

IPSA Complaints Policy

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1. Introduction

We aim to give the best quality service to everyone we deal with. However sometimes things can go wrong, and we welcome your feedback about these issues.

If you need to raise a complaint with us, we will take your complaint seriously and handle it in accordance with the procedure set out below. Handling complaints well is important to IPSA. When handling complaints we will:

- listen and ensure that we fully understand the complaint
- investigate the complaint independently and transparently
- respond in a fair and proportionate way
- be customer focused
- seek continuous improvement

This document outlines the IPSA corporate policy for the management of complaints raised with the organisation. This document covers:

- What is covered by our complaints procedure (scope)
- How to make a complaint
- How we will manage complaints
- How to appeal

All queries relating to the content of this policy should be submitted to IPSA via info@theipsa.org.uk.

Managing your data

While any data and information we receive will be treated as confidential in line with our data security policy ([Data Security Policy](#)), any information we hold is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and the General Data Protection Regulation.

2. Scope

The IPSA Complaints Policy covers complaints relating to the quality of service provided by IPSA to MPs and their staff. You may have a complaint that falls outside of this policy. The table below explains who you can complain to.

Complainant	Subject	Managed By	Process	Contact details
Member of Public (including media)	The Conduct of an MP	The Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards at the House of Commons	N/A	standardscommissioner@parliament.uk
Member of Public (including media)	An MP's Expense Claim	IPSA Compliance Officer ¹	N/A	compliance@theipsa.org.uk
Member of Public (including media)	The Scheme of MPs' Business Costs and Expenses	IPSA	IPSA Scheme Feedback – response within 10 working days	info@theipsa.org.uk
An IPSA Supplier or other Stakeholder	Performance of IPSA in the delivery of its responsibilities as a contractor/partner	IPSA	IPSA Complaints Process (this document)	info@theipsa.org.uk
MP or MP Staff	Decisions made about the payment or non-payment of claims	IPSA	IPSA Claim Review; escalated to IPSA Compliance Officer	info@theipsa.org.uk (marked for the attention of the Policy Team) compliance@theipsa.org.uk
MP or MP Staff	The Scheme	IPSA	IPSA Scheme Feedback – response within 10 working days	info@theipsa.org.uk
Anyone	IPSA Service Quality	IPSA	IPSA Complaints Process (this document)	info@theipsa.org.uk

¹ The IPSA Compliance Officer was established by the *Parliamentary Standards Act 2009*, as amended by the *Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010*. The Compliance Officer's remit is defined in statute and is to (a) conduct an investigation if he has reason to believe that an MP may have been paid an amount under the *Scheme of MPs' Business Costs and Expenses* (the Scheme) that should not have been allowed; and (b) at the request of an MP, review a determination by IPSA to refuse reimbursement for an expense claim, in whole or in part.

This policy does not cover Freedom of Information or Data Access requests. Please refer to the [IPSA Information Rights and FOI Policy](#) on our website for information on how to submit an FOI or Data Access request to IPSA. If you wish to request a review of the response to your FOI request, please see details attached here: [FOI Review Procedure](#).

3. How to make a complaint

There is no time limit on the submission of complaints. However, if you raise a complaint (that is upheld) a significant time after the end of the financial year in which it occurred, we may not be able to make changes to the relevant budget, should the complaint relate to a financial transaction.

Your complaint can be submitted to IPSA in the following ways:

1. By email to info@theipsa.org.uk – please mark it ‘formal complaint’
2. By phone to 020 7811 6400 – please ask for the Head of Operations
3. By letter to IPSA – please mark the letter for the attention of the Head of Operations
4. In conversation with any member of staff at IPSA

Please ensure that your complaint includes:

- Your name, contact email address and phone number
- Details of the complaint itself – please provide as much information as possible to assist us in our investigation – Specific details such as staff members names, dates, locations and times where relevant

Upon receipt of your complaint IPSA will send you an acknowledgement letter with details of next steps. Please see the next section for further information on how we will manage your complaint.

You may make anonymous complaints. However it usually assists with an investigation for us to know and understand the full nature of the complaint, including your interactions with IPSA. If your complaint is about a specific member of staff, we will not release your name to them. Your complaint to IPSA will be handled in confidence, unless otherwise agreed (including as part of the redress in the event your complaint is upheld).

4. How we will manage your complaint

The Head of Operations is responsible for complaint management within IPSA. All complaints received will be reviewed and logged by the Head of Operations prior to investigation. The investigation itself will be conducted by the member of staff within IPSA with the relevant knowledge and system access to be able to fully investigate the complaint.

IPSA will centrally log all complaints and the complaints log will be reviewed quarterly to ensure that the timelines outlined in the next section are adhered to, and to enable IPSA to identify any trends or issues that necessitate a change in the processes and procedures of the organisation. The log will be used on an ongoing basis to learn lessons, train staff and adapt the systems, processes and way in which the organisation supports MPs and their staff.

Managing a complaint

Upon receipt of the complaint the Head of Operations will review it against the table in section two and if it does not fall within the scope of this complaints management process, the complainant will be advised to redirect their issue to the most appropriate body.

If the complaint does fall within the scope of this complaints management process the complaint will be added to the complaint log and a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to the complainant within five working days of receipt of the original complaint. The letter of acknowledgement will confirm the approach to be taken (including the member of staff to whom the investigation has been delegated) and the timeline for response.

An investigation should normally take no more than ten working days, although this may vary dependent on the complexity or serious nature of the complaint. The complaint investigator may also need to speak with the complainant to gather additional information. This requirement will be outlined in the letter of acknowledgement.

The final response letter will be sent to the complainant from the complaint investigator. The final letter will confirm whether the complaint has been upheld or not upheld and if upheld, will confirm the action that IPSA intends to take in order to rectify or mitigate any negative impact experienced as a result of the cause of the complaint.

5. How to appeal

If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint, you may appeal the outcome by emailing your appeal to info@theipsa.org.uk. Please outline why you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint.

The Head of Operations will receive and log the appeal and will send a letter of acknowledgement to the complainant within five working days of receipt of the appeal. The Head of Operations will then delegate the appeal to a Director for a formal review. The Director who reviews the complaint and the original response to it, will be from a different area of the business in order to ensure independence. The Director will review the original complaint, the investigation undertaken and the outcome and will provide a further written response to the complainant within ten working days of the acknowledgement letter being sent.

If you remain unsatisfied with the outcome, you can send a further email to info@theipsa.org.uk, outlining why the result of the appeal process is unsatisfactory. The Head of Operations will receive and log the appeal and will send a letter of acknowledgement to the complainant within five working days. The further appeal will be escalated to the Chief Executive of IPSA, who will conduct an appraisal of the original complaint and the review. The Chief Executive will determine the appropriateness of the outcomes of the initial complaint and the review and will adhere to the same timescale as the initial complaints process above.