**This Policy is designed to provide guidance on the manner in which complaints about MAST and its employees are received and handled.**

**Complaints Handling Policy**

**Introduction**

**Objective of the Complaints Handling Policy**

MAST seeks to maintain its reputation for delivering high-quality professional services. MAST is also committed to maintaining its transparency and responsiveness to the needs and concerns of our clients and the public.

This Policy is designed to provide guidance on the manner in which complaints towards MAST and its employees are received and handled.

The objective of this Policy is to minimise damage to MAST’s reputation and reduce the risk of litigation by resolving complaints from customers or prospects in a timely, efficient, effective, consistent and professional manner.

Any person or organisation (the complainant) who is dissatisfied or concerned with a product or procedure provided by MAST, or the performance, behaviour and conduct of MAST staff for any reason, may contact MAST to complain.  A complaint may be made orally or in writing.  At times, complaints can be by way of negative feedback, which may not require a resolution or formal follow-up.  While this type of feedback is valuable, the Policy does not apply to feedback of this nature.

**Guiding principles of effective complaints handling**

**Accessibility**

MAST Complaints Handling Policy is readily accessible to all employees via TKO and clients via the MAST website. The Policy is easy to understand and includes details on making and resolving complaints.

**Responsiveness**

Receipt of each complaint is acknowledged to the complainant within 7 working days and will be handled in an efficient and effective manner. Complainants will be handled courteously and kept informed on the progress of their complaint throughout the complaint handling process.  Complainants must be referred to MAST’s Complaints Handling Policy.

**Objectivity**

Each complaint is addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner throughout the complaints handling process.

**Confidentiality**

Personally identifiable information concerning the complainant is actively protected from disclosure unless the complainant expressly consents to its disclosure.

**Completeness**

All available information/evidence have been collected from both sides.

**Customer-focused**

All MAST employees, including the CEO, Managers and Board members, are committed to efficient and fair resolution of complaints. MAST will actively solicit feedback from our clients on a regular basis and acknowledge a client’s right to complain.

**Accountability**

All MAST employees accept responsibility for effective complaints handling. The CEO will ensure that, where appropriate, issues raised in the complaints handling process are reflected in employee performance evaluation.

**Sensitivity**

Each case is to be considered on its merits, paying due care to individual differences and needs.

**Person responsible**

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing and regularly reviewing this Policy to ensure compliance with relevant industry laws, regulations, guidelines, and best practices. The Chief Executive Officer is also responsible for communicating this Policy to all employees, senior managers and Board members of MAST.

**Recording complaints**

All complaints, whether verbal or written, will be recorded at the time of receipt or as soon as possible afterwards. Customers will receive an acknowledgement letter confirming receipt of their complaint within seven working days. The complaint should be recorded by the staff member who took the details and emailed to the appropriate manager. The email will also need to be recorded in Content Manager (CM).  The record should show:

* Date of complaint;
* Complainant’s name;
* Nature of the complaint and the circumstances;
* Name of the person who is the subject of the complaint; and
* The date and conclusions of the decision rendered in connection with the complaint.

The CM record must be retained for a period of seven years following the resolution date.

Customers’ personal details or details of their complaints will not be disclosed to third parties unless MAST has obtained their written consent.

Recorded complaints will also be monitored by management for any ongoing trends, and efforts will be made to resolve any ongoing issues.

**Responding to complaints**

All individuals making a complaint will be treated with courtesy, and complaints will be handled in a timely, effective, fair, and consistent manner.

Where possible, complaints will be resolved at the first point of contact.  If the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, the customer will be given an appropriate timeframe, and MAST will strive to resolve all complaints within 4 weeks.

**Informing customers of progress**

Customers will be regularly kept informed of the progress of their complaint, especially if there are any delays or changes due to circumstances beyond MAST’s control.

Customers will be informed of any changes to our products or procedures resulting from their complaint.

Where appropriate, customers who have had a complaint resolved will be contacted at a later date to see if they are happy with how their complaint was handled.

**Escalation of complaints**

If a complaint cannot be resolved by the usual complaint process (through the Manager of the relevant area), the customer can request an internal review.

The internal review is to be conducted by the CEO, and the customer is to be informed of an amended timeframe for resolution.

On commencement of the internal review, the complainant must be given the opportunity to provide further information.

Once the CEO has reviewed all the information provided, they must advise the complainant of the final decision, along with supporting reasons.

If MAST cannot resolve the complaint to the customer’s satisfaction, they are to be informed how and where they can take further action eg the Ombudsman, Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading or through the Integrity Commission.