

Complaint mechanism through Dóchas

Signatories to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages (“the Code”) are obliged to ensure that: the materials and communications they produce are in-keeping with the principles as set out in the Code; and to provide the public with a facility to feedback, both positively and critically, on these communications (*Commitment 1*).

The organisation’s feedback mechanism is to be the first point of contact for those who wish to make a complaint.

However, in the case where an organisation fails to respond or where their response is not deemed satisfactory by the complainant, they may choose to initiate the following complaints process.

Requirements for lodging a complaint:

- Complaints must be addressed to the Dóchas Director at media@dochas.ie.
- Complaints must be against Code signatories only (Please see [here](#) for a full list of signatories).
- Complaint must clearly indicate which principle or principles of the Code the complainant feels may have been breached, and why (Please click [here](#) to download the Code of Conduct).
- Complaint must clearly indicate the full name of the complainant (this information will be kept confidential to Dóchas and anyone involved in the process) and the complaint must clearly indicate the format/medium the complainant feels may have breached the Code (ie. Website, TV ad, poster, etc) and provide a link, copy or full description of the piece.

Stages:

1. Complainant writes to the Dóchas Director following the requirements outlined above.
2. Dóchas Director sends an acknowledgement of receipt to the complainant.
3. Dóchas Director transmits essence of the complaint to the organisation, keeping the details of the complainant anonymous.
4. Dóchas receives response from the organisation and transmits response to complainant.

At this point, should the complainant deem the response to be satisfactory, the case shall be considered to be resolved and Dóchas will confirm that this is the case with both the complainant and the organisation in question.

APPENDIX 5
Dóchas Complaint Mechanism

In the case where the response is deemed unsatisfactory, then the complaints procedure will continue as follows:

5. Dóchas Director examines the case and decides whether:
 - a) to dismiss the issue as no breach to the Code was found.
 - b) to bring the complaint to the attention of the Dóchas Board.
6. Complainant and the organisation will be informed of Dóchas Director's decision.

The following process will apply if the Dóchas Director decides to bring the complaint to the attention of the Dóchas Board:

7. Dóchas Director transmits essence of the complaint and the response from the organisation to Dóchas Board.
8. Dóchas Board raises complaint with the organisation in question.
9. Dóchas Board receives response from the organisation.
10. Dóchas Board makes final decision about the complaint whether the organisation has breached the Code or not.
11. Complainant and the organisation will be informed in writing of the decision.

Dóchas commits to ensuring that the complaints are dealt within a timely and professional manner.