

Date	23 February 2023
Item	13.0
Title	Annual Complaints and Compliments Report
Author	David Pope, Director of Operations
Purpose	To report on corporate complaints and compliments about CILEx Regulation for 2022, prior to inclusion in the 2022 CRL Annual Report.
Recommendation	To receive and APPROVE for inclusion in the 2022 CRL Annual report the information on complaints and compliments received by CRL.
Timing	N/A
Impact Assessment	Complaints provide valuable opportunities to identify improvements to CRL's service that will benefit future service users. Failure to provide a fair, consistent and structured process to handle complaints about CRL's service may lead to reputational damage
Impact on Regulatory Objectives	The work covered in this report impacts on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - protecting and promoting the public interest; - protecting and promoting the interests of consumers
Implications for resources	N/A
Impact on consumer empowerment	N/A
Impact on ongoing competence	N/A
Publication status	For publication
Appendices (in supporting papers pack)	N/A

Purpose of report

1. This paper provides the Board with a report on corporate complaints and compliments received by CRL in 2022. This information will be included in the 2022 CRL Annual report.

Background

2. CRL reports complaints to the Board in line with the Service Complaints Policy for accountability and to improve standards as well as CRL's commitment to an open and transparent culture. Staff are also encouraged to record compliments given by external and internal customers and stakeholders.
3. Corporate complaints are reported to the Board quarterly as part of the operational performance report and to the Legal Services Board on a quarterly basis as part of the LSB Regulatory Assessment.
4. The level of complaints and compliments reflects well on the CRL staff during what was a particularly challenging year with the news related to CILEX's review of its regulatory arrangements.

Key issues for consideration

Complaints numbers, escalations and whether upheld:

Stage 1 Complaints 2022	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
No. Stage 1 complaints (corporate)	2	2	3	4	11
% Response within 15 working days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Stage 1 complaints upheld or partially upheld	100%	50%	100%	100%	90%
Stage 2 Complaints 2022	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
No. Stage 2 complaints (corporate)	-	-	-	-	0
% Response within 15 working days	-	-	-	-	-
% Stage 2 complaints upheld or partially upheld	-	-	-	-	-

5. There were eleven stage 1 complaints in 2022, compared to seven stage 1 complaints in 2021. No complaints were escalated to stage 2.
6. Although the number of complaints has risen again in 2022, it continues to remain relatively low when considered against the volume of interactions that CRL staff have with members, applicants and the public.

Type:

7. To help identify any themes, complaints are recorded against the following categories. Complaints that mentioned more than one issue were recorded against the category that best reflected the main source of dissatisfaction. While delay was not recorded as a main theme of complaint it did feature across a number of the complaints.

Type of Complaint	No. of Complaints
Policy/procedure/Rules	1
Staff behaviour/attitude	0
Service failure	4
Delay	0
Lack of response	6
Invoicing/payment	0
Other	0

8. In reviewing the seriousness of the complaints, none of the complaints related to exceptional risk or loss, nor had reputation management consequences.

Business Area Stage 1 complaints:

9. These are formal complaints that are dealt with by the relevant senior manager and in the response CRL indicates whether the complaint is justified, partly justified or not justified.

