

BMA feedback and complaints policy

February 2023

The BMA is committed to ensuring that every member and all those in contact with us receive a responsive, high-quality service and are satisfied with their interactions with us. We are always looking for ways to improve what we do.

We welcome any feedback that you have about the BMA, whether in the form of feedback on what you find particularly helpful about our policies, public statements, and the services we offer, or what you feel could be improved.

We are open to receiving complaints that you would like to be investigated about your individual experience of interacting with the BMA. We take all complaints seriously and if you are unhappy with any of our products or services, we will listen.

We use all feedback and complaints received as opportunities to learn, and to provide a better service to our members and stakeholders.

All feedback and complaints are centrally recorded and monitored so that we can identify patterns and identify areas for improvement.



Our principles

- We are member focussed.
- We value and encourage feedback.
- We are open, accountable, resolution-focussed, and timely.
- We seek continuous improvement.
- We will comply with confidentiality and data protection policies.

How to provide feedback

We consider feedback to be a relevant positive, negative or suggestive response to the work of the BMA, its actions and/or its provisions.

All feedback must relate to something that is within the remit and responsibilities of the BMA. For example:

- Positive feedback could be in relation to a member of BMA staff being helpful, or a new resource on the BMA website that has been found to be useful or informative.
- Negative feedback could relate to a policy position that the BMA has taken.
- Suggestive feedback could be an idea to improve a particular service or product offered by the BMA.

If you have any feedback, please let us know directly at feedback@bma.org.uk. We also welcome any suggestions you have for improvements that could be made.

Complaints and member liaison team standard operating procedure (SOP)

When a member provides feedback or raises a complaint, the SOP we operate is as follows. You will normally:

- Receive an acknowledgement within two working days.
- Receive a progress update on the investigation of the complaint within 15 working days.
- Receive the response to the complaint, where applicable, within 30 working days. We endeavour to conclude investigations as soon as possible; however, timeframes will vary depending on the size and complexity of complaints made and any additional information that the investigation process brings forward.
- Be kept informed of progress if more time is needed for us to address the complaint.

All BMA members who raise complaints or provide feedback are expected to treat staff with dignity and respect and abide by the BMA behaviour principles. Further details about the BMA's Code of Conduct and behaviour principles can be found [here](#).

Complainants are also expected to share information transparently and within set deadlines in order that complaint investigations can be completed as soon as possible which is in the best interests of all parties. It is the responsibility of the complainant to share any information and/or evidence that they would like considered as a part of the complaint investigation.

Complaint resolution process

You can make a complaint about an experience you have had with the BMA or a service you have received from it.

Please send complaints by email to the BMA Complaints and member liaison team at complaints@bma.org.uk.

Complaints will normally only be accepted if they have been made within three months of the event/s concerned, although the BMA can make exceptions where it is appropriate to do so (such as where you would not have been aware that you had cause to complain within this period).

All complaints will be managed and investigated independently by the BMA Complaints and member liaison team. When investigating a complaint that has been made about a staff member, we will notify the relevant staff manager.

In the interests of natural justice and transparency, the relevant staff are informed by their staff manager when a complaint is raised, so they are given the opportunity to respond to the concerns raised. Your complaint will only be sent to the relevant staff manager and will not be shared beyond their team or outside of the BMA. No information will be shared with another BMA member or another professional body.

We do not accept anonymous complaints.

Where concerns are raised relating to BMA employees, the concerns will be referred to their manager in the first instance. Where complaints are of a serious nature as set out in the BMA's internal disciplinary and employment policies, HR will also be informed.

The BMA Complaints and member liaison team uses all relevant information available to them when investigating complaints. This includes, but is not limited to, information provided by the complainant and the staff member/manager (if applicable), relevant policies, case files and correspondence files.

Complaint appeal process

You can appeal against the outcome of the Complaints and member liaison team's investigation by submitting a written statement for the attention of the BMA Director of corporate and member development, setting out your reasons for appeal (please complete the appeal outcome form in **Appendix 1** of this policy).

Appeals are accepted at the BMA's discretion; repeated appeals or appeals about matters outwith the 'My BMA Terms and Conditions' will not be accepted.

Appeal statements must be submitted within **15 working days** from when you are informed of the outcome of your complaint. If accepted, the appeal will be handled impartially by an independent, external party who will provide a recommendation. You will be informed in writing of the outcome. Please note that as appeals are reviewed externally, these do not operate within the complaint investigation timeframes outlined above in our SOP, although responses will be provided as quickly as possible.

Working together

While we fully understand the unhappiness that dissatisfaction may cause, BMA staff are there to help and therefore should be treated courteously at all times as set out in our Dignity at work policy.

The *BMJ*

Please note, the *BMJ* is independent of the BMA and has its own [complaints process](#).

BMA Law

Please note, BMA Law Limited is independent of the BMA and has its own [complaints process](#).

Accessibility

If there is any reason that you are unable to submit your feedback or complaint via email, or if you require this policy in an alternative format, please contact Joel Summers, Head of complaints and member liaison on JSummers@bma.org.uk or 020 7383 6708.

Appendix 1 – Complaint outcome appeal form

You can appeal the outcome of your complaint by submitting a written statement for the attention of the BMA Director of corporate and member development setting out your reasons for appeal. Appeal statements must be submitted within **15 working days** from when you were informed of the outcome of your complaint. The appeal will be dealt with impartially by an independent, external party, who will provide a recommendation.

In order for an appeal to be fully considered, the relevant information held by the BMA relating to your complaint will be shared with the independent, external party. This will be solely for the purposes of the appeal and will not be shared any further.

You will be informed in writing of the outcome.

Personal details

Title and name	
BMA membership number <i>(if applicable)</i>	
Email address	

Appeal statement

Original complaint date	
Complaint outcome date	

Reason/s for appeal. *Please specify the grounds of your appeal, outlining your reason/s for appealing the complaint outcome. The more specific you can be, the better.*

Evidence to support. *Please attach any additional relevant correspondence or evidence to support your appeal.*

Desired outcome. *Please indicate the outcome you would like.*

Declaration: I confirm this information to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date:

Please return the completed form to Nicky Jayesinghe, BMA Director of corporate and member development, at complaints@bma.org.uk.