

# **Group Analytic Society International (GASi)**

## **GASi Complaints Procedure**

Most complaints will be resolved informally. GASi will encourage mutual discussion or mediation between those involved.

The procedure below will be used when a complaint requires a more formal investigation and response. The aim is always to ensure that where possible complaints are resolved, and harmonious relationships restored.

GASi views complaints as an opportunity to learn and grow as well as the chance to review the situation objectively and seek to find a resolution for the person or people involved. Complaints may involve staff members (including consultants and freelancers, volunteers (including trustees) and members of GASi.

This policy sets out how GASi assesses and responds to complaints about any aspect of its operations. The following issues are examples of complaints that will be dealt with under this procedure:

- a. Allegations of unacceptable behaviour (refer to code of behaviour policy).
- b. Non-compliance with GASi's own policies and procedures.

Where practicable, no one who is the subject of a complaint or who would have a conflict of interest for any other reason will be involved in the investigation of a complaint. All complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially, informing only those who need to know and following any data protection requirements.

GASi will not consider complaints that are:

- a. Not accompanied with sufficient detail to assess the merits of the complaint.
- b. Broadly or substantively the same as previously investigated complaints.
- c. Vexatious\*.

It will be preferable if complaints can be raised soon after the facts become known to the complainant, but we appreciate that there may be reasons why people wait before raising a complaint.

GASi understands the importance of enabling complaints from those who may be concerned about reprisals or the sensitivity of matters raised, and will give fair consideration to complaints raised anonymously.

If a complaint gives rise to key issues that should be raised to the membership, those issues will be delivered via an email to the membership.

## Procedure for Responding to Complaints

GASi will fairly and objectively investigate any reported complaint regarding the activities of the charity or conduct by a staff member, volunteer or member of GASi. A Form can be found on GASi's website.

### Stages of the Procedure and Recommended Time for each stage

These are the Stages of the Procedure:

**Stage 1** – clarification and investigation of the report made to GASi (within 7 days from the receipt of the complaint)

**Stage 2** – initial consideration of the investigation by the Raising Concerns Group (within 21 days of stage 1)

**Stage 3** – further investigation if needed (to be concluded within 14 days of stage 2)

**Stage 4** – Discussion and decision on the Allegations (within 14 days of stage 2, or stage 3 if needed)

**Stage 5** – Appeal to the Trustees of GASi (the Trustees should be notified within 7 days of receipt of the Decision. The Appeal will be heard within 6 weeks of notification)

**Stage 6** – Reflection (within 6 months of stage 4).

The recommended times may need to be adjusted if a relevant person is not available due to illness, holiday or some other appropriate reason.

Protective action to safeguard the complainant or any other person can be taken while considering the complaint at any stage of the process.

### Stage 1 – Investigation of the Report

When a complaint is made to GASi, the Raising Concerns Group (which includes 3 Management Committee members) will investigate and clarify the allegations. Reports can be made by completing the form "**Complaint form**" which is found on the GASi website and sending it to this email address: [complaints@groupanalyticsocietyinternational.co.uk](mailto:complaints@groupanalyticsocietyinternational.co.uk) The Raising Concerns Group will respond as soon as possible to arrange a meeting with the person reporting the allegations, aware that they may not be personally affected by the matter in question. We will consider whether the report is being made informally or formally by (a) the individual(s) personally affected or, when relevant, (b) another person reporting on the individual(s) behalf. The person reporting the allegations may have someone with them during the meeting.

The Raising Concerns Group will gather such information as is available before proceeding to the second stage.

In the case of complaints involving behaviour, the Raising Concerns Group will consider whether the individual in question should remain in their role and retain their particular responsibilities, or be suspended pending the outcome.

The Raising Concerns Group will endeavour to complete the Investigation stage within 7 days of receiving a complaint, and will maintain confidentiality through the process, within relevant legal frameworks.

### **Stage 2 – Initial discussion of the Allegations by GASi Raising Concerns Group**

The Raising Concerns Group will meet to discuss the nature of the allegations based on the information gathered at Stage 1.

Details of all complaints will be logged and regularly monitored to notice patterns or trends that require further investigation.

A member of GASi Raising Concerns Group will contact the person reporting to request any additional information required by the Raising Concerns Group during their discussion and consideration process.

We will ensure discretion so that the smallest possible number of people know about the report. GASi MC will provide the operational support as this procedure is followed. The Raising Concerns Group will meet within 21 days of receiving the report of the investigation.

### **Stage 3 – Further Investigation if required.**

As a result of the Raising Concerns Group's consideration of the evidence, there may need to be further investigation of the allegations.

The Raising Concerns Group will consider the appropriate action regarding questioning the subject of the complaint, aware that safeguards may need to be in place to protect the identity of the individual(s) affected, and/or the person making the report. If an anonymous report has been made which adds to evidence previously gathered, this will be carefully considered, and action taken with utmost discretion to protect the anonymity of the reporter.

When appropriate, the Raising Concerns Group will contact the subject of the complaint to arrange a meeting with them (and, if they wish, a trusted colleague/friend) and discuss the allegations with them. A minimum of two members of the Raising Concerns Group will attend the meeting. A written record will be taken of the meeting and shared with all the attendees so that they can confirm that it is an accurate record.

The Raising Concerns Group will conclude any further investigation within 14 days of its initial consideration, and then convene a meeting to reach a decision about the Complaint.

### **Stage 4 – Discussion of the Allegations and Decision.**

Not more than 14 days after the conclusion of any further investigation, the Raising Concerns Group will discuss the allegations and reach its decision on further actions. It will bear in mind the importance of considering: (i) support for all the people involved in the allegations, (ii) taking appropriate action to respond to the allegations, and (iii) whether any report (or additional report, if an interim report was made at an earlier stage) to the Charity Commission is needed in accordance with GASi's serious incident reporting policy.

The Raising Concerns Group will consider allegations on the principle of the balance of probabilities that an event, when supported by evidence, is more likely than not to have happened.

### **Response**

The Raising Concerns Group will let the complainant know the outcome of their investigation and provide reasons. If the complaint is upheld in part or in full, we will explain the steps GASi is taking to put things right and may make proposals to resolve matters. In any event, all relevant people will be provided with support for such period of time as appears appropriate.

### **Stage 5 – Appeal**

An appeal to the Response may be made by the complainant to GASi Management Committee (Trustees) and will be heard within 6 weeks of the Trustees being notified of the request for an appeal.

The Trustees will not re-examine the complaint but will conduct a review of the steps taken. The Trustees will review the actions taken under this procedure and either confirm or vary the conclusion.

The Complaints Procedure will be reviewed by the GASi Management Committee on an annual basis.

October 2025

## \* Vexatious Complaint definition

### a. Definition of a vexatious complaint:

For the purposes of this policy, 'vexatious' refers to complaints that are:

- **Malicious or unfounded** – intended to cause distress, disruption, or reputational damage rather than to raise a genuine concern.
- **Persistent and unreasonable** – repeatedly raising the same issues without presenting new evidence or pursuing trivial matters in a way that places an undue burden on the society, provided that the society is committed to giving due consideration to each complaint it receives so as not to overlook any new substantive issues raised by repeat complainants.
- **Harassing or abusive** – using offensive, insulting, or threatening language or behaviour.
- **Without merit** – lacking a reasonable basis in fact of fairness, and made primarily to annoy, embarrass, or create difficulty for the society or its members.