



Making a complaint

Introduction

If you want to make a complaint, we have a procedure for you to use. This document explains the procedure. All the UK-wide and England lottery distributors use this procedure. Making a complaint will not affect in any way the level of service you receive for us, for example if your complaint is with regard to a funding application your chances of getting a grant for us in the future will not be compromised.

What can I complain about?

You can complain if you think that:

- 'maladministration' has taken place (for example, if we have delayed, made mistakes in or failed to follow the procedures in our application process);
- we have failed to give you access to information or have given you incorrect advice or information;
- we have not treated you politely; or
- we have discriminated against you or not treated you fairly.

If your complaint is concerning a funding application, we can only look at your application again if:

- we discover (through dealing with a complaint) that we did not follow the published procedures for assessing your application;
- you can show that we have misunderstood a significant part of your application; or
- you can show that we did not take notice of relevant information.

UK Sport maintains an independent appeal process administered through Sport Resolutions UK which will normally deal with matters to do with funding applications, if you have the right of appeal. You cannot decide to lodge an appeal and a complaint through this process on the same issue.

You may not be sure what information you should include or how best to set out your complaint. You should set out the facts as clearly as possible, in a logical order. Remember to include important details and dates where possible. We can give you information about how we will process your complaint. Our contact details are given in the 'Getting in touch' section at the end of this document.

We will keep all complaints confidential. If you make a complaint, we will treat you with respect, and we expect you to treat our staff in the same way.

What you cannot complain about

You may be disappointed if we turn down your application for funding, but you cannot use the complaints procedure to appeal against our decision on giving a grant if we have followed our decision-making process correctly.

You cannot complain about our published policies or any government policy. If you have any comments about our policies, send these to our Director of Corporate Development.

Do not use this complaints procedure to make a complaint about any fraud you think has taken place. You should report this to our Director of Corporate Development or the police.

How do I make a complaint?

Stage one

If you are not happy with the service you have received, contact the office you first dealt with. They will try to put things right. We hope that we can settle complaints as quickly as possible in this way.

Stage two

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you can take this further by:

- writing to the Director of Corporate Development by letter or e-mail; or
- sending an audio tape, or CD to our Information Governance Manager.

Please tell us:

- what happened;

- when it happened;
- who dealt with you; and
- what you would like us to do to put things right.

You must do this within four weeks of receiving our response to stage one.

If you cannot make your complaint in writing, please contact our Information Governance Manager on 020 7211 5171 for advice.

When will I hear from you?

Within three working days of receiving your complaint we will write to or phone you to say that we have received it. We will also tell you how you can contact the person who is dealing with your complaint and when you can expect a reply.

You will receive a reply to your complaint within 10 working days. If we cannot give a full reply in this time, we will tell you why and when you are likely to receive it.

If we consider it worthwhile, we may ask you to come to a meeting with us to discuss your complaint in more detail. This meeting would normally be held within 10 working days of us receiving your complaint. We would send you a written record of the meeting and a formal reply to your complaint from our Chief Executive or Director of Corporate Development.

If your complaint is about the way we have used our powers to make, refuse or manage funding, you can move on to Stage 3. If your complaint is about the way we conduct any other aspect of our business we will let you know of possible alternatives that may be open to you. We will tell you in our response to Stage 2 whether Stage 3 is open to you.

Stage three

If you are not satisfied with the reply at Stage 2, you can refer your complaint to the independent complaints reviewer (ICR), if it is open to you.

The ICR is unbiased and hears both sides of the complaint.

The ICR is not part of our organisation and their investigations and recommendations are independent. You can ask the ICR to look at your complaint, or our Director of Corporate Development can ask them to do this. There is no charge for using the ICR.

The Office of the Independent Complaints Review will contact you within 5 working days of receipt of your complaint.

The ICR has the power to decide whether or not to investigate a complaint, and he or she will explain their reasons if they decide not to investigate it.

If the ICR investigates your complaint and finds that it is justified, he or she will recommend ways for us to put things right, and how to prevent a similar situation in future. The ICR will report within three months, and usually more quickly. We will normally make any changes the ICR recommends to our current procedures as quickly as possible.

The ICR cannot consider complaints that have not gone through the procedure set out in this document. If you want the ICR to consider your complaint, you must write to them, or send them an audio tape or CD, within four weeks of receiving our reply.

The ICR cannot reverse funding decisions or make comments or changes to our legal responsibilities and policies on awarding grants.

To contact the ICR see 'Getting in touch' at the end of this document.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (known as the Parliamentary Ombudsman) investigates complaints by members of the public who have suffered injustice because of maladministration by public organisations. The Parliamentary Ombudsman also looks at complaints about being refused access to official information.

By law, the Ombudsman is independent of the Government and the civil service, and has wide powers to investigate.

The Ombudsman does not normally investigate complaints if they have not been through our complaints procedures first.

The Ombudsman's services are free.

You can get an explanatory leaflet about the Ombudsman – see 'Getting in touch' at the end of this document.

Freedom of information

Our publication scheme gives details of what information we make available to the public as a matter of course. We will extend the range of this list in the future, whenever it is possible for us to do so.

If you want information that we do not include in our publication scheme, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you the right to ask us for it. Under the Act, we must provide you with the information you ask for unless it is not covered by the Act (that is, it is 'exempt'). If the information you want is exempt, we have to tell you why.

If you do not agree with us, you should ask for an internal review under the Act and contact the Information Governance Manager. If you are still not satisfied, you may ask the Information Commissioner to review our decision.

You can get copies of our freedom of information policy and our publication scheme by visiting our website www.uk sport.gov.uk or phoning 020 7211 5171.

To contact the Information Commissioner, see 'Getting in touch' at the end of this document.

Your personal information

If you use our complaints procedure, you are agreeing that we can use any personal information you send us for purposes connected with your complaint. We may also give your personal information to other people and organisations if we have to do so by law or if you have given us permission.

Equal opportunities

We are committed to equal opportunities and take complaints about discrimination seriously.

We may use complaints about discrimination to review our policies and procedures. This is to make sure we treat everyone fairly.

We will record information about the ethnic background, sex, disability if applicable, and for Northern Ireland only community background, of everyone who makes a complaint, if you are willing to provide it, so that we promote and maintain our equal opportunities commitment. We will keep this under review to take account of changes in legislation. We will keep all information confidential.

Comments and suggestions

We welcome comments and suggestions as these can help us improve our services. Please send any comments or suggestions to our Information Governance Manager. The contact details are given in 'Getting in touch'.

Getting in touch

Chief Executive: Liz Nicholl

Director of Corporate Development: David Cole

Information Governance Manager: Peter Smith – 020 7211 5171; e-mail peter.smith@uksport.gov.uk

All at:

UK Sport
40 Bernard Street,
London WC1N 1ST

If you want to comment on any government policy on Lottery distribution, contact:

Public Enquiry Service
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2–4 Cockspur Street
London
SW1Y 5DH.
Website: www.culture.gov.uk
Phone: 020 7211 6000 (general enquiries)
E-mail: enquiries@culture.gsi.gov.uk

Other contacts

Office of the Independent Complaint Review Service
Lottery Forum
c/o 7, Holbein Place
London SW1W 8NR
E-mail: Katie.roberts@lotteryforum.org.uk

You can get an explanatory leaflet about the Ombudsman from:

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP.

Complaints Helpline Phone: 0345 015 4033
E-mail: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Phone: 01625 545 700
Fax: 01625 524 510
E-mail: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

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