



SRLPDC

SCOTTISH REGISTER OF LANGUAGE PROFESSIONALS
WITH THE DEAF COMMUNITY

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

SRLPDC aims to provide a high-quality service to all who contact or are involved with the organisation including: Staff, users of services provided by SRLPDC Registrants and those registrants themselves.

Well organised and efficient complaints procedures help us to improve services to the deaf community and serve to enhance quality and standards amongst our Language Professional/Agency registrants. SRLPDC will endeavour to investigate all complaints in accordance with this policy and within the indicative timescales laid out in our policies.

SRLPDC is managed by a Board of Trustees who function on a voluntary basis and in some instances longer periods may be required to investigate complaints. In the event that a longer timescale or alternative course of procedure is to be followed, SRLPDC will make parties aware of the reasons for this and the timescales / details of the timescale to be followed.

SRLPDC equally places value on being aware of 'concerns' that might come to the fore within professional practice. Although concerns might not merit being processed through the formal complaints channel, nevertheless, SRLPDC will strive to use any information gathered to address any issues and promote best practice. Any concerns should be forwarded to SRLPDC in exactly the same way as complaints.

Please note, a shortened accessible flow chart of this policy and these procedures is also available on line.



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1. COMPLAINTS AGAINST SRLPDC

SRLPDC seeks to ensure that all of its stakeholders are aware of how they can raise complaints in relation to SRLPDC's operations. Accordingly, where individuals or organisations have a complaint against SRLPDC or its staff or charity trustees, such complaints shall be dealt with in accordance with the details that follow:

1.1 Complaints by SRLPDC Staff:

All staff are provided with a copy of the internal SRLPDC grievance procedure under which they may raise any matters arising in relating to their employment with SRLPDC.

1.2 Complaints by users of Sign-Language Interpreting / Language Professional services:

Where persons or organisations other than SRLPDC staff or SRLPDC registrants wish to complain about the actions or decisions of SRLPDC or its staff, the ***SRLPDC Complaints Procedure*** (*attached*) should be followed.

1.3 Complaints by SRLPDC Registrants:

SRLPDC is a charitable company limited by guarantee. Registrants hold specific rights in relation to its operation - these rights are contained within and are properly dealt with in terms of SRLPDC's Articles of Association.

Separately, SRLPDC registrants are entitled to appeal decisions taken by SRLPDC relating to matters of accreditation, registration or adherence by a registrant to the SRLPDC Principles of Professional Practice (PoPP).



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2. COMPLAINTS AGAINST LANGUAGE PROFESSIONALS/ AGENCIES INVOLVED IN PROVIDING AN ASSOCIATED SERVICE

SRLPDC does not have any remit to investigate complaints against individual sign language interpreters/ language professionals or agencies that are not SRLPDC registrants. If the complaint concerns a non-SRLPDC registrant or registered agency, contact should be made with the registration body to which that language professional/agency is registered.

Where a language professional/agency is a registrant with SRLPDC, and is subject to SRLPDC requirements relating to registration and maintenance of standards, it is not the case that SRLPDC can, or will, automatically get involved with all complaints that are directed at that language professional/registered agency. SRLPDC will only become involved where a complaint concerns the failure of a registrant/registered agency to meet a specific SRLPDC standard or requirement.

2.1 Complaints by users of Language Professional services

Where issues arise concerning services provided by registrants, most may be resolved by direct contact with the registrant themselves. If issues cannot be resolved in this way and the registrant was booked through an agency, the issue should be raised with the agency. SRLPDC requires its registered agencies, as part of SRLPDC registration processes, to have in place and operate complaints policies.

Relevant to the above, users of Language Professional services, may wish to note the Principles of Professional Practice applicable to all SRLPDC registrants /registered agencies.

Where users of language professional services are unable to achieve resolution of issues arising with a registrant in terms of the above and, if an issue involves a SRLPDC registered practitioner or agency failing to meet specified SRLPDC standards or requirements, the matter can be referred to SRLPDC by way of a formal complaint in terms of the ***SRLPDC Complaints Procedure*** (see below).

Separate to the above, SRLPDC is, of course, at all times available to assist members of the deaf community and users of language professional services, including providing general advice in relation to all matters relating to access and use of language professionals [including how to resolve issues that have arisen when using a particular practitioner or agency.



2.2 Complaints by one SRLPDC registrant against another

Where a complaint arises between SRLPDC registrants, SRLPDC will only become involved if a complaint relates to a registrant's failure to meet specified SRLPDC standards or requirements. If a complaint between registrants involves such a matter, the matter can be referred to SRLPDC by way of a formal complaint in terms of the **SRLPDC Complaints Procedure**.

3. FURTHER INFORMATION IN RELATION TO SRLPDC COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints should be submitted in writing; by email or by means of video letters.

SRLPDC exists to improve and enhance the standards of language professionals' services in Scotland, particularly for the benefit of the deaf community. Please contact a member of the SRLPDC Registrar should you require any further information in relation to **SRLPDC Complaints Policy & Procedure** and/or how to submit a complaint.

PROCEDURE

The following are covered by this procedure.

