



## Complaints Policy & Procedure

### 1 Introduction:

- a. It is our policy to ensure that all members of the Political Studies Association (PSA) and those non-members who engage with us have access to a procedure to help deal with any complaints fairly and without unreasonable delay.
- b. Responsibility for this policy lies with the PSA's Honorary Secretary.
- c. We encourage people to seek to resolve matters informally as this can often provide the quickest, and most satisfactory, path to resolution for all parties. However, in exceptional cases if the individual feels that this is not workable in their situation, this procedure may be used.

### 2 Scope:

- a. The policy applies to:
  - Complaints relating to the PSA as an organisation.
  - Anyone acting in an organising or leadership capacity for the PSA (including, for example, Trustees, conveners/committee members of Specialist Groups, and conveners/committee members of PSA Networks);
  - Those leading activities on behalf of the PSA (including, for example, chairs of panels), when acting in that capacity.
- b. The Policy excludes employees of the PSA who are covered by internal policies.
- c. Any complaint that relates to a member of PSA can only be considered within the scope of this policy, if it relates to the work of the PSA. Actions by PSA members outside the remit of the PSA cannot be considered.
- d. Complaints relating to allegations of unlawful activities will not be considered by the PSA and should be raised with the appropriate bodies.
- e. The PSA may not consider complaints that it judges to be vexatious, persistent, or abusive. The PSA may also reject any complaint that is considered to be incoherent or illegible.

### 3 Complaint procedure:

- a. A formal complaint should be made in writing to the Honorary Secretary at [complaints@psa.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@psa.ac.uk).
- b. A written complaint should include the following information:
  - What went wrong
  - When and where it happened
  - Who was involved
  - The name and contact details of the person submitting the complaint.
- c. The PSA will try and resolve all complaints in an efficient and timely manner. The Honorary Secretary will determine the appropriate level of investigation that is required to determine the facts of the case. This may include:
  - a. Appointing one or more trustees or others to undertake an investigation.

- b. Arranging meetings with the complainant and others to gather relevant information and clarify points of fact.
- c. Making recommendations to the PSA Executive Committee.

#### **4 General:**

- a. The PSA expects all those who act on its behalf to uphold the [The Seven Principles of Public Life - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-seven-principles-of-public-life) known as the 'Nolan Principles'.
- b. All judgements made will be on the basis of a balance of probabilities.
- c. The PSA will conduct all processes in adherence to the principles of natural justice.
- d. As a result of a complaint, any action taken by the PSA Executive Committee must be within the Articles of Association and Bye-Laws of the Association.
- e. Where the complaint relates to the Honorary Secretary, the roles of that office, as outlined in this policy, will be undertaken by a different trustee.

#### **5 Change and review history:**

Implemented:           October 2023  
To be reviewed:        October 2026

#### **6 Related Policies:**

[PSA anti-harassment policy revised\\_0.pdf](#)