



Customer Complaints & Feedback Policy

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OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR CUSTOMERS

- 1.1 The Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (the "QLTR"), supported by the QLTR department, is the Crown's representative for *bona vacantia* (ie ownerless property) in Scotland. There are broadly 3 strands to such property. Firstly there is treasure trove, secondly there are estates which have fallen to the Crown as *ultimus haeres* (where a person has died leaving no will and no known relative) and thirdly other property, both heritable (ie land and buildings and interests in such property) and moveable, falling to the Crown as *bona vacantia*.
- 1.2 The QLTR's function is to deal with such property in the public interest. In respect of Treasure Trove that involves consideration of whether a reported find should be claimed for allocation to a Museum. In relation to that function the QLTR is supported by the Treasure Trove Unit located in the National Museums Scotland. For the other property their function is usually to seek to dispose of such property for value for the benefit of the public purse.
- 1.3 We recognise that a key element in helping us to deliver our functions most effectively is listening to those who are, or have been, affected by the work that we do and, in turn, the service we provide.
- 1.4 We want to hear about your experience of dealing directly with the QLTR and the QLTR Office, or the Treasure Trove Unit, whether it is good or bad, or how you have otherwise been affected by our service. We can learn from your experience.
- 1.5 We are committed to:
 - giving our customers the opportunity to comment on the service the QLTR, her Department and the Treasure Trove Unit provide, including our policies, systems and procedures;
 - listening to our customers and recording their feedback;
 - responding to complaints in a timely and helpful manner; and
 - using feedback to inform changes and improvements, as appropriate, so that the QLTR delivers a better service.

Who are our customers?

- 1.6 Our customers are any person or organisation who we deal with in connection with our work or who is affected by our work.

What is customer feedback?

- 1.7 Customer feedback is any complaint, comment, compliment or suggestion from our customers regarding the work of, and/or the service provided by, the QLTR, their Department or the Treasure Trove Unit.
- 1.8 Specifically, a complaint is any written or spoken expression of dissatisfaction with the service we provide.

Why does the QLTR value customer feedback?

- 1.9 The QLTR aims to deliver a high standard of service. Customer feedback, both positive and negative, including complaints, can provide valuable insight into the public perception of the service we provide. It can also help us to improve our standards of service.
- 1.10 We want to identify good practice so that we can seek to apply best practice across our operations.
- 1.11 We also want to put things right, if possible, when something goes wrong.

QLTR response to customer feedback

- 1.12 We will regularly analyse all feedback and consider whether lessons can be learned to improve our service. As part of that, we will review our policies, systems and procedures to see if any changes require to be made.
- 1.13 We will also monitor the operation of this policy.

2. HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT, COMMENT, COMPLIMENT OR SUGGESTION

- 2.1 There are a number of ways in which you can make a complaint, comment, compliment or suggestion.
- 2.2 You can choose the most convenient way for you from the options listed below:

- **by email** to enquiries@qltr.gov.uk
- **in writing** by letter to:

QLTR Department
Scottish Government Building
1F North
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

or, if the matter relates to the Treasure Trove Unit:

- **by email** to info@treasuretrovescotland.co.uk
- **in writing** by letter to:

Treasure Trove Unit
c/o National Museums Scotland
Chambers Street
Edinburgh
EH1 1JF

- 2.3 Please let us know if you would like details of our Customer Feedback Policy in another language or other format.

Can someone make a complaint on my behalf?

- 2.4 You can nominate someone else to make a complaint for you. You will need to give permission in writing that you wish for someone else to make the complaint on your behalf.

What information should I provide?

- 2.5 You should provide your full name and contact details.
- 2.6 You should provide details of any member(s) of the QLTR Department, or the Treasure Trove Unit, with whom you have already had contact regarding your feedback.

- 2.7 If you are making a complaint about a particular case, please provide information to identify the case and details as to why you are dissatisfied. If possible, please provide the QLTR Department, or the Treasure Trove Unit, reference for the matter.
- 2.8 We may seek clarification of any matters that are unclear. We may also ask you for further information. When we have the necessary information we will deal with your complaint in terms of our Complaints Procedure described below (see Section 3).

3.COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

There are two stages to our Complaints Procedure.

