



February 2021

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This Procedure will be followed should a formal complaint be received from a member of the Red Tractor scheme, a member of the public, an industry stakeholder or any other party/body who wish to raise a complaint.

The principles underlying this Complaints Procedure will be to take decisions that are based on facts, fairness, and proportionality.

1. Red Tractor Assurance (RT) can be notified of a complaint in the following ways:
 - By post: Red Tractor, 5th Floor, 100 Fenchurch, London EC3M 5JD
 - By email: <mailto:enquiries@redtractor.org.uk>
 - By phone: 020 7630 3320
 - TELL US <https://assurance.redtractor.org.uk/marketing-toolkit/contact-us/tell-us>
 - From a third party, whereby the complaint may be 'forwarded' to Red Tractor
2. If a complaint is received, all details of the complaint must be supplied along with any evidence supporting the complaint. Complaints considered 'in-scope' are complaints relating to RT Standards, RT Membership Rules, RT staff conduct, reputational risk and Certification Body operating procedures. Complaints not relating to any of these issues would not be considered in-scope.
3. Upon receipt of a complaint a Responsible Person within RT will be assigned to manage the complaint. The complaints process is as detailed below:



- Review complaint & establish if in scope
- Identify site/member detailed in the complaint
- Verify the complainant and validity of the complaint



- Full investigation carried out by Red Tractor with involvement from Certification Body if the complaint is in respect of a Red Tractor scheme member, all other complaints will be investigated solely by Red Tractor



- Review findings
- Apply Special conditions to membership/ suspend/ terminate member (is applicable)
- Share findings (if required)

4. Upon receipt of a written complaint, RT will review the documentation related to the complaint. Where necessary, clarification may be sought from the complainant on any facts.
5. Complaints received have the following timeline:
 - Acknowledging receipt of a complaint within one working day.
 - Providing an update on the complaint within 7 days.
 - Aim to conclude initial investigations within 21 days of receiving the complaint (or provide an update if not concluded)
6. Appeals - the Appeals Procedure is applicable only when a member wishes to appeal a decision made by RT to terminate a member's membership of a Scheme and will follow the process detailed below:
 - RT will notify the member in writing of the termination of membership which will normally be with immediate effect from the date of such letter.
 - The member is entitled to appeal within 14 full days from the date of the letter
 - Upon receipt of an appeal application, RT will review the grounds of appeal and all supporting documentation relied upon by the appellant.
 - RT may at any time prior to an appeal hearing, by written notice to the member in question, revoke any previous decision to terminate the member's membership of the Scheme.
 - A tribunal comprising not less than [3] persons will be appointed by RT to consider the appeal, one of whom will act as Chairman of the appeal hearing. RT will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the panel is independent, impartial and competent provided that at least one member of the tribunal shall be a member of the RT main board of directors. Members of the panel will be requested to disclose any conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest is disclosed an alternative panel member will be sought.
 - RT will notify the appellant in writing of the time and place of the appeal hearing and of the members of the panel. The appellant is entitled to question the suitability of any member of the tribunal by notifying RT in writing within 3 days of the date of this notification giving the reasons for objection. Such an objection will be considered by the Independent Chairman of Red Tractor Assurance and alternative member(s) of the panel shall be appointed if, in the Chairman's sole judgement, the reasons for objection are reasonable. If no objection is raised in writing within the 3 day period, the panel members will be deemed acceptable to the appellant. The appeal hearing will,

wherever possible, take place within 30 days after RT's receipt of the appeal application.

- Prior to the appeal hearing taking place, RT will prepare a bundle of documents for the use of the panel and the appellant which should be sent to the appellant as soon as reasonably practicable before the appeal hearing and in any event not less than 7 days before.
- If the appellant wishes any additional documents to be considered by the panel these should, if possible, be sent in advance to RT for inclusion in the bundle. If any such documents are tabled by the appellant at the appeal hearing at least five additional copies must be provided for the use of panel members and other attendees over and above the copies to be used by the appellant and his representative(s), if any.
- The appellant may be represented in person at the hearing by him/herself and / or a nominated representative. RT should be notified in advance of attendees and will reserve the right to limit numbers to what is reasonable. Any nominated representative attending in the absence of the appellant should provide written evidence of his authority to act on behalf of the appellant. Where the appellant is a limited company or partnership, it may be represented by a solicitor or nominated representative who should be a director or partner of the appellant. The appeal hearing will also be attended by RT representative(s) who should be at least the individual(s) responsible for the decision to terminate membership.
- The tribunal will notify the appellant of its decision in writing within 30 days of the hearing. The decision of the panel will be final and binding. Only one appeal will be allowable for a termination of membership arising from the same set of circumstances