

Heartfulness Institute Australia

Complaints Handling Policy

1. Introduction

Heartfulness Institute Australia is committed to providing meditation techniques and related support to members of the public aged 15 and over. As part of this commitment, we maintain a clear and transparent complaints procedure, enabling participants and stakeholders to raise concerns or suggest improvements.

We value feedback from anyone who believes we have not met the standards we set for ourselves. Complaints or feedback can be submitted by email to:

au.secretary@heartfulness.org
australia@heartfulness.org

2. Purpose

This policy ensures that all complaints are handled:

- Fairly and impartially
- Confidentially
- In accordance with Heartfulness values and legal obligations

3. Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers, trainers, and representatives of Heartfulness Institute Australia.

4. What Is a Complaint?

A complaint is any written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction regarding our services, behaviour, or conduct.

5. How Complaints Are Handled

Receiving Complaints

- Complaints may be submitted in writing or verbally.
- Anonymous complaints will also be considered.

Acknowledgement

- Complaints will be acknowledged within 10 business days.

Assessment and Risk Review

- The nature and seriousness of the complaint will be reviewed.
- If there is a risk to safety, immediate precautionary measures will be taken.

Investigation

- An impartial investigator will gather relevant information and statements.
- All parties involved will have the opportunity to be heard.

Outcome and Action

- Possible actions may include warnings, retraining, or removal from a role.
- The outcome will be communicated to the complainant and other relevant parties.

Confidentiality

- Complaints will be handled with strict confidentiality.
- Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

Recordkeeping

- All complaints and investigations will be documented and stored securely.

Review

- Complaints and trends will be reviewed annually to support continuous improvement.

6. Complaint Process Stages

Stage 1 – Complaint to the Secretary

- Complaints should be directed to the Secretary.
- We will acknowledge your complaint within 10 working days.
- Most complaints will be resolved within this timeframe.
- If a more detailed investigation is required, we will aim to respond within 20 working days.
- If exceptional circumstances cause a delay, we will inform you of the reason and when a response can be expected.
- Complainants are encouraged to use the Complaint Record Form (Appendix A below).

Stage 2 – Complaint to the Board of Directors

- If you are not satisfied with the Secretary's response, you may raise the complaint with the Chair of the Board of Directors.

- An investigation will be arranged as appropriate, and a response provided within 20 working days.

- At Stage 1, investigations are usually conducted by the Secretary and at least one Director.

- At Stage 2, an investigation panel of at least two Directors will be convened.

Stage 3 – Referral to the ACNC

- If you remain dissatisfied, you may refer your complaint to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

- Further details are available at: <https://www.acnc.gov.au/raise-concern>

Appendix A: Complaint Record Form

Complaint Reference Number:

Date of Complaint:

Time of Complaint:

Complainant Details

- Full Name:

- Contact Number:

- Email Address:

- Address:

Complaint Details

- Nature of Complaint:

- Details of Complaint:

Action Taken

- Person Handling Complaint:

Appendix A: Complaint Record Form

- Action/Investigation Steps:

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- Date Action Taken:

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Resolution

- Outcome / Resolution Provided:

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- Was the Complainant Satisfied? (☐ Yes ☐ No)

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Sign-off

- Staff Member Name & Signature:

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- Date:

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Heartfulness Institute, Australia

Complaint Clarification Form

Thank you for raising your concerns with Heartfulness Institute Australia.

To help us investigate your complaint fairly and thoroughly, please provide as much detail as possible below. This information will form the basis of our complaint record and guide the scope of our investigation.

1. Your Name (optional):

2. Your Contact Details (optional):

3. Specific behaviors or incidents that caused concern:

4. Approximate dates, times, or sessions when these occurred:

5. Please indicate which areas your complaint relates to (tick all that apply):

☐ Facilitation style ☐ Interpersonal conduct ☐ Ethical concerns ☐ Other: _____

6. Were there any witnesses or others directly impacted? If yes, please provide details:

7. Any additional information you wish to share:

Signature (optional):

Date:

Note: Additional pages can be appended if more space is required