

## Customer Complaints Procedures

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES & CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

A primary objective of HC Financial Advisers Group Ltd (the regulated entity) is the prevention of problems. Therefore management have established and maintained procedures to ensure that measures are taken to eliminate the cause(s) of quality related problems, or minimise the recurrence of the problem. The procedures are in line with the Consumer Protection Code (as amended 2012) and the Financial Services & Pensions Ombudsman legislation.

### **PROCEDURE**

All customer complaints when received by any member of staff must be brought to the attention of the CEO, who is also the Compliance Officer, as soon as possible and formally logged in a timely manner there-after with the objective of resolving the complaint as soon as possible where appropriate. Complaints are in effect continuous improvement initiatives; therefore, a root cause and effective preventive action are put in place.

- g) The person receiving the complaint fills out a Complaint Form (QR005) as soon as possible and informs the Compliance Officer who in turns advises on the appropriate course of action.
- h) The regulated entity will acknowledge each complaint in writing within 5 business days of the complaint being received;
- i) The regulated entity will provide the complainant with the name of one or more individuals appointed by the regulated entity to be the complainants point of contact in relation to the complaint until the complaint is resolved or cannot be processed any further;
- j) The regulated entity will provide the complainant with a regular written update on the progress of the investigation of the complaint at intervals of not greater than 20 business days;
- k) The regulated entity will attempt to investigate and resolve a complaint within 40 business days of having received the complaint; where the 40 business days have elapsed and the complaint is not resolved the regulated entity will inform the complainant of the anticipated timeframe within which the regulated entity hopes to resolve the complaint and of the consumer's right to refer the matter to the Financial Services & Pensions Ombudsman, where relevant, and will provide the consumer with the contact details of such Ombudsman;

- a) The regulated entity will advise the complainant in writing, within 5 business days of the completion of the investigation of a complaint, of the outcome of the investigation and, where applicable, explain the terms of any offer or settlement being made. The regulated entity will also inform the complainant of the right to refer the matter to the Financial Services Ombudsman or the Pensions Ombudsman, where relevant, and will provide the consumer with the contact details of such Ombudsman.
- b) When a regulated entity receives a verbal complaint, it must offer the consumer the opportunity to have the complaint treated as a written complaint
- c) A regulated entity must maintain an up-to-date record of all complaints subject to the complaints procedure. This record must contain the details of each complaint, a record of the regulated entity's response(s), any other relevant correspondence or records and the action taken to resolve each complaint
- d) A Complaint Log is retained and controlled by the Compliance Officer. This Log details the status of all complaints
- e) The Management shall make final authority on decisions regarding customer complaints. Trends are analysed and formally communicated.
- f) Clients are made aware of our complaints system through our Terms of Business. This document outlines our internal procedure and also details that if clients are not satisfied that they may approach the relevant Ombudsman regarding the complaint.

**Link to the Financial Services Ombudsman**

<https://financialombudsman.ie/make-a-complaint/>