

Overview

Libraries Unlimited is committed to providing excellent services. We welcome feedback from our customers and partners to ensure the continuous improvement of the services and facilities we offer.

We recognise that there may be times when we don't always achieve the high standards to which we aspire.

This policy establishes how you can take forward any issue which you think is unsatisfactory about the service or facilities you have received at any of our libraries.

We regularly review all feedback received to help inform ways in which we can improve our services, improve customer satisfaction and our overall performance.

Complaints Procedure

We hope that any problems or issues can be resolved immediately and effectively simply by speaking to a member of our staff or a manager. We recognise that there will be occasions when a more formal written response may be required. Our complaints procedure outlines the stages that any feedback received will go through to seek a satisfactory answer to your complaint.

A diagram of our complaints process can be seen at the end of this document.

Initial Contact

Sometimes a problem can be resolved quickly simply by speaking to a member of our staff or a manager.

However, if your complaint cannot be resolved in this way and Libraries Unlimited or you believe that a more detailed review and response may be required in order to respond to the issues raised, your complaint will be considered under the formal complaint procedure as set out below.

If you are not satisfied with the response received or the way in which your complaint is handled, you may write formally to us. We will consider the issues raised in accordance with the formal complaint procedure set out below and direct your complaint to the relevant member of our team as appropriate.

Making a Formal Complaint

Stage One

If you wish to make a complaint you should complete one of our feedback forms and return it to any of our libraries or alternatively you can contact us using one of the following methods:

Email: info@librariesunlimited.org.uk
Phone: +44(0)1884 824546
Write: Complaints
Libraries Unlimited
Exeter Library
Castle Street
Exeter EX4 3PQ

We will send you a written/emailed acknowledgement of receipt within 5 working days of receiving your complaint.

We will appoint a local manager to conduct a full investigation into your complaint.

The local manager will consider your complaint with an open and transparent view. If we have got something wrong, we will apologise and attempt to put things right.

The local manager's aim will be to achieve resolution of every substantive issue raised within your complaint or to explain clearly why this cannot be achieved.

We aim to respond to 90% of stage one complaints within 21 calendar days of receipt of your complaint. Where this is not possible, a revised date will be agreed with you.

If appropriate, a face-to-face meeting may be arranged with you.

Stage Two

If you are dissatisfied with our initial response, you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further. You should contact us using the details above. You should set out why you are unhappy with our initial response and why you believe that your complaint needs to be investigated further.

If we believe that the complaint has not been fully considered, we will ask an appropriate senior manager to examine the process to date and to begin a second-stage investigation.

We will send you a written/emailed acknowledgement of receipt within 5 working days. Otherwise, we will inform you in writing/via email within 14 calendar days of the decision and will explain why we believe that a second-stage investigation is not considered to be appropriate in this case.

After completing the second-stage investigation the senior manager will compile a written/emailed response to you.

We aim to respond to 90% of stage two complaints within 21 calendar days of receipt of your complaint. Where this is not possible, a revised date will be agreed with you.

If appropriate, a face-to-face meeting may be arranged with you.

Appeal to the Chief Executive

If you remain dissatisfied after the second-stage response to your complaint, you may request that your complaint is sent to the Chief Executive for further consideration. You should make such a request in writing/via email and include a full explanation as to why you believe your complaint needs to be investigated further.

You should email / write to:

Email: info@librariesunlimited.org.uk

Write: Chief Executive
Libraries Unlimited
Exeter Library
Castle Street
Exeter EX4 3PQ

Complaints Policy

If the Chief Executive agrees that there are grounds to believe that your complaint has not been properly or sufficiently considered to date you will be notified within 21 calendar days of receipt of your request.

The Chief Executive will then take appropriate steps to investigate your complaint further and will inform you of the outcome within a further 14 calendar days. Where this is not possible, a revised date will be agreed with you.

If the Chief Executive decides there are no grounds for further action, their letter/email will explain why no further investigation is considered to be appropriate in this case.

Time Limits for Making Complaints

A complaint should be made as soon as possible after the matter giving rise to it and, not later than within three calendar months of the incident occurring.

If you were not aware at the relevant time that there was cause for complaint, your complaint should normally be made as soon as possible after you became aware of it and, no more than three calendar months after becoming aware.

Exceptionally, we may extend the time limits where we feel that it is considered unreasonable for your complaint to have been made earlier, and it is still possible to fully investigate the matter in question.

Persistent and Vexatious Complaints

At times complaints can become vexatious and/or persistent, causing undue stress for staff and resulting in a disproportionate use of the library's resources.

In dealing with such situations we will ensure the complaints procedure has been correctly implemented and that no material element of a complaint has been overlooked or inadequately addressed.

Where a complaint deemed to be vexatious or persistent is considered to have no basis or genuine substance, we reserve the right not to investigate. In this situation, we will notify the complainant within 21 calendar days.

Other information

Libraries Unlimited staff and volunteers will treat all users politely and with respect. In return, staff are not expected to tolerate any behaviour that is of a personal, abusive or threatening nature.

Discrimination, in particular on the grounds of religion, gender, race/ethnicity, disability, age or sexual orientation, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the process of handling complaints promotes equal access, by meeting the diverse range of needs of the people who may wish to make a complaint.

To ensure the effectiveness of the complaints process and enable staff to understand the complaints procedure, appropriate training will be made available for Library staff.

Data Protection

Libraries Unlimited will retain all records relating to a complaint for 6 years from the date on which the complaint was made.

Fundraising

If your complaint is about fundraising and you remain unhappy with the outcome, you can take your complaint to the Fundraising Regulator within 8 weeks of receiving our response: <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/complaints>

Our Commissioners

Libraries Unlimited is the charity commissioned to provide public library services on behalf of Devon County Council and Torbay Council.

Devon County Council users may also complain directly to Devon County Council by using the contact details below:

Email: customer.relations@devon.gov.uk

Phone: 0800 212 783

Write: Customer Relations Team

Room 120

County Hall

Topsham Road

Exeter EX2 4QD

The most up-to-date copy of this policy can be found on our websites:

<https://devonlibraries.org.uk>

<https://torbaylibraries.org.uk>

<https://www.librariesunlimited.org.uk>

Libraries Unlimited Feedback Process

