

# Procedure for complaints against a member of the BESA Secretariat, Director General or member of the BESA Executive Council.

Chris Ratcliffe, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2020.

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## Complaints Procedure

The British Education Suppliers Association is committed to working in an open and accountable way that encourages the trust and respect of all of our stakeholders. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our members, and in particular by taking complaints seriously, and by putting mistakes right.

## How to make a complaint

- Complainants should first direct their concerns to the Secretariat. If complainants feel that the issue has not been satisfactorily resolved, a formal complaint can be raised.
- Complainants should not approach individual Council members to raise concerns or complaints.
- Complaints against members of the Secretariat (below Director General level) should be made in the first instance, to Caroline Wright, Director General through email ([caroline@besa.org.uk](mailto:caroline@besa.org.uk)) or in writing to the BESA address (marked Private and Confidential): **Albert House, 256-260 Old Street, London EC1V 9DD.**
- Complaints that involve or are about the Director General should be addressed to the Chair of Executive Council, currently Chris Ratcliffe ([cratcliffe@scholastic.co.uk](mailto:cratcliffe@scholastic.co.uk)) or in writing to the BESA address (marked Private and Confidential). Whilst complainants may make complaints anonymously, it is at our discretion to decide whether an anonymous complaint warrants an investigation.
- Complaints should be made within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this timeframe if exceptional circumstances apply.

### British Educational Suppliers Association

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- If a complainant wishes to withdraw a complaint, they should do so in writing.

## Resolving complaints

At each stage in the procedure, BESA wants to resolve the complaint. We will aim to ensure that:

- We deal with complaints promptly, politely and, where possible and appropriate, confidentially;
- We respond in the right way, e.g. with an explanation and information on any action taken or an apology where mistakes have been made;
- We learn from complaints and use them to improve our service.

### Stage 1

- In the first instance, complaints should be appropriately addressed as outlined above. In the communication, complainants should set out the details of the complaint and the remedies they are seeking. Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 business days of receipt.
- BESA aims to provide a response within 15 business days. Whilst it is our aim to resolve all matters as quickly as possible, some complex issues may take longer to be fully investigated. Therefore, timescales for handling and responding are indicative. We will update the complainant on the progress of the complaint (provided that it is not anonymous) if we expect it to take longer than 15 business days to resolve.

### Stage 2

- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 1 and wishes to take the matter further, they can escalate the complaint to Stage 2.
- A request to escalate to Stage 2 must be made to the Vice Chair of BESA's Executive Council, currently Christine Major via email ([christine.major@gluu.org.uk](mailto:christine.major@gluu.org.uk)) or in writing to the BESA address (marked Private and Confidential). This request should be made within ten business days of receipt of the Stage 1 response.
- The Vice Chair will not review any new complaints at this stage or consider evidence unrelated to the initial complaint. New complaints must be raised at stage 1 of the Procedure.
- Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 business days.
- The Vice Chair will normally provide a response to the complaint within 15 business days. The Vice Chair's decision is final.

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