

The SPSO: what we do and how we can support your organisation

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) investigates complaints about most organisations providing public services in Scotland including:

**Councils • the National Health Service
Housing Associations • The Scottish Executive
Colleges & Universities • Scottish Public Authorities**

We investigate when a complainant claims to have suffered injustice or hardship as a result of maladministration or service failure.





accountability



how we act

consider, investigate, report

We will investigate a complaint if we **consider** it is within our jurisdiction.

When we **investigate** a complaint, our approach is to collect, examine and weigh evidence in order to decide what we believe is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of each particular case. Where the two sides of a story seem to be at odds, or the evidence is contradictory, we will seek corroboration and then make decisions on the basis of what we believe is most likely to have happened on the balance of probability. Throughout the process we seek to achieve resolution, and we give you and the complainant an opportunity to comment before we issue a report.

We **report** all investigations to the Scottish Parliament in order to disseminate good practice and to fulfil our remit of improving public services through the complaints process. We will follow up our recommendations to ensure they have been implemented and will consider issuing a special report if injustice or hardship has not been remedied.

what we can do for you

- provide advice and guidance on producing your complaints policies and procedures
- share examples of best practice
- talk to you about
 - staff training
 - the role of the SPSO
 - lessons learned from complaints
- supply information leaflets for distribution – these are available electronically, in other languages and in an appropriate format for those who are visually impaired
- supply information on our website
www.spsso.org.uk

Liaison/Contact

If we investigate a complaint, we will contact the head of your organisation. Many bodies under our jurisdiction have found it useful to have a designated officer who will coordinate responses and act as a point of contact with us.

Requests

In circumstances where a complaint has been dealt with by a listed body but where the complainant remains dissatisfied and has made that matter public, the authority may request the Ombudsman to investigate.

Publicising the SPSO

You are required to give information about the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman, the time limit for doing so and our contact details. This should be published as part of your own complaints procedures and included in any response issued to a complainant.



learning



For further information please contact us:

**SPSO, 4 Melville Street
Edinburgh EH3 7NS**

Tel **0800 377 7330**
Fax **0800 377 7331**
Text **0790 049 4372**
Email **ask@spsso.org.uk**
Web **www.spsso.org.uk**

SPSO
Freepost EH641
Edinburgh EH3 0BR

advice leaflet 1 - AL10406

This leaflet is available in other languages and formats.

Gàidhlig 中文 (繁體字) اردو বাংলা العربية

SPSO Scottish
Public
Services
Ombudsman