
Updated March 2025

Society for Endocrinology Complaints Policy for Members and Donors

Whilst the Society makes every effort to meet peoples' expectations, circumstances may arise where an individual has a concern and wishes to bring this to our attention. We will take all reasonable steps to resolve the situation, in everyone's best interests.

Complaints may be made to the Society could include, but are not limited to, the way the Society conducts its activities (governance), the activities themselves, how donations are used, or about the conduct of staff or members. Any complaints that refer to our members' professional conduct outside of Society activities should be taken up with their institutions or appropriate ruling bodies directly.

Where a complaint is about a member's conduct when representing or working for the Society please also refer to the [member's code of conduct](#), the staff code of conduct or the [complaints process for those in a leadership position](#).

Complaints that may relate to criminality

Any complaint made that may relate to actions or behaviours that it is suspected could be deemed illegal should be immediately referred to the police. The Society's internal processes should be paused pending the outcome of police inquiries and only re-started once the police investigation has concluded.

Informal concerns

Anyone who has a concern should initially raise this with a member of the Society office team at the time, as this enables us to respond and deal with an issue quickly using the email members@endocrinology.org or phoning 01454 642202.

Any member of the Society team, who is made aware of a concern, will advise the Director of Membership Engagement. We will seek to resolve the concern and meet any reasonable expectations the individual may have, ideally to their satisfaction the Chief Executive will also be notified of the concern.

Formal complaints

Where an individual wishes to make a formal complaint, this should be in writing to the Society's Chief Executive, by email or post.

To help resolve the complaint as quickly and effectively as possible, the individual making the complaint should do so as soon as possible and should include in it:

- Their name, organisation (if relevant), address, telephone number and e mail. If you do not wish to be contacted in a particular way, please let us know and we will of course respect this.
- As much information as possible, such as what happened, where, when (date/time), who was present and any action taken, and by whom.
- What it is you felt to be unsatisfactory.
- What action you are seeking from us, if appropriate.
- Receipt will be acknowledged, if at all possible within two working days.

An investigating officer from within the Society will be appointed and the complaint will then be investigated. The Investigating Officer will be impartial and will have the relevant knowledge and experience to consider the issue objectively and fully. If necessary, specialist advice will be sought, from an external expert. Where clarification or further information is felt to be necessary, the Investigating Officer will contact the complainant to request this.

On completion of their investigation, the Investigating Officer will submit a written report with recommendations to the Chief Executive for review. A response will be sent within 14 working days. If this is not possible, a holding reply will be sent after 14 days advising when we estimate the investigation will be completed. The complaint response will detail the findings of the investigation and outline what has been or is proposed to be done about it, subject to the constraints of the Data Protection Act.

Complaints featuring any of the below, although this list is not exhaustive, are to be reported to the Society's Chief Executive and the General Secretary within 48 hours and will be investigated following the above process as a matter of urgency.

- Risk of serious injury or harm.
- Discriminatory behaviour, such as sexism, racism or homophobia.
- Bullying or sexual harassment.
- Substantive breaches of safety, such as H&SW or safeguarding procedures.
- Substantive data protection breaches.
- Fraud or other criminal acts.
- Conduct of individuals in Society leadership positions

For all complaints, if the complainant is not satisfied with the response, he or she may appeal the decision to the Trustee-Directors of the Society (Council of Management), by writing to the General Secretary of the Society

The appeal should be specific about why the individual feels the decision made was wrong and provide the facts and information necessary to demonstrate this.

A decision by Council will be notified within 28 days and will be final.

Wider action

Irrespective of the outcome of any complaint, the Investigating Officer is to consider if there is any requirement in respect of wider action and/or statutory reporting to the charity commission, or the Police.

Consideration is also to be given to whether any changes should be made to policies, procedures, training etc to see if anything might reasonably be done to prevent a similar issue arising in future.

Complaints against members of the Society

If a complaint is made against a member representing or working for the Society, the process the Society will use to investigate the complaint will be underpinned by the principles of natural justice which include:

1. No bias whether conscious or unconscious
2. The right to fair hearing
3. Reasoned Decision

Any complaint will not normally be considered until any ongoing legal proceedings have been concluded.

A complaint against any Member should be submitted confidentially by email to the General Secretary and to the Chief Executive. In the case that a complaint is brought against the General Secretary, the President shall act in their stead.

Any member who wilfully refuses or neglects to comply with the provisions of the Articles or the Byelaws of the Society or, the Code of Conduct in the sole opinion of Council, is guilty of any conduct injurious to the character or interests of the Society shall be liable to removal by a resolution of not less than 75% of the members of Council agreeing with this decision which is either discussed by email or at a meeting at which the decision is taken. At least twenty-eight days before the deadline given for the resolution is to be discussed, the member shall be given notice of the intended resolution and will have the opportunity of presenting written evidence in defence. Any subsequent decision to remove such member shall not be subject to any further right to appeal.

If both parties accept Council's decision, the sanction will be applied and a note made on the Member's record. If either party wishes to appeal the decision, they must do so within 21 days of the communication by email to the General Secretary and to the Chief Executive.

The individual against which the complaint has been made will not cease to receive any membership benefits for the duration of the investigation.

Where Council has determined expulsion of a Member, the Member will cease to be a Member from the date of the Council decision is made, either at a meeting or by email, and shall receive no refund of any membership dues paid in arrears or for the forthcoming year.

Complaints against those in leadership positions within the Society

The investigation of complaints against individuals in leadership positions within the Society will follow [this specific policy and process](#).

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints will be recorded and any facts available investigated. However, in doing so we will be mindful that anonymous complaints can sometimes be malicious. Everyone involved in our work, even incidentally, has a right to complain and we will hold anyone accountable but, equally, individuals have a right to be protected from unsubstantiated and, potentially, malicious allegations.

Consequently, anyone wishing to complain is strongly encouraged to provide the information requested above and his or her contact details. This will also allow us to advise him or her of the outcome.

Complaints about Society staff

Staff are bound by their terms and conditions of their employment so any complaints relating to a member of staff should be reported to the Chief Executive and will be dealt with through the Society's internal HR procedures.

Potential financial claims

If a complaint may potentially result in a claim for compensation, such as damage or loss to property, or personal issue, the Society's insurers will be notified.

Confidentiality

The complaint will be treated as confidential and any communication on this issue, including responding to the complainant, will be subject to compliance with the data protection act.

Availability

This policy is to be available publicly and given to anyone who advises that he/she wishes to submit a complaint.

Recording of complaints

Minor complaints do not need to be recorded, as long as these are satisfactorily resolved, but the details of any unresolved and all serious complaints are to be recorded in the Complaints Log by the Chief Executive.

The Complaints Log is to be reviewed by Council annually.