



ROMANTIC
NOVELISTS'
ASSOCIATION®

RNA Complaints Policy

Responsibility	Date Agreed	Date of Review	Review Undertaken
Governance Lead	November 2022	November 2025	

Romantic Novelists' Association (RNA) Complaints Policy

Scope

The Romantic Novelists' Association (RNA) Complaints Policy applies to RNA members, volunteers who are members and volunteers who are not members.

RNA employees should use the RNA's Grievance Procedure for dealing with complaints and grievances.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The RNA recognises the need to continually improve and develop as an organisation. We are committed to using knowledge and learning from feedback and complaints to improve the RNA. This is a two way process where we encourage RNA members and volunteers to feel invested in the organisation and support them to raise any concerns or complaints.
- 1.2 We take a holistic approach to issues and complaints raised, focusing on the circumstances leading to the problem and any relevant factors in terms of wider context.
- 1.3 We work to create communication routes that suit a wide range of members and volunteers to ensure everyone feels able to raise concerns or make a complaint. Many issues can be addressed more effectively with a less formal approach and we support members and volunteers to use this if preferred.
- 1.4 The RNA belongs to its members and we wish to make use of our organisational memory to learn and improve how we work for our members and volunteers and their interests.
- 1.5 The RNA has published a [Code of Conduct](#) which applies to all members and volunteers. If a member or volunteer believes that this has been breached and they do not feel able to resolve the issue directly and informally, we encourage the member or volunteer to raise the issue as follows:

2. For issues within RNA Chapter groups

- 2.1 These can often be resolved informally between members or volunteers. If an issue cannot be resolved informally, it should be raised in the first instance with the local Chapter Co-ordinator.
- 2.2 If the Chapter Co-ordinator cannot resolve the issue within the Chapter, they may wish to seek advice from the Chapter Liaison Officer or another officer of the organisation. This will only be undertaken once the Chapter Co-ordinator has requested and gained the permission of the complainant to do so, unless the matter involves a serious matter such as a breach of the law, safeguarding, or potential harm.

3. For issues involving equality, diversity, and inclusion

- 3.1 The RNA is committed to upholding the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, and has an *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy* which details this commitment.
- 3.2 We appreciate that issues involving these matters can sometimes be difficult to raise. If a member or volunteer has an issue in this area and does not feel comfortable raising a direct complaint, they can contact the Diversity and Inclusion officer by emailing rnainclusion@romanticwriters.co.uk. The Diversity and Inclusion officer will discuss the situation and offer support in resolving the issue or in taking your complaint further.

4. Formal Complaints

- 4.1 If an informal resolution to a complaint cannot be achieved, or if the complainant believes that the complaint needs to be dealt with on a formal basis, then a formal complaint can be submitted as follows:
- 4.2 Formal complaints should be made to the Chair of the Board using the [RNA Complaints Form](#) and submit it online [via the electronic form](#) or email it to the RNA Board Secretary, at: rnasecretary@romanticwriters.co.uk
- 4.3 If a complaint concerns the conduct of the Chair of the association this should be specified in the complaint form so that the matter can be dealt with by another Director.
- 4.4 Complaints will normally be considered in the first instance by two Directors other than the Chair and Vice Chair. These Directors will be formally appointed as the Investigating Officers to take the lead in conducting the investigation. Other Directors, volunteers, or members may be consulted if needed for the purposes of seeking evidence and relevant supporting information and this will be undertaken in strictest confidence.
- 4.5 The complainant will receive an initial acknowledgement of their complaint within ten working days of receipt of the complaint, and will be kept up to date with the progress of any investigation, and informed directly of the outcomes of their complaint in writing by the Investigating Officers.
- 4.6 Outcomes of investigations into complaints will be dependent on the nature of the complaint raised and the evidence considered but can include:
 - Complaint not upheld
 - No further action taken
 - Complaint upheld
 - Asking the full Board to approve a formal change in policy or procedure
 - Invoking the RNA Disciplinary policy in respect of a named member/members, employee/s or volunteer/s.
- 4.7 If, following investigation, the complaint is found to be an unsubstantiated allegation made with malicious or vexatious intent, the RNA reserves the right to take disciplinary action against the complainant.
- 4.8 If a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of the investigation into their complaint they can appeal to the Chair of the Board using the [Complaints Appeal Form](#). Any appeal will be considered only by members of the Board who did not investigate the original complaint.

