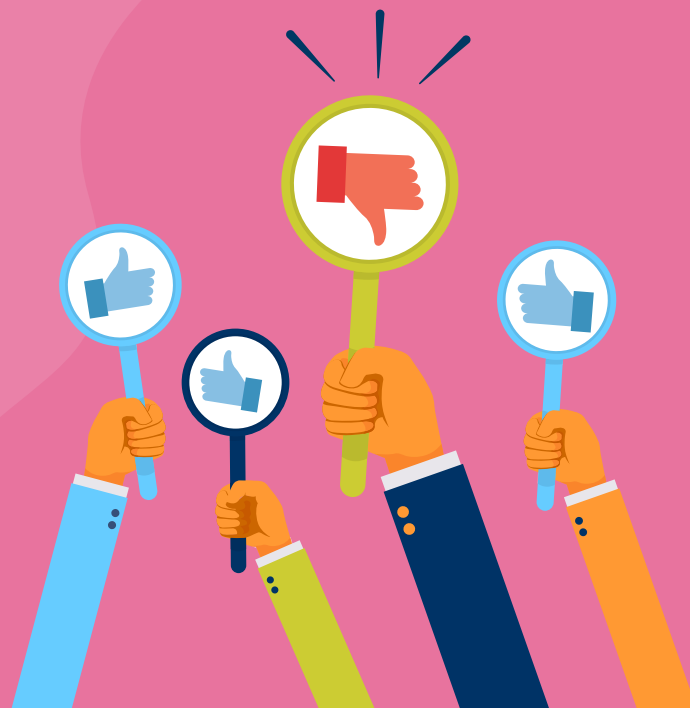


# Complaints Audit



The QCS complaints audit focuses on five key areas and should be completed in line with the current audit schedule of your service, as well as any local risks, to allow you to evidence compliance with both the fundamental standards, in particular Regulation 16: Receiving and acting on complaints and Regulation 17: Good governance, as well as the new single assessment framework from the CQC. The guidance aligns particularly to the new quality statements 'Learning Culture', 'Responding to people's immediate needs' and 'Listening to and involving people'.

This guidance should also be reviewed alongside key policies and procedures, including the Quality and Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure, Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and Auditing Policy and Procedure.

## AUDIT SCORING

### Standards Met or Not Met

- Each question should be completed in the audit, with a '1' entered where the service has met that question or a '0' where it has not met the requirements of the question
- Record any further observations, as part of the audit, in the 'comments' column for each question
- Once the full list of questions has been completed, the scorings '0's and '1's should be tallied up and totalled at the bottom of the table
- Each table already has the total number of questions documented; you must provide a total of how many questions you have met as part of the audit
- Please note - each box is defined as one question. There is guidance included within the audit for each question with evidence prompts and evidence sources suggested

### Scoring Rating Boxes

- Red, Amber and Green boxes are situated at the bottom of the audit questions as a way of determining the severity of the risk of the overall audit score
- Determining the scoring for each colour rating will be dependent upon the local risks associated with the audit theme and must be determined by the service

- Once completed, the range of scoring for each rating box can be added and will allow those completing the audit to ascertain how severe the result of the audit is. It may be a different range from other audits and so should be completed on an individual basis by the service
- An example would be an audit of 12 questions having Red for any scores between 0-5, Amber for scores between 6-9, and Green for scores between 10-12. This will allow the auditor to clearly see the risks associated with the scorings but must be determined by the service at a local level.

## ACTION PLAN

- Once completed, the findings from the complaints audit must be documented in an action plan template, which can be found at the end of this document
- All questions that have a scoring of '0' must be documented, alongside what action is being taken
- Remember to implement SMART objectives when action planning:
  - S** – Specific
  - M** – Measurable
  - A** – Agreed
  - R** – Realistic
  - T** – Timebound

## ACCOUNTABILITY

- Ensure that all audits are signed and the name printed of the person completing it, alongside the date of completion
- The audit should also be verified by the Registered Manager where it has been completed by another member of staff
- Once fully completed, audits should be kept in line with the Record Keeping Policy and Procedure at the service

Complaints Audit	
Name of Service:	
Name of Service Manager:	
Date of Audit:	
Name of Auditor:	
Signature of Auditor:	
Verification of Audit by Manager:	

