

SEQOHS Complaints and Concerns Policy

1. Complaints about staff or assessors

SEQOHS aims to provide a service which is timely, efficient and courteous. Should there be dissatisfaction with the quality or standard of service received from SEQOHS staff, or assessors, and a complaint is received, the Faculty of Occupational Medicine undertakes to investigate and respond within a reasonable timeframe as outlined below.

1.1 Raising a complaint

The matter should be brought to the attention of the Head of Assessment and Quality, by emailing quality@fom.ac.uk and providing details of your complaint. Receipt of your complaint will be acknowledged, and the matter will be considered by the Head of Assessment and Quality with the aim of trying to find an informal resolution if possible. A written response will be provided by the Head of Assessment and Quality normally within four to six weeks from the date on which the complaint was received by the FOM. In the event that the Head of Assessment and Quality is unavailable to consider the complaint, another senior manager will be appointed to do so.

1.2 Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome communicated to you by the Head of Assessment and Quality, you can submit a written appeal to the Chief Executive of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine by emailing ea@fom.ac.uk marked for the attention of the Chief Executive.

When submitting your appeal, please provide the following information:

- Your name;
- The name of your employer/organisation if you are making a complaint on behalf of your employer/organisation;
- The details of your complaint and your supporting evidence;
- Why you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint; and
- How you would like to see the matter resolved.

Receipt of your appeal will be confirmed, normally within five working days. The Chief Executive will review available evidence and respond to you normally within four to six weeks. The decision of the Chief Executive is final.

2. Concerns about a SEQOHS accredited service

If your concerns relate to a SEQOHS accredited organisation you should follow the procedure outlined below.

2.1 Raising a concern about a SEQOHS accredited provider

Ongoing SEQOHS accreditation is dependent on the provider maintaining SEQOHS Standards. If you believe that a SEQOHS accredited provider listed at www.seqohs.org is not complying with SEQOHS Standards, please email quality@fom.ac.uk and provide the following details.

- Your name;
- The name of your employer/organisation and your position, if raising a concern on behalf of your employer/organisation;
- The details of the organisation you have concerns about, and specifically why you feel the provider is not complying with SEQOHS Standards; and
- Evidence that supports each concern that you raise.

Your personal data may be held by the FOM as a data controller in connection with an investigation and we may process it for that purpose, but will do so in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. We may share it with professional advisors and others to progress an investigation. When you write to advise us of your concerns, please do not include information about any other identifiable individual and/or reference their clinical information without having obtained explicit consent to do so. Please ensure that the concerns that you raise are focused on the SEQOHS Standards, that disclosure of clinical information, having obtained consent, is limited to what is strictly necessary, and/or that information is anonymised where possible.

On receipt of a concern, we will acknowledge receipt, normally within five working days and send a copy of this SEQOHS Complains and Concerns Policy document to you.

SEQOHS is an accreditation scheme owned and administered by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine ('FOM'). FOM is not a prescribed body for receiving protected disclosures, and we are unable to investigate anonymous complaints and concerns. However, if you are concerned about the professional practice of a regulated health professional, we would advise you to contact their regulator, such as the GMC, NMC or HCPC.

2.2 Initial review of concerns and evidence

Concerns raised about a SEQOHS accredited organisation allegedly not complying with SEQOHS Standards, and the evidence provided to support those allegations, will be reviewed in the first instance by the SEQOHS Clinical Lead.

The SEQOHS Clinical Lead will determine if, in their professional opinion, the accredited provider:

- a) Appears to be complying with SEQOHS Standards; or
- b) May not be complying with SEQOHS Standards.

2.3 Investigation and outcomes

If, in the opinion of the SEQOHS Clinical Lead, the provider appears to be complying with SEQOHS Standards, no further action will be taken. The organisation or person who raised the concerns will be informed of this.

If a provider is notified by anyone other than SEQOHS that a complaint has been raised, or will be raised, about them and the provider hears nothing from SEQOHS, it should be assumed that the matter is not being investigated and is closed. We only notify providers that concerns have been raised if the SEQOHS Clinical Lead has determined that an investigation is needed.

