

## **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

At the Oxford Mindfulness Centre (OMC), we are committed to providing the best possible service to our customers. We expect all who work with the OMC to adhere to our Guiding Ethical Principles. However, we recognise that things sometimes can go wrong. When they do, we want to put them right as soon as possible and learn from what happened to develop and improve our services and procedures.

The OMC is supported by a not for profit charitable Trust, the Oxford Mindfulness Foundation (OMF), for the provision of training, public classes and research. Any complaints will be overseen by the OMF and dealt with under this structure.

### **Preliminary Enquiries – Stage 1**

If you are considering whether to make a complaint, you are encouraged to make preliminary enquiries by email with the OMC's Administrative Team [admin@oxfordmindfulness.org](mailto:admin@oxfordmindfulness.org) to see whether we can meet your concerns, quickly and informally.

If you feel that a complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily at this level or if the problem is of a more serious nature, then the formal procedures described below apply.

Normally, at this stage, your complaint will only be seen by those considering your complaint. However, during investigation we may approach others to gain information from all those involved.

### **Making a formal complaint – Stage 2**

The second stage is for you to write to the Chief Executive of OMC (Sharon Hadley, via [sharon.hadley@psych.ox.ac.uk](mailto:sharon.hadley@psych.ox.ac.uk) – please mark as confidential) to consider your complaint. Please ensure that you state the nature of complaint, give relevant details of dates and if appropriate name the individuals involved.

A complaint should be made as near as possible to the events concerned, usually within a month, and in exceptional circumstances no later than within 6 months. At this stage, where there are individuals involved, they will be notified of the complaint.

In making the complaint, it is helpful for you to give an indication of your desired outcome. You should also indicate the outcome of any action you have already taken to raise and resolve the matter directly with the person(s) complained against.

On receipt of the complaint, the CEO of the OMC will consider the complaint and make a judgement on the complaint within 30 working days.

After reviewing the complaint, the CEO will determine a fair and equitable response, which may include:

- A full explanation
- An apology (which is not necessarily an admission of liability)
- The matter put right if possible
- If appropriate, disciplinary action may be taken

### **Appealing the outcome - Stage 3**

If you wish to appeal the outcome of your complaint, you should contact the CEO within 30 working days of our response, setting out the grounds of your appeal.

An Appeal Panel will be convened by the Chair of the Board of OMF Trustees (usually with two other trustees of the OMF Board). The Panel will review the complaint and the CEO's response. The Panel may also ask for additional information from all involved and will provide, normally within 30 working days, a full written report covering:

- The circumstances leading to the complaint and appeal
- The steps taken to investigate
- Reasons for the decisions made by the OMC
- Agreed response to the appeal

The decision of the OMF Panel is final.