



# DWQR Complaint Handling Procedure

## A Guide for Consumers

### **Making a complaint about our service**

DWQR is committed to offering a high standard of service. We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve.

This guide describes our complaint procedure and how to make a complaint. It also tells you what you can expect from us. Our complaint procedure follows the guidance provided by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

### **What is a service complaint?**

A service complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction from one or more customers about the standard of service we have provided.

You can complain about things like:

- failure to provide a service or inadequate standard of service,
- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests,
- how we communicated with you,
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff.

### **What can't I complain about?**

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaint handling procedure.

These include:

- a request for information,
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded service complaint or to have a service complaint reconsidered.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you resolve your concerns, we will give information and advice to help you.

## Who can complain?

Anyone who requests or is affected by our services can make a complaint including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service.

## How do I complain?

You can complain by phone, by email or in writing. We will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help customers access our complaint procedure.

When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter

## Our contact details

### Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland

3-F South

Victoria Quay

Edinburgh

EH6 6QQ

Tel: 0131 244 0190

Email: [dwqr@gov.scot](mailto:dwqr@gov.scot)

Website: [www.dwqr.scot](http://www.dwqr.scot)

## How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally, you must make your complaint within 6 months of the event you want to complain about, or finding out that you have a reason to complain. In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

## What happens when I have complained?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaint procedure has two stages.

## Stage 1- Frontline resolution

You can complain by phone, email or in writing. We aim to resolve complaints quickly and close to where we provided the service. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at Stage 1 **in five working days** or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. You can ask us to look at your complaint again by taking your complaint to Stage 2. If you wish to exercise this right, you must contact us **within 20 working days** of receipt of the outcome of your Stage 1 complaint.

## Stage 2 - Investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

When using Stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint **within three working days**,
- discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as a possible and usually **within 20 working days**

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will keep you updated.

## What if I am still dissatisfied?

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

The SPSO **cannot** normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaint procedure (so please make sure it has done so before contacting the SPSO)
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago
- A matter that has been or is being considered in court.

You can contact the SPSO at:

By Post:

**Scottish Public Services Ombudsman**

Bridgeside House

99 McDonald Road

Edinburgh

EH7 4NS

Freephone: 0800 377 7330

Website: [www.spsso.org.uk/](http://www.spsso.org.uk/)

## Personal data

In carrying out investigations there may be a need to share your personal information with a concerned body e.g. Scottish Water, the local authority or SPSO, etc. where they are implicated in a related water quality complaint investigation. You can find out about the types of personal data we may collect about you when you make a complaint to us in the privacy notice on our website. <https://dwqr.scot/privacy/>

## Getting help to make your complaint

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We can take complaints from a friend, relative, or an advocate, if you have given them your consent to complain on your behalf.

If you require specific support, such as learning difficulties, people who are deaf or hard of hearing or you require information in large font or braille please contact us where suitable arrangements may be put in place if appropriate.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance:

**Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance**

18 York Place

Edinburgh

EH1 3EP

Tel: 0131 524 1975

Email: [enquiry@siaa.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@siaa.org.uk)

Website: [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk)

## A quick guide to our complaint handling procedure

### THE SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN

If, after receiving our final decision on your Stage 2 complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have handled your Stage 2 complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it.

### STAGE 2: INVESTIGATION

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage 1. We also look at complaints at stage 2 if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation due to their seriousness or high risk.

We will acknowledge your complaint within **3 working days**. We will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than **20 working days** *un-less* there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.

### STAGE 1: FRONTLINE RESOLUTION

We will always try to resolve your complaint as quickly as possible. We will give you a decision **in 5 working days or less**.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at Stage 2.

### COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

You can make your complaint by phone, by e-mail or in writing.

We have a 2 stage complaint procedure. Please consider whether your complaint can be dealt with by our complaint handling procedure.