



Service Code of Practice

The TMSA is committed to providing a quality service for its members and to working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views (both positive and negative) of our members, service users and the general public.

The TMSA welcomes comments from members and non-members, and those who attend TMSA events as either performers or audience. We aim to improve our service by maintaining and disseminating recognized good quality and beneficial practices and also by using complaints constructively in the planning of future activities. Comments and complaints relating to the practices of and/or an event organised by a branch should be raised with the Branch Secretary. Other comments/complaints should be raised with the Office Manager at the National Office.

We recognise that many comments and complaints can and will be raised informally. We resolve to deal with such concerns promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially; explaining any action taken and apologising when we have got things wrong. At Branch level, the Branch Secretary should note any comments and deal with any complaints and then report at the following Branch Meeting.

If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Formal Complaints Procedure

The TMSA defines a complaint as 'any expression of dissatisfaction (with the TMSA, with a member of staff/volunteer, or with a TMSA event) that relates to the TMSA and that requires a formal response'.

The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

If the complaint is about the practices of, or an event organised by a branch, then it should initially be raised in writing with the Branch Secretary. If the complaint does not concern a branch or if the complainant feels it inappropriate to be raised at branch level, s/he should write to the Office Manager at the National Office. The Branch Secretary / Office Manager is responsible for investigating the complaint and responding to the complainant.

The TMSA's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to the TMSA's attention normally within 4 weeks of the issue arising;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow the TMSA a reasonable time to deal with the matter;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond the TMSA's control.

Confidentiality:

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and the TMSA maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (each complaint will be judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Timescales:

The TMSA's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

Monitoring and Reporting:

As part of their monthly report, Branch Secretaries will forward anonymised reports of any formal complaints and their resolutions to the Office Manager. These reports and those of complaints received by the National Office will be compiled and included in the Annual Report presented at the AGM.

Procedure:-

Stage 1

In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to the Branch Secretary or National Office. If the complaint is about the practices of, or an event organised by a branch, then it should initially be raised in writing with the Branch Secretary. If the complaint does not concern a branch or if the complainant feels it inappropriate to be raised at branch level, s/he should write to the National Office.

In your letter you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within 7 days of receipt.
You should get a response and an explanation within 28 days.

Branch and National Office contact details can be found on the TMSA Website.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint then you can write to the TMSA's National Convener and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. You can expect the National Convener to acknowledge your request within 7 days of receipt and a response within 28 days.

General

At any time during the process you may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss your complaint with the person conducting the investigation. You may also be contacted by letter or telephone to discuss or clarify particular aspects of your complaint. You are asked to co-operate at every stage where requested.