



Confidential Or Serious Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

Scripture Union is committed to providing a pathway for complaints to be raised and appropriately investigated that is respectful to the person making the complaint and any person implicated in the allegations.

Confidential or serious complaints can be submitted internally to a senior member of staff, or through our external liaison service. Details are published on our website www.sunz.org.nz

2. Timing for Employee Complaints

Complaints raised by employees must be raised within 90 days of the matter occurring or coming to the attention of the employee, unless it relates to sexual harassment, in which case the time limit is 12 months. Complaints raised outside these timelines may still be relevant for the organisation to be aware of and take appropriate action, however they cannot be used as a basis for a personal grievance.

3. Confidentiality

Information provided in a complaint will be shared only with those who genuinely need to know in order to investigate, respond to, or address the complaint. The complainant will be made aware of how much information will be shared before this occurs. In most situations, a formal complaint against an individual or group of individuals will be provided to that person / those people in order to allow them to provide a response, including the name of the complainant and date of statement. In limited circumstances, there may be another way to address the matter, and this will be decided by the most senior appropriate person (excluding any person who is alleged to have behaved inappropriately).

4. Definitions

A serious complaint is defined as

- Abuse of power and authority (bullying / harassment / discrimination)
- Serious misconduct
- Serious Health and Safety risk / endangerment
- Illegal activity
- Reputational risk to the organisation

This particularly applies to allegations against the National Director or a member of the Board.

5. Guiding Principles

Our guiding principles for these complaints are:

- We will seek external advice for all serious complaints.
- We are committed to accountability.
- We will listen.
- We will offer support to all involved.

6. Process

Once you have told us or our external liaison person (ELP) about your concern, we will acknowledge your contact within five working days and commence the process. We commit to communicating with you regularly about the progress towards resolution.

The investigation process will be decided on a case-specific basis.

- Allegations of illegal activity will be referred to the police, with the exception of minor matters such as minor driving offences or minor theft which can be dealt with through employment processes
- Allegations against the National Director or a Board Member will be investigated by an appropriately skilled person appointed by the Board.
- Allegations against another employee may be investigated internally or by an appropriately skilled external person appointed by the organisation.
- Allegations of poor / inadequate process or organisational non-conformance to process may be investigated internally or by an appropriately skilled external person appointed by the organisation.
- A decision maker will be appointed appropriate to the situation. This will not be a person implicated in the allegation unless advice from an external skilled assessor indicates this is required and appropriate.
- We may appoint an external investigation coordinator, and that appointment may include on-going communication with the complainant through the process.
- After the investigation, the Decision Maker will consider any findings, and will decide next steps which may include
 - Disciplinary process if the allegation is against an employee
 - Supported conversation and / or reconciliation process
 - Training / counselling
 - Mediation
 - Redress
 - Apology
 - Report to Police
 - Review of policy or process

The Decision Maker will decide whether a report or summary report will be provided to the complainant, this may be a redacted version of the final report to protect the confidentiality of other parties.


You may also seek independent advice or assistance from:

- Your personal lawyer
- The Citizens Advice Bureau
- Your Community Law Centre
- The Office of the Privacy Commissioner (for privacy issues)

7. Document Control

Prepared by:

Hana Leofa (Operations Manager)



Authorised by:

Hilary Hague (National Director)



Date authorised:

15/04/2025

Next review date:

15/04/2027