

Client Complaints Procedure

Quetzal aims to provide a fair and equal service which is of a high standard. We hope you are happy with the service you receive, but if you are not and you wish to make a complaint, you are encouraged to do so. You can use an advocate (a person who can speak on your behalf) if you wish, or speak for yourself.

The Quetzal Complaints Procedure is for any woman who uses Quetzal services and is unhappy about them or about the way she has been treated. The Complaints Procedure may be used to about any of the direct services, staff, volunteers or Management Committee. By complaining, no woman should feel she will lose the support of Quetzal.

The Complaints Procedure is in three stages. If you feel unhappy with the outcome of the investigation of your complaint, or the way it has been investigated, then you may take it on to the next stage for someone different to look at it.

About the Quetzal name

The Quetzal Project was the brainchild of Jenifer Anthony Black. Quetzal began in 1989 as a self help group and then developed into a more formalised range of professional support services. Jenifer no longer plays a role in the delivery of services provided by Quetzal, but her vision remains.

A quetzal is a South American bird which, legend has it, dies when caged. The Quetzal Project offers counselling, a Helpline and information to break the bars of psychological cages for women who are recovering from the trauma of childhood sexual abuse.

Quetzal now works with hundreds of women aged 16 and over in Leicester City, County and Rutland.

Production of this leaflet is supported by the Home Office (Office for Criminal Justice Reform) through the Victims Fund.



COMPLAINTS

Helpline 0116 253 3383

Quetzal Helpline is open:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday

7 pm-9 pm

Answer phone at other times.

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14-16 Talbot Lane, Leicester LE1 4LR
Office 0116 253 9103 • Fax 0870 705 9993

Helpline 0116 253 3383

Email help@quetzal.org.uk • Web www.quetzal.org.uk

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The Quetzal Project Limited • Company limited by guarantee
Registered in England and Wales • Company No. 5319865

*Supporting women
recovering from the trauma of
childhood sexual abuse*

Patron: Sue Townsend

COMPLAINTS

How to make a complaint

It may help to talk to someone who isn't involved with Quetzal. This can help in sorting out what you want to do and why you want to do it. A complaint can be made in any method of your choice: eg by letter, on tape, in Braille, by fax, e-mail, text or Minicom.

Stage one—informal discussion

This stage involves trying to resolve the problem/complaint informally with the complainant and worker/ volunteer by informal discussion as soon as possible—if you are willing to do so.

Quetzal is responsible for making sure that this is done sensitively and carefully and for recording what is said, by whom, and the start and finish times of the meeting. If the complaint is about a serious matter, a copy of the notes made at the meeting will be sent to you with a written offer to make corrections or additions, or to make a note of where your version differs. The Chairperson will acknowledge your complaint, upon receipt in writing within seven days.

We hope that the problem can be resolved with the person concerned, preferably on the same day or within ten days. It is hoped that the majority of complaints are dealt with at this informal stage.

If agreement cannot be reached and you feel

dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage One, you can request investigation at Stage Two by writing to the Chairperson, within twenty-eight days of receiving a response from Stage One.

Stage two—formal discussion

Stage Two involves a more formal investigation of the complaint by the Chairperson of Quetzal. This will mean arbitrating or reaching a judgement on it and making a decision on how best to sort things out.

The Chairperson will acknowledge your complaint, upon receipt in writing within forty-eight hours. The Chairperson will investigate the complaint, including interviewing you and others to establish the facts.

A written response and personal explanation by the Chairperson will be made to you within twenty-eight days of the complaint being made. The Line Manager or Management Committee will also be informed about the complaint and outcome.

If the complaint is about the Chairperson, then the complaint is referred to the Management Committee who will nominate an investigating officer who will proceed as above. The investigating officer will be independent of the project.

You will be informed about the next stage of the Complaints Procedure and if you are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two, you can request an investigation at Stage Three. This must be done in writing within twenty-eight days of receiving a written response from Stage Two.

Stage three – review panel

The review panel's role is to ensure that the due process has been followed correctly, to consider whether appropriate action was taken and to make recommenda-

tions about the way forward. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to get the panel together.

The Chairperson will acknowledge your complaint, upon receipt within forty-eight hours.

The review panel will consist of no more than three women, none of whom will have been involved with the procedure or complaint beforehand. The panel will comprise:

- A lay member of the Management Committee
- Two independent persons—possibly from another organisation—one of whom will act as Chairperson

The review panel needs to investigate the complaint within thirty working days of the Chairperson receiving notification.

All parties will be given notice and the opportunity to submit papers to the review panel. These papers must be included with the written notice of the review meeting to the panel members, yourself and the respondent. Seven days' written notice of this review meeting will be given.

The review panel meeting will be as informal as possible. The review panel will consider their action in private and write to you outlining their decision within seven working days of the meeting.

The decision of the independent review panel is final.

A written record of the complaint and action taken will be kept by Quetzal, in a separate complaint file.

All correspondence relating to the complaint will be sent by registered post.

Complaints about Quetzal

This leaflet explains how to make a complaint about Quetzal. It gives full details of the process, people and time scales involved.

Quetzal offers a three stage complaints procedure:

- *Informal discussion*
- *Formal complaint*
- *Review panel*

A complaint starts at the informal discussion level.

If the complaint is not resolved, it goes on to become a formal complaint.

If this formal complaint cannot be resolved either, a review panel makes a final decision on the issue.