



COMPLAINTS POLICY

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This policy applies to complaints from: Hijinx Actors (and their family members), participants, audiences, partners, donors, funders, contractors and suppliers.

***Note:** Staff members, contracted freelancers and creatives who wish to make a complaint should follow the grievance procedure outlined in the Staff Handbook or Freelancer Handbook.

Legislation and other relevant policies and documents

Internal: Dignity at Work Policy, Strategic Equalities Plan, Safeguarding Policy, Hijinx Grievance Procedure and Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy

External: Charities Commission Code of Conduct, Equalities Act 2010, General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

Introduction

This Complaints Policy explains how to make a complaint to Hijinx Theatre and the procedure that we will follow. Throughout this policy, Hijinx Theatre, Wales Millennium Centre, Bute Place, Cardiff CF10 5AL will be referred to as “we” or “us”.

Though we take care to provide a positive experience for all, we recognise that complaints might be made, and we will try and resolve these. We receive complaints in good faith and will use them to help us learn and improve what we do and how we do it.

Policy

We will:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure that is clear and accessible for anyone who wants to make a complaint,
- Share our complaints procedure on our website and make it clear how people can make a complaint,
- Ensure the internal procedure for handling complaints is fully understood by our staff and Board of Trustees,
- Investigate all complaints thoroughly, fairly and in a timely way,
- Work to resolve complaints wherever possible,
- Reflect on any changes that may need to happen in response to complaints,
- Gather information and share it with our staff to help us to continually improve what we do.

Definition of a complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made by a service user. The service user could be an individual or a representative of another company.

Complaints can be formal or informal. We try to resolve complaints informally where possible. If you do not want your complaint to be treated informally, please tell us that you want to follow the formal complaints procedure when you make your complaint.

Any complaint involving serious concerns or allegations (such as safeguarding, health and safety or bullying and harassment or sexual harassment) will automatically be treated as a formal complaint.

Who can complain

Anyone who engages with Hijinx and/or takes part in our activities. This includes Hijinx Actors (and their family members), participants, audiences, partners, donors, funders, contractors and suppliers.

Exceptions: Staff members, contracted freelancers and creatives who wish to make a complaint should follow the grievance procedure outlined in the Staff Handbook or Freelancer Handbook.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively in line with the Data Protection Act 2018. Only those directly involved in investigating and resolving a complaint will handle confidential information in line with UK GDPR regulations.

Making an informal complaint

Our aim is deal with any complaint in a timely manner.

Many complaints can be resolved informally, and often at the time a situation arises. If you are on site and feel able to do so, please raise your complaint with a member of Hijinx staff who will seek to resolve your complaint directly. If your complaint relates to a freelance worker, please approach a Hijinx staff member with your complaint in the first instance.

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, or do not want an informal solution, you can pursue a formal complaint.

Complaints can be received via email directly to a staff member, to the complaints email inbox, via letter, by telephone or in person. Verified service users who complain via social media will be asked to send their complaint via a communication method above. If you wish to complain by letter or email, please use the address below.

Letter: Administrator, Hijinx Theatre, Wales Millennium Centre, Bute Place, Cardiff, CF10 5AL

Email: complaints@hijinx.org.uk

We'll investigate complaints made in this way and we will respond in writing (or verbally where required) to each complaint received.

Exceptions: General feedback made on social media may not be responded to. Any individual wishing to make a complaint should use the methods described above. Complaints made via surveys are noted but cannot be responded to directly as they are completed by our service users anonymously.

Making a formal complaint

A formal complaint should be made when you have serious concerns. If you have concerns about safeguarding, health and safety, bullying and harassment or any other serious welfare concern please raise it at your earliest opportunity so we can take any necessary action.

When you make a formal complaint, please include the following information:

- The date, time and location of any incident if applicable
- A description of what happened and / or your complaint
- If appropriate include any staff names and any other relevant information
- Any other evidence to support your complaint
- A brief description of how you would like us to resolve the complaint

Please provide your full name, email address and contact phone number. Unless you tell us otherwise, we will assume your preferred method of contact is the same as the one you used to tell us about your complaint.

What happens next?

- All formal complaints will be dealt with in the first instance by our Administrator who will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days.
- You may be contacted by them (or a staff member they deem is best placed to respond) to gather any additional information from you that will help us resolve the complaint.
- You will normally receive a full response to your complaint within 30 working days of its receipt. In cases where further investigation is required or we need external advice or support, we may extend this to 45 days and will notify you of this in writing.
- If your complaint alleges that a criminal offence has taken place, then the police will be informed, and their procedures will take precedence over Hijinx's complaints policy.
- If, as a direct result of your complaint, disciplinary proceedings are taken against a member of staff or a contracted worker, an internal disciplinary procedure will apply. You will be informed that disciplinary proceedings have taken place, but not the outcome as those proceedings are confidential.

Fairness and impartiality

On receipt of a complaint, Hijinx will ensure that the people investigating and making any decision/s about the outcome are impartial. If, during the investigation, it arises that a conflict of interest exists between those investigating the complaint and the subject of the complaint and/or the person raising the complaint the Chief Executive or Chair of the Board as appropriate will remove that person or persons from the process and appoint an impartial person or persons to investigate and reach a decision.

Escalating your formal complaint

If you are dissatisfied with the response you received from us to your formal complaint, you can escalate it to Hijinx's Board of Trustees via:

Letter: Board of Trustees, Hijinx Theatre, Wales Millenium Centre, Bute Place, Cardiff, CF10 5AL

Email: complaints@hijinx.org.uk

The Board of Trustees will acknowledge receipt of your communication within 10 working days. They will review your complaint and our response and will determine if further action is required by Hijinx. You will receive a final response within 30 working days of receipt.

Taking your complaint elsewhere

Though we encourage you to contact us directly to resolve your complaint in the first instance, you can contact the Charities Commission and make a complaint at any point. Details of how to make a complaint to them can be found [here](#).

Do you need any specific requirements to enable you to make a complaint?

Please let us know if you would like to view this policy in an alternative format.

Monitoring complaints

A log of complaints received is monitored and reviewed by the Leadership Team on an ongoing basis.

Vexatious complaints

In the unlikely event that complaints are raised and pursued with the intention of deliberately harming the reputation of the charity or any employee, freelance worker or volunteer, we reserve the right to seek legal advice and take legal action to protect the charity and those who work within it.

Aggressive or inappropriate language or behaviour towards our staff and volunteers will not be tolerated and complaints should be raised in a constructive and respectful manner.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.