10. Enforcement case 1: this complaint was an alleged service failure. The complainant did not receive the acknowledgements and updates they were expecting, and the complaint was upheld.
11. Enforcement case 2: this complaint was upheld due to delays in responding to the complainant about this case. Ultimately there was no evidence of misconduct by the member.
12. Enforcement case 3: this complaint was partially upheld due to delays caused by IT problems in resubmitting an application for membership. The complainant was unhappy with the decision of the Professional Conduct Panel which had rejected the initial application, but this was outside the jurisdiction of the service complaint procedure.
13. Enforcement case 4: this was a complex complaint where contact with the complainant was preferred in writing. The complainant wished to be able to discuss the case and progress in detail, which was outside of the process. The complaint was upheld due to not setting out clearly the reasons for not responding to the complainant as requested about this case.
14. Enforcement case 5: this complaint was a challenge to the process about a decision made under the Enforcement Rules. The complainant had exhausted the appeals process, so the matter was closed. The complaint related to communicating the timescales for future engagement was upheld.
15. Enforcement case 6: the complaint related to process around consideration of prior conduct related to a number of applications. In trying to assist the applicant, this created a service issue which was upheld.
16. Practitioner team case 1: this complaint was upheld in part, due to delays in responding to communications. The other issue regarding not being part of the initial Ulaw cohort was not upheld as the member responded after the deadline.
17. Practitioner team case 2: this employer complaint, which was upheld on behalf of the members, was related to the service that employees had received in relation to practice rights applications and the impact that that had had on progressing their careers. The service was not to the standard expected and the employees had had to chase for updates on progress with their applications.
18. Practitioner team case 3: this complainant felt ignored through the practice rights application process, where they had not received timely responses to chasing communications. The complaint was upheld because it was clear that there had been a lack of communication.
19. Practitioner team case 4: the renewal of the complainants advocacy qualification had been missed and the members detail had been deleted from the directory. This was rectified but the complaint was upheld.
20. Practitioner team case 5: this complaint was upheld due to delays in responding to communications regarding the applicants application to become a dual qualified Fellow.
21. Where service issues have been highlighted, CRL has reflected on how these can be addressed, and processes improved. CRL will look to provide clearer guidance on timescales within the Enforcement process, particularly around how CRL communicates with complainants and how often, and the complainants involvement in a complaint.
22. The issues for the PAS team were quite similar, focusing on the importance of reassuring members and applicants that an application is progressing in a timely manner.

Business Area Stage 2 complaints

23. If a complainant is unhappy with the Stage 1 response (partially justified or not justified) they can request that it be reviewed by a Director of Service who had no operational involvement with the matter or by the CEO.
24. There were no Business Area Stage 2 complaints in 2022.

Compliments:

25. Positive praise, over and above a thank you, is treated as a compliment. The majority of compliments received in 2022 were from regulated individuals and those compliments recorded in 2022 are categorised as follows:

Team	No. of Compliments
Accounts	1
Administration	1
Consumer and Policy	0
Enforcement	5
Entity Authorisation and Supervision	1
Practitioner and Authorisation (CPD)	4
Practitioner and Authorisation (Practice Rights)	1
Practitioner and Authorisation (QE)	1
Practitioner and Authorisation (WBL)	6
Practitioner and Authorisation (General)	14
Total	34

26. For 2021 CRL recorded 43 compliments.
27. Some operational areas are more likely to attract positive feedback. Staff are reminded regularly to share compliments they have received from colleagues and stakeholders.
28. A selection of compliments, demonstrating a theme of good customer service, follows at the end of this report.

Recommendation

29. The Board is asked to receive and **APPROVE** for inclusion in the 2022 CRL Annual report the information on corporate complaints and compliments received by CRL.

CILEx Regulation Compliments 2022

Please let me thank you and the CILEx Regulation team for your guidance and efforts over the last few months, which have been difficult due to many personal reasons that the CILEx team are aware of. I will be sure to leave positive feedback on the survey sent to me, and I wish you all the best for the future.

Member

I am so grateful for your assistance and help and can always say I receive the best assistance from CILEx regulation. You are all amazing so thank you!

Member

Thank you as always for assisting me with my questions. You make things much clearer with the process.

Member

A huge thank you to Samuel for all his hard work in crunching the membership data into regions to support the Young Foundation EDI research

Colleague

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and compassion throughout this process, you have been very helpful, and I am grateful of your assistance.

Member

I wish to thank her for her kind words. Bethany was extremely compassionate with me when I rang to inform you of my family bereavement.

Member

Can I just say you have been so incredibly helpful. I was really dreading sending it all off just expecting no responses and slow progress etc. but you have been amazing and it's really appreciated.

Member

Michelle is incredibly proactive, helpful, and very positive. Her depth and breadth of knowledge about the company is impressive.

Colleague