

## 9. Complaints Procedure

### 9.1 Soul Restore Complaints Policy

If anyone is unhappy with any part of our service, including the professional conduct of our Counsellors, or if they have a complaint to make, let the Head of Counselling know in writing as soon as possible in order to resolve the situation quickly. All complaints will be treated seriously and confidentially. Please read the sections below on informal and formal complaints and decide which your complaint is at this point. A complaint can be informal, and then the complainant decide to take it to the level of a formal complaint.

If the complaint is against the Head of Counselling, then address to the Soul Restore Counselling steering group, email: [confidential@soulrestore.co.uk](mailto:confidential@soulrestore.co.uk) It will then be brought before the Soul Restore steering group, comprising of members of St Andrews Leckie church, and an additional external Counselling representative.

A copy of this procedure and the complaint form is available on the website. Clients may ask Receptionists and Counsellors for a copy of the complaint form as well.

### 9.2 Who Can Complain?

Clients who attend Soul Restore Counselling or have attended in the last two years. People on the Waiting list or who have made an enquiry.

Anonymous complaints will be investigated by the Head of Counselling, who will use the information as feedback and use discretion in assessing what action should be taken.

### 9.3 How To Complain

The Complaint should be sent in writing, signed and dated and marked 'Private and Confidential' to: Head of Counselling, Soul Restore Counselling, Rooms 2&3 County Buildings, Rosetta Road, Peebles EH45 8HQ. [janice@soulrestore.co.uk](mailto:janice@soulrestore.co.uk)

**A Complaint Form** to assist in the raising of a complaint is attached to this document and is available on the Soul Restore website. It is also detailed in **Appendix K**.

**If you are currently receiving our counselling service, please try to talk your concerns over with your counsellor if you can, before taking it further.**

If a complaint relates to the conduct of a Counsellor in Counselling, at all times the client's safety will be a primary consideration. Suspension of Counselling may take place at any stage of the complaints process, if appropriate.

There are two levels of complaint the client may wish to consider, Informal and Formal, it is up to the complainant which they feel is appropriate in the first instance. If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of discussions at the informal stage, then a formal complaint can be made.

## 9.4 Informal Complaint

Every opportunity will be taken at the time of the initial complaint to settle the concern informally. This may include telephone conversations and/or face to face meetings or written explanation of the reasons for a decision taken. The Head of Counselling will normally handle the complaint at this stage. However if a complaint is against the Head of Counselling, it will be brought to the Soul Restore steering group who will respond to the complaint and manage the complaints procedure.

## 9.5 Formal Complaint

A formal complaint will be acknowledged in writing by the Head of Counselling within seven days of the complaint form and letter being received. A copy of the Complaints Procedure will be enclosed.

If an employee, or volunteer of Soul Restore Counselling Service is the subject of the complaint, they will be sent a copy of the complaint along with the Complaints Procedure.

In Writing the Complaint Must:

- Identify the person(s) complained about. The persons involved will be given a copy of the Formal Complaint.
- Identify whether the complaint is against an individual, or the Soul Restore Counselling service, in which case an outside arbitrator from St Andrews Leckie will be appointed.
- Indicate the part(s) of the Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice that has been breached. Available from COSCA at [http://www.cosca.org.uk/application/files/1915/2119/7097/Statement\\_of\\_Ethics\\_CURRENT\\_Nov\\_1412-08-14.pdf](http://www.cosca.org.uk/application/files/1915/2119/7097/Statement_of_Ethics_CURRENT_Nov_1412-08-14.pdf)
- Detail how the above part(s) have been breached.

The Head of Counselling will acknowledge a complaint in writing within 7 working days. The complaint will then be followed up within one calendar month of receiving the complaint. If that is not possible the complainant will be informed as to why. The Head of Counselling (or the stand in, if the complaint is against her) will hear the case of the complainant and the person(s) who has been complained against, and will proceed to resolve the issue within 3 months of the original complaint being made.

The complaint will be investigated, and recommendations will be made regarding the action required to bring about the resolution of the complaint.

All parties involved will be informed in writing of the outcome of the complaint procedure, within 3 months.

If counselling has to be stopped, then the complainant at this stage will be offered an alternative counsellor if at all possible, this may be subject to the Waiting List.

## 9.6 Complaints to COSCA

If the complainant remains dissatisfied about the content reported decision, he/she will be advised to contact COSCA.

Soul Restore Counsellors are members of COSCA (or student Members), the professional body for Scotland as individuals [www.cosca.org.uk/guidance-policies/complaints](http://www.cosca.org.uk/guidance-policies/complaints)

COSCA  
16 Melville Terrace  
Stirling  
FK8 2NE

## 9.7 Complaint Form

Name of complainant: (Please supply contact details on a **separate sheet**)

--

Name of counsellor against whom you wish to complain:

--

Description of the professional relationship you had with the counsellor: (Please include start and finish dates for this relationship). Continue on separate numbered sheets(s) if necessary.

--

Description of the complaint against the counsellor: (This should include details of dates when the event(s) giving rise to the complaint occurred). Continue on separate numbered sheets(s) if necessary.

--

Detail any attempts you have made to resolve your complaint with the counsellor concerned: (If not, give an explanation why). Continue on separate numbered sheets(s) if necessary.

--

Signature:	Date:
------------	-------

**NOTE:** Please return this completed and signed form together with all supporting evidence to the address below. Please also note that a copy of this complaint form will be made available to the counsellor or volunteer complained against:

Head of Counselling  
Soul Restore Counselling  
Rooms 2&3 County Buildings  
Rosetta Road  
Peebles EH45 8HQ

**OR** if against Head of Counselling:  
Soul Restore Steering Group  
St Andrews Leckie church  
Eastgate  
Peebles EH45 8AD