt of your completed form within three working days.

The Complaints Officer may investigate and respond to your complaint. If however he/she is unable to do this for any reason, he/she will be entitled to appoint another senior manager to do so. The Complaints Officer or other senior manager will aim to send you a full response within twenty working days. If this is not going to be possible, then he/she will write to let you know what is happening and when you should receive a full response.

What if I am not satisfied with the response from GTC Scotland?

If you are not satisfied with the final GTC Scotland response at Stage Two, you can request a review of your complaint by the Independent Reviewer. The final GTC Scotland response letter at Stage Two will include their contact details. You should contact the Independent Reviewer within one month of receiving the final GTC Scotland response at Stage Two.

The Independent Reviewer will aim to acknowledge your request for a review within three working days of receiving it.

The Independent Reviewer will aim to respond in full within forty working days, giving details of what has been done and the results of his/her enquiries. If for some reason this is not possible within this timescale, he/she will let you know what is happening and when you may expect to receive a full response.

The outcome of the review by the Independent Reviewer is final.

Contact Details

See overleaf.