

The James Hutton Group Document ID: HP149 Complaints Policy	Version
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HP149 Complaints Policy



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Latest update details:	New controlled document
Details of all previous updates to this document can be found in Appendix 1	

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1. Purpose and scope

The Hutton Group is a world-leading research centre for the sustainable management of land, crops and natural resources to support thriving communities. We are one of the Main Research Providers (MRPs) for the Scottish Government’s Rural and Environmental Science and Analytical Services (RESAS) Strategic Research Programme. Our research addresses food, energy and environmental security.

We are committed to providing a high quality, responsible and accessible service for all our stakeholders and for members of the public who may have contact with the Hutton. However, we recognise that sometimes things go wrong, and this policy aims to set out the steps we will take to try and resolve any complaints.

To bring about our vision and achieve our mission we are guided by our values in everything we do.

All our values are important in relation to our Complaints policy.

- We respect and value our people and the people we engage with
- We want to make a difference.
- We strive to be excellent in everything we do
- We lead by example
- We foster creativity and innovation

2. Associated Documents – none

3. Definitions/Glossary

Term/acronym	Definition
MRPs	Main Research Providers
OSCR	Office of Scottish Charities Register
RESAS	Rural and Environmental Science and Analytical Services

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4. What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more individuals, either verbally or in writing, about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the Hutton and its employees.

5. Who can complain?

Complaints can be raised by any individual and/or group who receives, requests or is directly affected by the services which the Hutton Group provide. In the circumstances where an individual is reluctant or unwilling to make a complaint themselves another person can only make a complaint on their behalf if they are legally responsible for the complainant or if the complainant is unable to make the complaint themselves e.g., due to disability.

6. What can I complain about?

The Hutton is committed to administering and maintaining an effective complaints policy which supports all who wish to make a legitimate complaint. We endeavor to investigate all complaints fairly, timeously, consistently, and confidentially. Issues or concerns that an individual and/or group might wish to bring to the Hutton's attention could relate to the following for example;

- quality and standard of our services;
- quality of our resources and facilities;
- treatment by a member of Hutton employee;
- failure by the Hutton to adhere to an appropriate administrative process.

7. Procedure for making a complaint.

7.1 Frontline Resolution - Stage 1

We aim to resolve the majority of complaints as quickly as possible. Ideally, a complaint should be raised with the Hutton at the time of the initial occurrence. The complaint should be discussed, if possible, with the relevant member of Hutton staff or department.

This can be done in writing or via e-mail or by telephone. The Hutton aims to resolve all complaints subject to the Frontline Resolution process within 5 working days of the receipt

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of the complaint. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response received following the Frontline Resolution stage, they should proceed to the Investigation stage.

7.2 Investigation – Stage 2

This stage of the complaints process aims to deal with complaints that have not been resolved at Stage 1, or which are more complex requiring a more detailed investigation and where a complainant has expressly stated that they are making a formal complaint. In these circumstances the complainant should submit a formal complaint in writing to the Information Governance Officer (details below) who will conduct an investigation:

Information Governance Officer
The James Hutton institute
Errol Road
Dundee DD5 5DA

e-mail: info@hutton.ac.uk

Tel: 0344 928 5428

The Hutton will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 3 working days and the Information Governance Officer will carry out a thorough investigation of the complaint. There are a number of possible outcomes following the investigation which may include;

- full resolution of the complaint through mediation between all parties;
- the complaint is upheld;
- the complaint is deemed invalid on the basis that there is no case to answer or the complaint is found to be malicious/vexatious

The Hutton will aim, where possible, to resolve formal complaints and provide a written response to the complainant within 20 working days of the receipt of the formal complaint. However, if for any reason the Hutton is unable to meet this deadline, the complainant will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation.

8. Appealing the Complaint Response

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Hutton's final decision or handling of the complaint, they may take their complaint to appeal by writing to the Office of Scottish Charities Register (OSCR) at the undernoted address who will consider the complaint for an independent review:

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OSCR
 Quadrant House
 9 Riverside Drive
 Dundee
 DD1 4NY

Email: info@oscr.org.uk

Tel: 01382 220446

Please note that the OSCR aim to conclude any complaints raised with them generally within six months. However, if the complaint is of a more complex nature and requires more detailed investigation the process can take up to nine months.

Further details regarding the OSCR’s complaints process can be found via the following link :- <http://www.oscr.org.uk/complaints>.

9. References - none

APPENDIX 1 – Changes to previous versions

<i>Version</i>	<i>Description of change including section number.</i>
1	New controlled document

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