- 1. Complaints against SRLPDC**, including complaints relating to:
 - SRLPDC staff/ contractors; or
 - The Board of Trustees or a particular Trustee
- 2. Complaints against SRLPDC registrants**
(including registered agencies).

Please note that SRLPDC can only investigate complaints against registrants/agencies that are registered with SRLPDC and SRLPDC will, under this procedure, only investigate complaints that concern the failure of a registrant/registered agency to meet standards or requirements specified by SRLPDC.

Complaints should be submitted, in the first instance, to:

The Registrar
SRLPDC
c/o Brett Nicholls Associates, 63 Ruthven Lane, Glasgow G12 9BG
Or submitted via email to mail@thescottishregister.co.uk



Stage 1 – Submission of Complaint and Acknowledgement

- In the case of a complaint against an individual registrant /registered agency, SRLPDC will check whether steps have been taken to resolve matters direct with the practitioner/agency.
- In the case of a complaint against an individual registrant/registered agency, SRLPDC will check that the complaint concerns failure to meet a specified SRLPDC standard or requirement.
- An acknowledgement will be sent to the Complainant, indicating the identity of the person that SRLPDC proposes investigates the Complaint and the names of the individuals on the SRLPDC Board of Trustees that it is proposed will decide matters relating to the Complaint.
- The person complained of shall be informed:
 - (i) that a complaint has been raised:*
 - (ii) of outline details of the matters complained of and the identity of the Complainant;*
Note: Complainants should be aware that SRLPDC will, in most circumstances, require to disclose the Complainant's identity to the person complained of.
 - (iii) of the identity of the person that SRLPDC proposes investigates the complaint; and*
 - (iv) of the names of the individuals on the SRLPDC Board of Trustees that it is proposed will decide matters relating to the complaint.*
- Provided that they respond within 5 working days of receiving notification, giving reasons as to why the person scheduled to investigate the Complaint or any other member of the SRLPDC Board of Trustees would not be neutral, the person complained of or the Complainant may request that SRLPDC Board make alternative arrangements for dealing with the complaint.
- SRLPDC may suggest alternative individuals to be involved in investigating/deciding on the complaint.
- If it proves impossible to agree on neutral persons on the SRLPDC Board to investigate and then decide on the complaint, the SRLPD Board may appoint an external party to investigate matters.

Indicative Timescale: 6 weeks from acknowledgement of receipt



Stage 2 – Initial Investigation

- Investigation of the complaint will commence.
Note: to ensure effective governance, the SRLPDC Board will be updated to the effect that a complaint has been received. Where the complaint is of a serious nature the Board will also be provided with a very brief outline of the subject matter of the complaint. However, in order to ensure no conflict at any appeal stage, no in-depth details will be provided to the SRLPDC Board.
- Investigation will include:
 - Communicating with the Complainant, where possible by way of face-to-face meeting(s);
 - Communicating with any relevant individual(s) complained of, where possible by way of a face-to-face meeting;
- The complaint investigator will produce a report summarising findings in relation to the matters complained of and their recommendations as to any proposed actions (the Report).

Indicative Timescale: 6 weeks from acknowledgement of receipt

Stage 3 – Decision by Complaints Committee

- The Board of Trustees (*to exclude the chair of SRLPDC so that they may conduct or coordinate any relevant appeal*), or such other body or person put in place pursuant to Stage 1, will make a decision in relation to the complaint based on the Report.
- Where necessary, prior to the above, the appointed members from the Board of Trustees, or such other body or person put in place pursuant to Stage 1, may request further investigation in particular areas, or discuss and make amendments to the Report, prior to reaching its decision.

Indicative Timescale: 3 weeks of the Report being produced



Stage 4 – Informing of Complainant and person complained of

- The Complainant and the person complained of shall be informed of the Complaints Committee's decision (subject to appeal). The person complained of shall be given full details of any action SRLPDC proposes to take if a complaint is found to be substantiated.
- The Complainant will also be provided with a summary of any action that SRLPDC proposes to take.

Indicative Timescale: within Timescale for Section 3

Stage 5 – Appeal of Decision

- The Complainant or the person complained of may appeal the decision of the appointed members of the Board of Trustees in writing to the Chair of SRLPDC (who shall not be aware of the detail of the complaint or have been involved in the decision taken in Stage 3) within 10 working days of receiving notification of the decision;
- The relevant sections of Stage 1 required to: (i) inform the Complainant and the person complained of how the appeal will be conducted and (ii) ensure neutrality of the Appeal Investigation and Decision shall be repeated.
- Stage 2 will be repeated with the Chair investigating or in circumstances where an issue of neutrality has been raised, such other person established pursuant to the processes set out in Stage 1.
- Stage 3 will be repeated, but further members the Board/ appointed externals (excluding members involved in the first decision) shall make the final decision. In circumstances where a complaint is between registrants and matters cannot be decided in this way, the final decision may be referred to agreed externals.
- The outcome of the appeal shall be communicated to the Complainant and the person complained of.

Indicative Timescale: Within 9 weeks of the Chair being notified of the exercise of a right to appeal (assuming matters decided by Board).