4.9 The Complaints Appeal form should be submitted online via the electronic form or emailed to the RNA Board Secretary.

5. Data Protection

5.1 All documentation used at any stage of the complaints process will be retained by the RNA Board Secretary.

5.2 All documentation will be securely stored in accordance with the provisions of the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

5.3 The RNA reserves the right to retain documentation for five years after which time it will be confidentially destroyed.

Appendix 1

**Romantic Novelists' Association
Formal Complaint Form**

Your name: (please use the name that you have registered with the RNA as a member/volunteer)

Address:

Email:

Current RNA membership:

New Writers' Scheme Full Member

Associate Member Not a Member

Please give a summary of the **key** issues of your complaint, no longer than 200 words:

Please indicate which of the RNA's Policies or Procedures that you believe have been breached, if applicable, and briefly state why. (e.g. Code of Conduct, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy)

If you believe that legislation has been breached (e.g. Equality Act 2010) please state the legislation and briefly state why you believe it has been breached:

If you are complaining about a specific individual or individuals, please provide the full name(s) and membership status of the individual(s) (if known):

Please provide full details of your complaint, including: any evidence that you are able to provide to support your complaint, the date and location that the incident(s) occurred, the name(s) and contact details of any witnesses who will be willing to give evidence in support of your complaint, any supporting documentation or material evidence. If you would prefer to attach this information as a separate document, email this to: rnasecretary@romanticwriters.co.uk

Complaint details:

Please note that the RNA takes all complaints very seriously. You will receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your complaint within ten working days. The RNA deals with complaints in the strictest confidence and we expect that complainants will also maintain strictest confidentiality and under no circumstances refer to any element of their complaint on social media.

Please send this form to the RNA Board Secretary:
rnasecretary@romanticwriters.co.uk or [submit online](#)

I declare that the matters referred to in this complaint are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signed

Dated

Complaint reference number (for office use only)

Return to the RNA Board Secretary: rnasecretary@romanticwriters.co.uk

Appendix 2

**Romantic Novelists' Association
Complaints Appeal Form**

The RNA will only consider an appeal where there are proven material grounds for an appeal. The RNA will not consider an appeal that is made purely on the basis that the complainant does not like the outcome of their complaint. There must be a substantiated reason for lodging an appeal e.g. the Investigating Officer did not adhere to the provisions of the RNA's Complaints procedure, a witness was not interviewed, evidence was not considered, etc.

Your name: (please use the name that you have registered with the RNA as a member/volunteer)

Address:

Email:

Current RNA membership:

New Writers' Scheme Full Member

Associate Member Not a Member

Please give a summary of the key reason(s) that you are lodging an appeal, no longer than 200 words:

Please indicate which of the RNA's Policies or Procedures that you believe have been breached in the outcome of your complaint, if applicable, and briefly state why.

If you believe that legislation has been breached in the outcome of your complaint eg. the Equality Act 2010, please state the legislation and briefly state why:

Please provide the names of the Investigating Officers who investigated your complaint:

Please provide full details of your appeal, including: any evidence that you are able to provide to support your appeal, the name(s) and contact details of any witnesses who will be willing to give evidence in support of your appeal, any supporting documentation or material evidence. If you would prefer to send this information as a separate document, please email it to: rnasecretary@romanticwriters.co.uk

Appeal details:

Please note that the RNA takes all appeals very seriously. You will receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your appeal within ten working days. The RNA deals with appeals in the strictest confidence and we expect that complainants will also maintain confidentiality.

I declare that the matters referred to in this appeal are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signed

Dated

Please send this form to the RNA Board Secretary (or [submit online](#)):

rnasecretary@romanticwriters.co.uk

Appeal reference number (for office use only)