

Making a complaint

about Audit Scotland, Accounts Commission or
Auditor General for Scotland



We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve the way we carry out our work

Audit Scotland helps the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General to make sure organisations that spend public money in Scotland use it properly, efficiently and effectively.

We do this by auditing various aspects of how public bodies work. You can find further information on our website about the Auditor General, Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland.

Concerns about the organisations we audit

We have a [separate process](#) for dealing with concerns about the organisations we audit.

These concerns will not be considered as part of the Accounts Commission, Auditor General and Audit Scotland complaints process.

Complaints process

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our work, please tell us.

We have one complaints procedure covering the Accounts Commission, the Auditor General and Audit Scotland. Audit Scotland will deal with complaints on behalf of the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General. This leaflet describes our complaints procedure and what you can expect from us.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the service provided by us or on our behalf.

What can I complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- failure to provide a service
- our standard of service
- our policy

- treatment by, or attitude of, a member of staff
- our failure to follow proper rules and procedures.

What can't I complain about?

There are some things we cannot deal with through our complaints process. These include:

- a routine first-time request for a service
- requests for compensation
- things that are covered by a right of appeal
- a complaint where legal proceedings or court action has started
- a complaint that has already been heard by a court or tribunal
- a complaint we have already investigated and given a final decision on
- complaints about our audit opinions or judgements.

If other procedures or rights of appeal can help you with your concerns, we will tell you about these.

Who can complain?

Anyone can make a complaint to us, including the representative of someone who is dissatisfied with our service. Please also read the section overleaf on 'Getting help to make your complaint'.

How do I complain?

It is usually easier for us to resolve complaints if you make them quickly.

You can complain by phone, in writing, email, via our [complaints form](#) or in person at any of our main offices. If you are not sure who to complain to, then contact us and we will direct your complaint to the appropriate person and department. Our contact details are on page 4 of this leaflet.

When complaining, please tell us:

- your full name and contact details
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

It is better if you make your complaint as soon as possible, and must be within six months of:

- the event that you want to complain about, or
- finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after this time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

Our contact details

Audit Scotland
Complaints Administrator
110 George Street
Edinburgh
EH2 4LH
T: 0131 625 1500

E: complaints@audit-scotland.gov.uk 

www.audit-scotland.gov.uk 

What happens when I have complained?

We will always tell you who is dealing with your complaint and when you can expect to hear from us.

Our complaints procedure has two stages:

Stage 1 – Initial contact resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly with the department concerned. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you our decision at Stage 1 in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If we cannot resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. We might suggest that you take your complaint to Stage 2. You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you get our initial decision.

Stage 2 – Investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that require detailed investigation.

When using Stage 2 we will:

- acknowledge your complaint within three working days
- where appropriate, discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied after Stage 1 and how you think we may resolve the matter
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will agree revised time limits with you and keep you updated on progress.

What if I am still dissatisfied?

After we have fully investigated, if you are still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to look at it.

The SPSO **cannot** normally look at:

- a complaint that has not completed our complaints procedure (so please make sure it has done so before contacting the SPSO)
- events that happened, or that you became aware of, more than a year ago
- a matter that has been or is being considered in court.

You can contact the SPSO:

In person:
SPSO
4 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7NS

By post:
SPSO
Freepost EH641
Edinburgh
EH3 0BR

Freephone: 0800 377 7330
or call T: 0131 225 5399
www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us

Getting help to make your complaint

We understand that you may be unable, or reluctant, to make a complaint yourself. We accept complaints from a person you have chosen to complain for you if you have given them your consent to complain for you, for example a friend, relative, or an advocate.

You can find out about advocates in your area by contacting the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance.

Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance
T: 0131 556 6443
www.siaa.org.uk

We are committed to making our services easy to use for everyone. In line with our statutory equalities duties, we will always ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help access to our services. If you have trouble putting your complaint in writing, or want this information in another language or format, such as large font, or Braille, please tell us by using the contact details below.

Our contact details

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T: 0131 625 1500
E: complaints@audit-scotland.gov.uk 
www.audit-scotland.gov.uk 

Or in person at one of our main offices:

18 George Street Edinburgh EH2 2QU	4th Floor, South Suite The Athenaeum Building 8 Nelson Mandela Place Glasgow G2 1BT	3rd Floor Ballantyne House 84 Academy Street Inverness IV1 1LU
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Information correct as at September 2015.

Summary of our complaints process

Complaints process

You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by email or in writing.

We have a **two-stage complaints procedure**. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need a detailed investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.



Stage 1: Initial contact resolution

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within **five working days** if we can.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at Stage 2.



Stage 2: Investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage 1. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days**. We will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than **20 working days unless** there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.



The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO (or awarding body) to consider it.

We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision.



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