



# RIAS

## How to Complain to RIAS

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The RIAS strives to be an open and transparent organisation working to support Architects and promote Architecture in Scotland. Whilst no organisation actively seeks complaints about itself, its members and its staff, it is fundamental to good governance that all valid complaints received are dealt with fairly, swiftly and with an open mind.

### Exclusion

This guidance relates to complaints against the RIAS as a corporate body, against RIAS members and against members of RIAS staff, arising from their actions or inactions, other than actions related to the provision of architectural services by a Chartered Member. Complaints regarding professional services should in the first instance be directed to the Chartered Member themselves or their employer and if this is not dealt with satisfactorily in the eyes of the complainant, the Architects Registration Board who have the statutory duty to investigate.

### Complaints against RIAS, its Members and its Staff

1. **First Steps** - Identify what you wish to achieve by raising a complaint and test that your complaint is valid. You might wish to discuss this with an appropriate advisor, colleague, member of RIAS or RIAS staff member.
2. **Resolve Informally If Possible** - Depending on the nature of your complaint, if appropriate and possible, talk or write to the person about whose actions you wish to complain. If you put your case to them they may satisfy your concerns and if appropriate apologise and take appropriate action.
3. **Valid Complaint** - Once you are clear that you have a valid complaint and require to formally raise it you should identify who it is best to contact.

If the complaint relates to another RIAS member, RIAS Council member including the President or RIAS itself then it should go to the RIAS Complaints Ombudsperson (tbc). Until an ombudsperson is appointed, complaints can be sent to the address below, marked "Confidential", and your complaint will be recorded by the Administration Manager.

CONFIDENTIAL  
RIAS Complaints Ombudsperson  
c/o RIAS  
15 Rutland Square  
Edinburgh  
EH1 2BE

If you have a complaint regarding RIAS staff actions this should be to the Secretary/Chief Executive at the above address or email: [secretary@rias.org.uk](mailto:secretary@rias.org.uk).

If your complaint relates to the RIAS Secretary/Chief Executive you should contact the Ombudsperson.

These individuals are responsible for the initial consideration of your complaint and logging it as received.

4. **Provide Clear Details** - You should address the complaint in writing to the specific person above providing all relevant, detailed information and your relationship to the subject of your complaint. It is important that you set your case clearly and concisely, particularly if you wish to refer to other guidance or documents or if the circumstances are complex. You should not 'drip feed' information in multiple correspondence or repeat specific points. Brevity is encouraged but make sure you provide all relevant details. E.g. If you believe that a Trustee is failing his

/or her duty under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 you should make this clear.

5. **Response to your Complaint** - You will be contacted to discuss the matter further, specifically whether the RIAS Secretary/Chief Executive or Ombudsperson consider there are grounds for further investigation and with details of how your complaint will be dealt with e.g. as a grievance or whistle blowing or using the RIAS Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure or Corporate Complaints Procedure. In addition you will be provided with confirmation of the details of the process and an outline of potential outcomes. You should respond to requests for clarification timeously. At all times, be polite and reasonable and expect the same in return.
6. **Confidentiality** - Unless agreed otherwise your complaint is confidential and you should not involve any other RIAS members or outside parties.
7. **Right of Appeal** - If you do not agree with how your complaint is resolved under the RIAS Complaints Procedure you have a right of Appeal.