

Spike Island

Spike Island complaint policy

Spike Island takes complaints and feedback very seriously and treats them as an opportunity to learn. We're grateful to hear from people willing to take the time to help us to improve.

Our policy is to:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use.
- Make sure all complaints are investigated equitably and in a timely manner.
- Make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- Gather information to help us to improve what we do.

Definition of a complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Spike Island.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively and confidentially, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees of Spike Island.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually and updated as required.

Complaints Procedure

Receiving complaints

We recommend people make a complaint in writing using our online form so that anyone who may need to review the chain of communication can review the complaint in their words. If they want to make the complaint in person, a member of staff will:

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, email address and telephone number (if in person or by phone)
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post, email or via our form so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

Time frame for making a complaint

A complaint should be made within 14 days of the date of the action giving rise to the complaint or within 14 days of the complainant becoming aware of the action giving rise to the complaint.

What information should I include?

To give us the best chance of resolving your complaint successfully, please tell us:

- What happened
- When it happened
- Who dealt with you?
- What you would like us to do to put things right.

Please include all the information you feel is relevant and necessary, including any correspondence you have received.

Resolving complaints

Stage one

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and will do so if possible and appropriate. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information will be passed to the Executive within five working days.

On receiving the complaint, the Deputy Director will record it in the complaints Logbook. If it has not already been resolved, they will delegate someone to investigate it and to take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints will be acknowledged within five working days. The acknowledgement will say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report will be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

The reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Stage Two

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level.

At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chair of the Board. The request for Board level review will be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it.

The Chair of the Board will speak with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they will be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report will be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Chair of the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

Variation of the complaint's procedure

The Chair of the Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair or trustee should not also be led by the Chair and/or trustee involved.

Monitoring and learning from complaints

We treat all comments and complaints as an opportunity to improve. We are happy to acknowledge the mistakes that we have made, sincerely apologise for them and then try to prevent them from happening again in the future. Thank you for helping us to provide a better service.

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.