We only notify providers that concerns have been raised if the SEQOHS Clinical Lead has determined that an investigation is needed, subject to the process set out below.

If, in the opinion of the SEQOHS Clinical Lead, a provider may not be complying with one or more SEQOHS Standards, the SEQOHS Clinical Lead will write to the organisation or person raising concerns confirming:

- the information SEQOHS proposes to disclose to the provider subject to the concerns;
- to whom it will be disclosed;
- the purpose of the disclosure; and
- that the investigation cannot proceed without this disclosure.

The organisation or person raising the concerns will be asked to agree to the proposed disclosure. SEQOHS will only disclose the information necessary for the investigation and will seek to minimise or anonymise information relating to otherwise potentially identifiable individual service users wherever possible.

If agreement to the proposed disclosure is provided, SEQOHS will notify the provider that they have been referred for investigation. SEQOHS will then share the agreed details of the concerns and any evidence held, and will request a written response from the provider.

If agreement to the disclosure is not provided, SEQOHS may be unable to proceed with the investigation. This will be communicated to the organisation or person raising the concerns.

The objective of the investigation is to determine facts and to ensure that any concerns are addressed promptly so that SEQOHS Standards are maintained.

Following investigation, the SEQOHS Clinical Lead will set out in writing any steps needed to be taken by the provider to address concerns and ensure ongoing compliance with the SEQOHS Standards. Should the provider fail to address the concerns communicated in writing by the SEQOHS Clinical Lead within a reasonable period of time (usually six to twelve weeks, depending on the nature of the concern), SEQOHS may suspend accreditation for a maximum of twelve months. Should the provider fail to meet SEQOHS Standards within these twelve months, SEQOHS accreditation will be withdrawn. The provider may apply for accreditation again at a future time.

We will communicate the outcome of the investigation to the provider that is the subject of the concerns, and to the organisation or person who contacted us with the concerns, as follows:

1. The organisation has provided sufficient evidence to reassure SEQOHS that the concerns are not substantiated, or the concerns have been addressed; or
2. The organisation's SEQOHS accreditation has been suspended while work is undertaken to address non-compliance.

Please note that failure to carry out the actions identified by SEQOHS as being necessary to comply with SEQOHS Standards, within a reasonable period of time as determined and communicated by the SEQOHS Clinical Lead, will result in removal of accreditation status.

2.4 Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome communicated to you by the SEQOHS Clinical Lead, you can submit a written appeal to the Chief Executive of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine by emailing ea@fom.ac.uk marked for the attention of the Chief Executive.

When submitting your appeal, please provide the following information:

- Your name;
- Brief details of the concerns raised;

- Why you are not satisfied with the outcome communicated to you by the SEQOHS Clinical Lead; and
- How you would like to see the matter resolved.

The Chief Executive will acknowledge receipt of your appeal, and appoint an Appeal Panel to review the evidence, including the decision of the SEQOHS Clinical Lead. Should the Chief Executive be unavailable, a Faculty Trustee or senior manager not involved in SEQOHS will carry this out. The Appeals Panel will review all evidence and their decision will be communicated normally within four to six weeks. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final.

3. Notices issued by the Health and Safety Executive

Any SEQOHS accredited service provider who is subject to an enforcement notice by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) should make the SEQOHS office aware of that Notice as promptly as reasonably possible.

A Notice issued by the HSE against an organisation will result in immediate suspension of SEQOHS accreditation. On suspension of SEQOHS accreditation, the SEQOHS logo cannot be used by the organisation and no reference to being SEQOHS accredited can be made.

It is the responsibility of the service provider to inform the SEQOHS office in writing when the status of the Notice has been changed to 'complied with' and to provide evidence via a link to the HSE's published Notice. At that point, we will offer the suspended service the opportunity to apply to have their SEQOHS accreditation suspension lifted, subject to successfully passing a Full Audit.

The purpose of the Full Audit is to ensure that the provider is adhering to all SEQOHS standards. There is a charge for Full Audit, as it will require the time of two SEQOHS Assessors to carry this out. Further details can be provided on request.

Suspension of SEQOHS accreditation will not be lifted until we are satisfied that all SEQOHS standards are being adhered to.