Stage 1 - Quick Resolution

- 3.1 We know that customers complaining about an aspect of our service, will often want the matter dealt with as quickly as possible.
- 3.2 We aim to resolve problems as soon as possible. Often it is possible to sort them out straight away.
- 3.3 If you wish to make a complaint via the "Quick Resolution" system, the first step is to email the QLTR Department, or if it relates to treasure trove, to the Treasure Trove Unit. **You should do this as soon as possible after the matter you wish to complain about occurs.**
- 3.4 You should provide details of the case, and if known, the particular member of staff who dealt with the matter and the QLTR Department (or Treasure Trove Unit) reference.
- 3.5 We will try to resolve your complaint immediately at this stage by noting details of your complaint from you and, if possible, explain what has happened. We may need to make brief enquiries into your complaint, or for the matter to be passed to another Department who might be more appropriate to deal with the matter.
- 3.6 We will do this as soon as possible and aim to contact you within 5 working days. If for any reason we cannot do that we will contact you to let you know when we anticipate we will be able to reply fully.
- 3.7 Alternatively, it may be possible for you to raise the matter, in person, with a member of staff, at the time it occurs.
- 3.8 If your complaint cannot be resolved straight away, you may progress to the formal stage of our Complaints Procedure.

Stage 2 – Formal Procedure

- 3.9 Complaints should be directed to the QLTR Department using the contact details set out in paragraph 2.2 above. This also applies where the complaint relates to the Treasure Trove Unit.
- 3.10 You should indicate on all correspondence that you are making a formal complaint. You should provide details of the case, and if

known, the particular member of staff who dealt with the matter and the QLTR Department (or Treasure Trove Unit) reference.

Timescales

- 3.11 If we cannot resolve your complaint immediately upon receipt of your notification to us of a wish to progress to the formal procedure then:
- we will aim to acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 3 working days;
 - we will aim to provide you with a full response as quickly as possible, and in any event within 20 working days; and
 - if we are unable to provide a full response, we will keep you informed of progress within 20 working days, and every 28 days thereafter, until a full response is issued.
- 3.12 Complaints should be made as soon as possible, and, in any event, within **6 months** of the matter complained of.
- 3.13 We will usually decline to deal with complaints made outside these timescales.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

- 3.14 If you are unhappy with how the QLTR has handled your complaint, you can raise the matter with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The SPSO is the final stage for complaints about most organisations providing public services in Scotland. Their service is independent, free and confidential.
- 3.15 The SPSO has the power to investigate alleged maladministration. The SPSO has no role in examining how and why legal decisions were taken, but can examine how we have handled a complaint.
- 3.16 The SPSO will decide whether your complaint has grounds for investigation.
- 3.17 The SPSO cannot normally look at complaints more than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about.
- 3.18 You may contact the SPSO directly at:

Address: SPSO, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh, EH3 0BR
or
SPSO, 4 Melville Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7NS

Telephone: 0800 377 7330
Email: ask@spsa.org.uk
Web: www.spsa.org.uk

4. WHEN THE QLTR MAY NOT DEAL WITH YOUR COMPLAINT

Unacceptable actions

- 4.1 The QLTR, their Department and the Treasure Trove Unit may refuse to deal with complaints received from the relatively few customers whose actions or behaviour we consider unacceptable. We aim to provide a service that is accessible to all customers who wish to make a complaint. However, we retain the right, where we consider actions to be unacceptable, to restrict or change access to our service.
- 4.2 We do not view behaviour as unacceptable just because a customer is forceful or determined. In fact, we accept that being persistent can be a positive advantage when pursuing a complaint. However, the actions of customers who are angry, demanding or persistent may result in unreasonable demands on us or unreasonable behaviour towards our staff.
- 4.3 Actions considered to be unacceptable are grouped into the following three headings:
- Aggressive or abusive behaviour
 - Unreasonable demands
 - Unreasonable persistence
- 4.4 We may say that we consider a customer to be making unreasonable demands or as being unreasonably persistent because of the amount of information they seek, the nature and scale of service they expect or the number of approaches they make.

Aggressive or abusive behaviour

- 4.5 Examples of behaviour under this heading include threats, physical violence, personal verbal abuse, swearing, derogatory remarks and rudeness. We also consider that inflammatory statements and unsubstantiated allegations can be abusive behaviour.

Unreasonable demands

- 4.6 Examples of actions under this heading include demanding responses within an unreasonable timescale, insisting on seeing or speaking to a particular member of staff, continual emails,

phone calls or letters, repeatedly changing the substance of the complaint or raising unrelated concerns.

- 4.7 We will not consider these unacceptable and unreasonable demands because they impact substantially on our work and diminish service to all.

Unreasonable persistence

- 4.8 Examples of actions grouped under this heading include persistent refusal to accept a decision made in relation to a complaint, persistent refusal to accept explanations relating to what this department can or cannot do, and to continue to contact us without presenting any new information.

- 4.9 We will not consider these persistent complaints to be acceptable when they take up a disproportionate amount of time and resources.

Managing unacceptable actions

- 4.10 There are very few customers whose actions we consider unacceptable. How we aim to manage these actions depends on their nature and extent. Where a customer falls into any of the above categories considered unacceptable we may take any actions as we consider appropriate including informing the customer that no further action will be taken in response to their complaint and advising them that only new or substantive issues will receive further response.