



## *Association of Clinical Scientists*

### COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

***An individual, a candidate, a prospective candidate, a supervisor or an assessor may consider that they have cause to complain about an aspect of the ACS and its activities. A complaint can occur at any time, before, during or after an assessment.***

- Complaints must be received in writing (letter or email to the Association's contact address) and are logged by the Administrator.
- Complaints should clearly state what they are complaining about.
- The ACS Administrator notifies the ACS Executive including copies of the letter(s) of complaint.
- The ACS Administrator starts to fill in the Complaints Pro-Forma to include the details of the candidate, complaint and background to the assessment.
- The ACS Executive will consider the nature of the complaint and determine the appropriate course of action. This may include:
  - Dismissing the complaint as insignificant
  - Appoint a suitable person to undertake an investigation of the complaint
  - Escalate the complaint to formal internal appeal with an ACS Appeals Panel
- An acknowledgement letter/email will be sent to the complainant by the ACS Administrator with a timescale. It is expected to respond within 4 weeks but there may be circumstances where this is not possible and the complainant will be kept informed.
- Where appropriate, the ACS instigates an investigation of the complaint. This will usually be done by the ACS Board member relevant to the modality of the complaint.
  - The ACS Executive identifies the questions that they consider relevant to the complaint in the complaints form.
    - This is important because it guides the person investigating the complaint
    - It de-personalises the investigation when members of professions are "investigating" each other
    - The investigator may not limit themselves to these questions but must limit questions relevant to the complaint

- At any time, the complaint may be escalated to a formal internal appeal at the discretion of the ACS Executive. This is because the gravity of a complaint may be sufficient to require an independent view and an ACS Appeals Panel includes an independent member.
- The ACS Executive arranges a meeting (normally by telephone conference) to discuss the outcome of the investigation. This will include two members of the ACS Executive, the investigating ACS Board member (relevant to the modality of the complaint) and an ACS Administrator.

This review should:

- identify whether there are clear ground for complaint
- identify any further action that may be indicated
- A record of the complaint will be created on the Complaints Pro-Forma and completed as the review proceeds.
- Conclusion reached and a letter drafted by the Complaints Panel is sent to the complainant.
- Documentation relating to the complaint is archived by the ACS Administrator in a separate complaints file for future Audit.