NIHR School for Social Care Research (SSCR) Public Involvement Complaints Policy (July, 2025)

We want to make sure that everyone has the best possible experience of being part of SSCR. We take complaints about our work, staff and levels of service very seriously. Concerns or complaints should be raised as soon as possible, ideally within three months of the incident.

If you would like to make a complaint, please follow the process below. We will work to resolve your complaint as quickly and effectively as possible, and learn from it to improve the quality of our work.

How to raise a complaint

Concerns and complaints should be sent in the first instance to: SSCR@york.ac.uk and addressed to Jen Hill, SSCR Programme Manager.

Supporting Documentation

If available, provide details like your full name, email/postal address, a clear description of the complaint, and any relevant documents or emails.

Advocacy and Support

You may find it helpful to have an independent advocate to support you through the complaints process. An advocate can help you make the complaint but cannot make the complaint for you.

Resolution Preference:

Specify how you'd like the complaint to be resolved and how you prefer to be contacted.

How we will handle the complaint

When you have made a complaint, we will:

- email you to let you know that we have received your complaint (if you have provided an email address)
- investigate your complaint thoroughly, fairly and quickly, while working towards an agreed outcome
- handle your complaint in a systematic, compassionate, and proportionate manner
- aim to fully resolve your complaint
- treat all complaints with an appropriate degree of confidentiality - information will only be shared with staff as necessary to the investigation

Although we aim to respond to everything we receive, we are unable to do so if your correspondence:

- asks questions about topics outside the responsibility or remit of SSCR
- contains offensive language
- is illegible or cannot be read
- is selling or promoting a product

Concern and complaint management

If the person who makes a complaint is dissatisfied after receiving the initial response to the complaint, then they have the opportunity to explain what elements of the complaint have not been satisfactorily reviewed, and to request further review. In the first instance this will be escalated to Professor Yvonne Birks, Director of SSCR.

If no satisfactory resolution can be agreed the complaint can be escalated to Jeremy Taylor, Director of Public Voice at NIHR.

Safeguarding

NIHR also has a Safeguarding Guidance policy that outlines procedures for handling complaints and concerns related to safeguarding, particularly in the context of research contracts.

Research Misconduct Complaints related to research misconduct will be handled under the UKRIO Code of Practice for Research

Counter Fraud

The NIHR has a Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy to ensure the responsible use of public resources.