



CYNGOR LLYFRAU CYMRU
BOOKS COUNCIL of WALES

Complaints Policy

Updated & approved: July 2022

Introduction

This policy outlines the complaints process of the Books Council of Wales (the Books Council) and enables us to respond appropriately to complaints. This policy applies to complaints about our employees, trustees, members of our sub-committees, judging panels associates, and to all aspects of our work.

Making a complaint does not affect in any way the level of service you receive from us. For example, if your complaint is about an application for funding, this will not affect your future success of getting a grant from us.

We always aim to ensure that your complaint is resolved as quickly as possible, and by the member of staff usually responsible for providing that service. We will listen carefully to your complaint and undertake a thorough investigation. Once the investigation has been completed, you will receive an explanation outlining what the Books Council will do next; in some cases, it could result in a review of an existing policy or procedure, or in providing additional staff training.

We will only be able to look at the concerns that you tell us about within six months. This is because it is more effective to address the issues while they are fresh in everyone's mind and the possible evidence is still available. We may be able to consider complaints which are brought to our attention later than this, but you would need to set out a clear rationale why you have not brought them to our attention earlier. We will not consider any complaint about matters that happened more than one year ago.

What can I complain about?

You can complain if you believe that:

- 'maladministration' has taken place (for example, if we have delayed, made mistakes in or failed to follow the procedures in our formal process);
- we have failed to give you access to information or have given you incorrect advice or information;
- we have not treated you courteously;
- we have not treated you equally and fairly.

If your complaint is about an application for funding, we can only look at your application again if:

- we discover (through dealing with a complaint) that we did not follow the published procedures for assessing your application;
- you can show that we have misunderstood a significant part of your application;
- you can show that we did not take notice of relevant information.

If you want to complain about someone or something we may have funded please contact the Publishing Development Department [here](#)

We will keep all complaints confidential. If you make a complaint, we will treat you with respect, and we expect you to treat our staff in the same way.

What you cannot complain about

You may be disappointed if we turn down your application for funding, but you cannot use this complaints procedure to appeal against our decision on giving a grant if we have followed our decision-making process correctly.

You cannot use the Books Council's complaint policy to complain about content you disagree with which is published by organisations we fund unless that content breaches the law.

You cannot complain about our published policies but if you have any comments about our policies, please send these to castellbrychan@llyfrau.cymru

Please do not use this complaints procedure to make a complaint about any fraud you believe has taken place. You should report this in writing to our Chief Executive on castellbrychan@llyfrau.cymru or the Chair of the Board of Trustees on trustees@books.wales

How do I make a complaint?

Complaints will be accepted via post, email or any other format.

Informal Resolution (Stage 1)

If you are not happy with the service you have received, contact the department or member of staff you first dealt with, within 3 months of the action or decision to which the complaint refers. They will try to put things right themselves or may pass the complaint to a more appropriate colleague. If this is the case we will contact you to give you the contact details of the person who will be dealing with your complaint. You may not be sure what information you should include or how best to set out your complaint. You should set out the facts as clearly as possible, and include the following information:

- Briefly, what the complaint is about;
- When it happened;
- Who originally dealt with the matter;
- What you would like to happen to remedy the situation.

Remember to include important details and dates where possible. We can give you information about how we will process your complaint. We hope that we can settle complaints as quickly as possible in this way.

Formal Complaint (Stage 2)

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you can take this further by contacting the relevant Head of Department [here](#)

Please tell us:

- what happened;
- when it happened;
- who dealt with you;
- what you would like us to do to put things right.

Where the complaint regards an application for funding and falls within the guidelines outlined above, copies of the following information are also required:

- The original application for funding to us.
- Any documents or other material that was enclosed with the application.
- The decision letter received from us.
- Any other letters or documentation sent by either party in relation to the application.

Please also tell us if there is anything we need to know about how to contact you. You must do this within four weeks of receiving our response to Stage 1.

When will I hear from you?

Within three working days of receiving your formal complaint we will write to you to say that we have received it. We will also tell you how you can contact the person who is dealing with your complaint and when you can expect a reply.

You will receive a reply to your complaint within 10 working days. If we cannot give a full reply in this time, we will tell you why and when you are likely to receive it.

Stage 3

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, you can take this further by contacting our Chief Executive on castellbrychan@llyfrau.cymru

Please tell us:

- what happened;
- when it happened;
- who dealt with you;
- what you would like us to do to put things right.