Scoring Criteria: 1 = Standard Met    0 = Standard Not Met

*The audit score ratings must be populated by the service. These must be based on the local risks associated with the complaints audit theme. An action plan must be completed for any section scoring a '0'.*

Area of Audit: <i>Considering a complaint</i>			Yes	No	N/A	Score	Comments
1.0	Was the service user given information on how to complain when they started using the service?	👁					
1.1	Is it clear who the service user can complain to?	👁					
1.2	Does the service user have a named point of contact that they can go to within the service?	👁					
1.3	Are service users made aware of the importance of complaining?	👁					
1.4	Do service users know they have a right to complain?	👁					
1.5	Do service users feel that the service will be open and honest when things go wrong?	👁					
1.6	Are service users encouraged to give their feedback in relation to the service being provided?	👁					
1.7	Do service users know how to contact the regulator?	👁					

Area of Audit: <i>Making a complaint</i>			Yes	No	N/A	Score	Comments
2.0	Have staff been given a copy of the complaints policy for the service?	👁					
2.1	Are there staff in place that are trained to deal with complaints from service users?	👁					
2.2	Are staff confident to deal with complaints from service users as they arise?	👁					
2.3	Are staff made aware of the importance of receiving complaints from service users?	👁					
2.4	Have staff had training in the whistleblowing processes at the service?	👁					

2.5	Are staff trained and know how to raise a safeguarding concern?						
2.6	Are there different channels of communication available at the service in order for complaints to be communicated?						
2.7	Are service users offered support with making a complaint?						
2.8	Is all the correct and necessary information taken down in relation to the complaint?						
2.9	Is the procedure for making a complaint clear and adaptable to the person's specific communication needs?						
2.10	Is there evidence of the regulator or local authority being informed of a complaint, where this is requirement?						
2.11	Are staff and service users familiar with Duty of Candour requirements?						

Area of Audit: <i>Staying informed</i>			Yes	No	N/A	Score	Comments
3.0	Are service users kept up to date with the progress of their complaint?						
3.1	Are formal acknowledgements communicated within the required timeframe of receiving the complaint?						
3.2	Is a full response, in the preferred communication method, sent out to the complainant?						
3.3	Are full records kept of the complaint and its investigation?						
3.4	Is there an escalation process in place, where this is required, which service users are aware of?						
3.5	Is feedback gained throughout the process in relation to how the complaint is being handled?						

Area of Audit: <i>Receiving outcomes</i>			Yes	No	N/A	Score	Comments
4.0	Are complaint outcomes completed in the necessary timeframe?						
4.1	Are outcomes communicated to people in their preferred way, as per the Accessible Information Standard?						
4.2	Are staff trained in how to deliver outcomes appropriately?						
4.3	Do outcomes use appropriate language; are they professional and not formed from opinions?						
4.4	Do outcomes highlight escalation steps should this be needed by the individual? i.e. regulator information, ombudsman						
4.5	Where actions have been required from a complaint, have these been evidenced and completed?						

Area of Audit: <i>Reflecting on the experience</i>			Yes	No	N/A	Score	Comments
5.0	Are people aware how they can feedback on their complaints experience?	👁					
5.1	Are trends / themes looked at in relation to complaints?	👁					
5.2	Does the service undertake learning from the complaints being handled, to support development?	👁					
5.3	Are staff aware of the outcomes from complaints handling and what developments have been made?	👁					

Audit Score				Score	
Considering a complaint audit score				/8	
Making a complaint audit score				/11	
Staying informed audit score				/6	
Receiving outcomes audit score				/6	
Reflecting on the experience audit score				/4	
Total complaints audit score:				/35	

### Compliance score rating

Red =

Amber =

Green =

### Audit Action Plan

Upon completion of the audit track the progress of the identified actions through the action plan template below.

