



Fierce Festival External Complaints Procedure **October 2023**

Introduction

The procedures below set out our commitment to ensuring a fair, swift and courteous policy regarding complaints which is based on our core values:

- Trust: we will deal with complaints promptly and in line with the below procedures to ensure complainants trust that we are taking appropriate action.
- Joy: we will centre care in our responses to complaints to ensure the process is as painless as possible.
- Disruption: we understand that the work we present can be controversial and may not be to everyone's taste and therefore reserve the right to treat complaints differently based on their context.
- Rigour: we will discuss all complaints and follow the procedures set out below to ensure thorough investigations and responses sent to complainants based on the best possible information.

Procedures

We will discuss all complaints received through any channel at regular Team Meetings. This allows us to monitor potential issues and decide on next steps for specific complaints.

We understand that the work we present can be controversial or not to everyone's taste and that people will have strong reactions to it; these are valid, and we encourage conversation around the subject matter and will do our best to provide context and more information on the work. However not all complainants request or require a direct response.

There are also occasions where people's complaints may be based on misinformation or incorrect assumptions; where it is appropriate, we will respond to these, but this may depend on organisational capacity.

Complaints about the conduct of staff, safeguarding or health and safety issues will always be dealt with seriously and in line with the following procedure:

- Fierce will acknowledge receipt of a complaint within 5 working days.
- Complaints will be discussed at the next Team Meeting and the team will agree how to proceed.
- If the complaint is about one of the Co-Directors or could seriously affect the company's operations or reputation, the complaint will be escalated to the Board who will continue the investigation as below.
- We will investigate the complaint which may include writing to the original complainant for more information or contacting freelance staff or suppliers.
- A response will be sent to the complainant stating the steps that have been taken to investigate their complaint and if any steps are being taken to address the issue. This response will be sent within 4 weeks and if a final answer is not ready then, we will write explaining this and send a full response within a further 4 weeks.
- The response will include the option for the complainant to contact the Chair of the Board if they are unhappy with the result.



- The Chair of the Board will then review the evidence from the investigation and make a response within 2 weeks of being contacted; their response is final.

Responses

Responses to complainants will centre care by acknowledging the context of the person's complaint, particularly if it has been difficult for them to come forward with it for whatever reason. We will be as open as is possible regarding the investigation we have undertaken, what we have found and what action, if any will be taken.

We will communicate clearly about timelines and provide explanations if they need to be extended, and about how and who they can appeal to if they don't think their complaint deserves more thorough investigation.

For legal reasons and to safeguard the wellbeing of individuals, it may not always be possible to inform a complainant of the exact steps being taken to address a complaint. We ask that as they have trusted us to follow procedures and investigate a complaint thoroughly, they trust us to take appropriate action based on our findings.