Where the complaint regards an application for funding and falls within the guidelines outlined above, copies of the following information are also required:

- The original application for funding to us.
- Any documents or other material that was enclosed with the application.
- The decision letter received from us.
- Any other letters or documentation sent by either party in relation to the application.

Please also tell us if there is anything we need to know about how to contact you. You must do this within four weeks of receiving our response to Stage 2.

When will I hear from you?

Within three working days of receiving your complaint we will write to you to say that we have received it. We will also tell you how you can contact the person who is dealing with your complaint and when you can expect a reply.

The Chief Executive may seek the advice of members of the Board of Trustees and/or external specialists whilst investigating your complaint.

You will receive a reply to your complaint within 15 working days. If we cannot give a full reply in this time, we will tell you why and when you are likely to receive it.

We may ask you to meet with us to discuss your complaint in more detail. This meeting would normally be held within 10 working days of us receiving your complaint. We would send you a formal reply within 15 working days from the day of the meeting.

If you wish to complain about the Chief Executive Officer of the Books Council of Wales please write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees on trustees@books.wales outlining your concerns, setting out the facts clearly including any communications you have had from us.

Stage 4

As a registered charity, we are governed by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and if you are not satisfied with our Chief Executive's reply, you can refer your complaint to them. In order to do this, however, you will be expected to have followed our complaints procedure in full first. Please include all communication you have had with us when contacting them.

Charity Commission for England and Wales

PO Box 211

Bootle L20 7YX

Phone: 0300 066 9197

www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity

Email: post@charitycommission.gov.uk

The outcome of the investigation will be reported to the Books Council of Wales Executive Team for monitoring purposes.

Other ways to make a complaint

Creative Wales

If your complaint relates to the distribution of publishing grants, and you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can contact Creative Wales which is located within the portfolio of the Deputy Minister for the Arts & Sport of Welsh Government.

Creative Wales

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff CF10 3NQ

Phone: 0300 0615976

Email: creativewales@gov.wales

For complaints regarding Welsh language issues, you can contact:

The Welsh Language Commissioner

Market Chambers

5-7 St Mary Street

Cardiff CF10 1AT

Phone: 0345 6033 221
Email: post@cyg-wlc.cymru

To find out more about the Freedom of Information Act you can contact:

The Information Commissioner

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9
5AF

Phone: 0303 123 1113

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales investigates complaints by members of the public who have suffered injustice because of maladministration by public organisations. By law, the Ombudsman is independent of the Government and the civil service and has wide powers to investigate. The Ombudsman does not normally investigate complaints if they have not been through our complaints' procedures first. The Ombudsman's services are free.

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Pencoed

CF35 5LJ

Phone: 0300 790 0203

Email: ask@ombudsman.wales

Freedom of information

The Books Council of Wales is not a public authority. Rather, it is a charity, registered under charity number 1192269. In this regard, the provisions which provide for any third party to make a request for information under the FOI legislation do not apply.

As a charity supporting the book sector in Wales we are not averse to providing interested third parties with answers to reasonable and proportionate requests for information, notwithstanding that we are not a public authority and have no formal obligation to respond to FOI requests.

Our annual accounts, which are posted [here](#) online provide an overview of the organisations that receive BCW funding. Further, all the titles that are funded will contain an acknowledgement of the support they received from us and are available to access free of charge via the legal deposit libraries in the UK.

Your personal information

If you use our complaints procedure, you are agreeing that we can use any personal information you send us for purposes connected with your complaint. We may also give your personal information to other people and organisations if we have to do so by law or if you have given us permission.

Equal opportunities

We are committed to equal opportunities and take complaints about discrimination seriously. We may use complaints about discrimination to review our policies and procedures. This is to make sure we treat everyone equally.

We may record information about the ethnic background, sex and disability of everyone who makes a complaint so that we promote and maintain our equal opportunities commitment. We will keep all information confidential.

Comments and suggestions

We welcome comments and suggestions as these can help us improve our services. Please send any comments to castellbrychan@llyfrau.cymru

Getting in touch

You can contact our Chief Executive or make general enquiries at

The Books Council of Wales
Castell Brychan
ABERYSTWYTH
Ceredigion
SY23 2JB
www.books.wales
Phone: 01970 624151
Email: castellbrychan@llyfrau.cymru

You can contact the Chair of our Board of Trustees at trustees@books.wales by writing to the address above.