Identified Action	Target Completion Date	Action Assigned to	Comments	Date Action Completed	Print Name

## Areas of Audit , Evidence Prompts and Sources

Area of Audit: Considering a complaint		Evidence Prompts	Evidence Sources
1.0	Was the service user given information on how to complain when they started using the service? ↑	Is the service complaints literature visible and accessible to all service users? Is it available in different formats?	Service User Pack Pre- Assessment Documentation Complaints Policy Service User Guide Evidence of other formats Complaints Poster
1.1	Is it clear who the service user can complain to? ↑	Is the complaint handling procedure (and who will support it) highly visible?	Policy document includes the names Posters/literature with named individual Service User Guide Complaints Policy
1.2	Does the service user have a named point of contact that they can go to within the service? ↑	Do service users have a named person within the service that they can approach to make a complaint?	Name(s) documented of key staff Discussion with staff – are frontline staff sufficiently empowered and sufficiently knowledgeable to deal with a service user who wants to make a complaint?
1.3	Are service users made aware of the importance of complaining? ↑	Is literature visible and accessible to all service users and available in different formats?	Service User Pack Pre-Assessment Documentation Complaints Policy Service User Guide Evidence of other formats Review documentation Complaint literature Number of complaints per month by theme
1.4	Do service users know they have a right to complain? ↑	Do all staff encourage people to complain, without fear for themselves?	Complaints Policy Service User Guide Staff complaints training Staff Handbook
1.5	Do service users feel that the service will be open and honest when things go wrong? ↑	Does the service reassure service users that making a complaint will not have a negative effect on their care?	Evidence of satisfaction surveys Evidence of learning and improvement from complaints Customer quality reviews Satisfaction survey results
		Is the service transparent about the outcomes of complaints?	Evidence of trends and learning from complaints Annual/quarterly newsletters or feedback to staff and service users
1.6	Are service users encouraged to give their feedback in relation to the service being provided? ↑	Is there evidence of service user engagement?	Evidence of Complaints, Compliments & Concerns

1.7	Do service users know how to contact the regulator?	↑	Is literature, including provider, regulatory and local authority, available to the service user?	CQC ratings poster CQC inspection report Complaints Policy Safeguarding Poster Service User Guide Whistleblowing information
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Area of Audit: Making a complaint		Evidence Prompts		Evidence Sources
2.0	Have staff been given a copy of the complaints policy for the service?	↑	Are copies of the complaints policy available i.e. on noticeboards, staff rooms, staff handbook etc?	Complaints Policy Evidence of audits of the service's office/premises
2.1	Are there staff in place that are trained to deal with complaints from service users?	↑	Are there staff training records in place?	Training Policy Training Matrix Training certificates in place within the staff member's file Induction and Onboarding Policy Staff Handbook
2.2	Are staff confident to deal with complaints from service users as they arise?	↑	Do staff encourage people to complain, without fear for themselves?	Induction and Onboarding Policy Complaints Policy Staff Handbook Complaints literature Satisfaction surveys
2.3	Are staff made aware of the importance of receiving complaints from service users?	↑	Is literature visible and accessible to all staff and available in different formats?	Recruitment Policy Induction and Onboarding Policy Complaints Policy Staff Handbook Complaints literature Number of complaints/month by theme
2.4	Have staff had training in the whistleblowing processes at the service?	↑	Are staff training records in place?	Training Policy Training Matrix Training certificates in place within the staff member's folder Induction and Onboarding Policy Staff Handbook Whistleblowing Policy
2.5	Are staff trained and know how to raise a safeguarding concern?	↑	Are there staff training records in place?	Training Policy Training Matrix Training certificates in place within the staff member's folder Induction and Onboarding Policy Staff Handbook Safeguarding Policy
2.6	Are there different channels of communication available at the service in order for complaints to be communicated?	↑	Is a variety of literature available on complaints, i.e. easy reads, large print etc?	Complaints Policy Accessible Information Standard (AIS) Policy Complaints literature

2.7	Are service users offered support with making a complaint? ↑	Is a variety of literature available on complaints, i.e. easy reads, large print etc?	Complaints Policy Accessible Information Standard (AIS) Policy Complaint literature
		Are staff trained to support people with making a complaint?	Training Policy Complaints Policy Staff training records
2.8	Is all the correct and necessary information taken down in relation to the complaint? ↑	Are regular reviews of complaints documentation undertaken?	Evidence of complaints audits Trends and analysis of complaints Peer reviews Complaints folder/electronic complaints system
2.9	The procedure for making a complaint is clear and adaptable to the person's specific communication needs? ↑	Is the complaints policy regularly reviewed to ensure it remains current to the service?	Complaints Policy Good Governance Policy Quality and Quality Assurance Policy
2.10	Is there evidence of the regulator or local authority being informed of a complaint, where this is requirement? ↑	Is there evidence of statutory notifications/ local authority paperwork in place where the complaints require escalation? i.e. safeguarding	Complaints policy Complaints folder/electronic complaints system Regulatory notifications Minutes from complaints meetings with LA/ regulator
2.11	Are staff and service users familiar with Duty of Candour requirements? ↑	Is there evidence of understanding in relation to duty of candour? Is there evidence of saying sorry meaningfully when things go wrong?	Duty of Candour Policy



