

GMC & PROFESSIONAL REGULATION | PRACTICAL WORKBOOK

Complaints and Candour Response Guide

Prepare an accurate and compassionate account while keeping the complaint, incident, candour and legal routes distinct.

What this resource contains

- Six structured preparation stages
- Private writing space and review prompts
- Process, deadline and confidentiality safeguards

IMPORTANT

Independent general guidance. It does not replace clinical, employment, regulatory, immigration or legal advice. Do not include patient-identifiable or unnecessary colleague-identifiable information in worksheets.

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**BEFORE YOU
WRITE**

Use this on a trusted device or paper copy. Record references rather than copying patient-identifiable or privileged material. Nothing in this workbook is sent to SAS Doctors Review.

1. Route and jurisdiction

Complete only what is relevant. Use neutral, factual language and confirm process-specific advice.

Which UK nation and complaints framework applies?

Complaint, incident review, duty of candour or claim?

Who owns the organisational response?

What is my role and deadline?

2. Establish the record

Complete only what is relevant. Use neutral, factual language and confirm process-specific advice.

Contemporaneous clinical record

Policies and systems in force

Sequence of decisions

Information known at each point

Team and system contributions

3. Explain with care

Complete only what is relevant. Use neutral, factual language and confirm process-specific advice.

Acknowledge experience and impact

Answer the question actually asked

Separate fact from recollection

Use plain language

Avoid defensiveness and unsupported blame

4. Candour

Complete only what is relevant. Use neutral, factual language and confirm process-specific advice.

Who leads the statutory or professional candour process?

What has been explained?

Apology expressed appropriately

Follow-up and records

Advice where civil or regulatory risk overlaps

5. Learning and action

Complete only what is relevant. Use neutral, factual language and confirm process-specific advice.

Immediate correction

Individual learning

Team or system improvement

Named owner and due date

How effectiveness will be checked

6. Final quality check

Complete only what is relevant. Use neutral, factual language and confirm process-specific advice.

Accurate and proportionate

Patient confidentiality protected

Consistent with other formal accounts

Reviewed by appropriate adviser

Submission route confirmed

Action summary

What must happen today?

Which adviser will I contact, for which process?

Which restrictions and deadlines have been independently confirmed?

**DO NOT LET ONE
ROUTE OBSCURE
ANOTHER**

An internal grievance or appeal does not normally stop an external legal deadline. A regulatory adviser does not automatically represent an employment claim, and a wellbeing service does not provide legal advice.

Sources and disclaimer

Use the current GMC, MPTS, national NHS, Acas or Labour Relations Agency source and the correct local policy before acting. Processes, time limits and service eligibility change.

GMC: how concerns are investigated

MPTS: hearings and decisions

Acas: current tribunal time limits

**INDEPENDENT
GENERAL
EDUCATION**

This workbook does not calculate a deadline, assess credibility, predict a regulatory outcome or replace individual legal, employment, regulatory or clinical advice.