

Complaints

Making a complaint about Audit Scotland



Introduction

Audit Scotland strives to ensure the highest standard of service. This includes a commitment to continuous improvement and to delivering value to our clients and stakeholders. We do, however, recognise that from time to time things may go wrong. Our process for complaints about Audit Scotland aims to resolve matters quickly and allow us to learn any lessons for the future.

Complaints

Complaint definition

Audit Scotland's definition of a complaint is as follows:

'A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the service, actions or lack of action by Audit Scotland, or its staff, affecting one or more members of the public.'



Types of complaint about Audit Scotland

We can consider complaints about the following:

- How we carry out our legal duties. For example, appointing auditors, publishing reports, and defining the performance indicators local authorities should publish.
- Bad or inefficient management of Audit Scotland.
- Goods and services we provide. For example: publications, conferences and events.
- The reasonableness of the processes followed, and the decisions made, by our staff.
- The behaviour of our staff and auditors.
- How auditors carry out their work, including complaints that they have not followed the *Code of audit practice*.

How to complain about Audit Scotland

If you have any concerns or are dissatisfied with any part of our work, you should first give us a chance to deal with your complaint informally. If you are not sure who to contact, or if you need any help or advice, please contact Audit Scotland on 0845 146 1010 or email us at: complaints@audit-scotland.gov.uk

If you wish to make a formal complaint, please fill in the Audit Scotland complaints form. This can be downloaded from our website (www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/utilities/complaints) and posted or emailed back to us. If you would like help in completing the form, please let us know.

Complaints which are more than 12 months old from the time you became dissatisfied with our service, will not normally be investigated.

How we will deal with your complaint about Audit Scotland

Our commitment is to deal with your complaint fairly, politely and as quickly as possible.

- We will acknowledge your complaint within ten working days, then consider your complaint carefully and, if the matter is straight-forward, we will reply within 20 working days. However, if we need to carry out a more detailed investigation, we may need to ask for further information, and so our response may take longer. If this is the case, we will tell you when to expect a reply.
- If we agree that your complaint is justified, you will receive an apology together with details of any other steps we think are necessary in the circumstances. We will also explain what we are doing to prevent the problem happening again.
- If we conclude that your complaint is not justified, we will write to you to explain why.
- If a complaint is repeated persistently and vexatiously, we may bring the communication to a close.

If you are not satisfied with our response

If you are not satisfied with our response you should write, telling us your reasons for your dissatisfaction, to the Chief Operating Officer (at the Audit Scotland address at the bottom of the page overleaf). The officer will consider if your complaint has

been dealt with properly, our response was suitable and whether any further action is necessary. The officer's decision will be sent to you in writing.

If you are still unhappy with the decision reached, you should write again to the Chief Operating Officer who will arrange for your case to be escalated to a member of the board of Audit Scotland. Your complaint will be re-examined to find out if it has been dealt with properly, our response was suitable and whether any further action is necessary. The decision reached will be sent to you in writing.

If you are unhappy with the board member's final decision, you may refer the matter to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

Complaining to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

The SPSO is the final stage for complaints about most organisations that provide public services in Scotland, including Audit Scotland. Their service is free and confidential.

If you continue to be dissatisfied and you believe that you have been the victim of maladministration by Audit Scotland causing you injustice or hardship you may refer the matter to the SPSO. The SPSO will normally only consider a complaint after you have completed Audit Scotland's complaints procedure.

The SPSO cannot normally look at complaints that:

- are more than 12 months after you became aware of the matter you want to complain about; or
- have been or are being considered in court.

The SPSO can be contacted at:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

4 Melville Street

Edinburgh EH3 7NS

T: 0800 377 7330

E: ask@spsso.org.uk



Audit Scotland, 110 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4LH

T: 0845 146 1010 E: info@audit-scotland.gov.uk

www.audit-scotland.gov.uk