Area of Audit: Staying Informed			Evidence Prompts	Evidence Sources
3.0	Are service users kept up to date with the progress of their complaint?	↑	Is there evidence of acknowledgements and updates being sent to the person making a complaint?	Complaints Policy Complaints folder/electronic complaints system
3.1	Are formal acknowledgements communicated within the required timeframe of receiving the complaint?	↑	Is there evidence of formal acknowledgements being sent via the person's preferred communication method?	Complaints Policy Complaints folder/electronic complaints system
3.2	Is a full response, in the preferred communication method, sent out to the complainant?	↑	Is there evidence of a full response being sent?	Complaint Policy Complaints folder/electronic complaints system
3.3	Are full records kept of the complaint and its investigation?	↑	Is there a complaints folder/electronic complaints system in place?	Record Keeping Policy Complaint Policy Complaints folder/electronic complaints system Suite of data protection policies and procedures
3.4	Is there an escalation process in place, where this is required, which service users are aware of?	↑	Do service users know who to escalate any concerns to in relation to their complaint?	Complaints Policy Organisation chart for the service Service User Guide
3.5	Is feedback gained throughout the process in relation to how the complaint is being handled?	↑	Are service users communicated with regularly during the complaints process?	Complaints Policy Evidence of communication with the service user (emails, calls, letters etc.) Service user's file Complaints folder/electronic complaints system Satisfaction Surveys

Area of Audit: Receiving Outcomes			Evidence Prompts	Evidence Sources
4.0	Are complaint outcomes completed in the necessary timeframe?	↑	Do staff follow the necessary timeframes for dealing with complaints, as set out in the complaints policy?	Complaints Policy Complaints folder/electronic complaints system
4.1	Are outcomes communicated to people in their preferred way?	↑	Is there evidence of a variety of means of communication being used, i.e. verbal, written, large print, tape, braille etc?	Accessible Information Standard (AIS) Policy Suite of Communication Policies
4.2	Are staff trained in how to deliver outcomes appropriately?	↑	Is staff training in evidence in relation to the complaints process for the company?	Complaints Policy Training Policy Training records

<b>4.3</b>	Do outcomes use appropriate language; are they professional and not formed from opinions?	↑	Is the outcome communicated correctly by staff?	Complaints Policy Complaints folder/electronic complaints system Analysis/peer review of complaint outcomes
<b>4.4</b>	Do outcomes highlight escalation steps should this be needed by the individual? i.e. regulator information, ombudsman	↑	Are service users aware that they can discuss outcomes and escalate where necessary?	Complaints Policy Service User Guide
<b>4.5</b>	Where actions have been required from a complaint, have these been evidenced and completed?	↑	Is the service open about any actions that were required as a result of a complaint and can evidence they have been completed?	Complaints Policy Action plans in relation to the complaint Evidence of actions being completed included with the action plan Complaints folder/electronic complaints system

Area of Audit: Reflecting on the experience			Evidence Prompts	Evidence Sources
<b>5.0</b>	Are people aware how they can feedback on their complaints experience?	↑	Is there a survey in place to support service user feedback and aid company development?	Satisfaction Surveys Customer Quality Review Suggestion boxes
<b>5.1</b>	Are trends / themes looked at in relation to complaints?	↑	Is there someone responsible for reviewing complaint trends and feeding it back to the company?	Good Governance Policy Quality meetings Complaints review meetings Documentation to evidence trend analysis and actions
<b>5.2</b>	Does the service undertake learning from the complaints being handled, to support development?	↑	Is there evidence of development and learning in the service?	Good Governance Policy Quality meetings Complaints review meetings Documentation to evidence trend analysis and development
<b>5.3</b>	Are staff aware of the outcomes from complaints handling and what developments have been made?	↑	Are outcomes and learning shared with staff to support their understanding and importance of the complaints system?	Team meetings Staff newsletters/company updates to staff Staff supervisions/appraisals Good Governance Policy