

Appendix A: Self-assessment form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and it must be reviewed and approved by the landlord's governing body at least annually.

Once approved, landlords must publish the self-assessment as part of the annual complaints performance and service improvement report on their website. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.

Landlords are required to complete the self-assessment in full and support all statements with evidence, with additional commentary as necessary.

We recognise that there may be a small number of circumstances where landlords are unable to meet the requirements, for example, if they do not have a website. In these circumstances, we expect landlords to deliver the intentions of the Code in an alternative way, for example by publishing information in a public area so that it is easily accessible.

Section 1: Definition of a complaint

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the landlord, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting a resident or group of residents.’</i>	Yes	This specific definition is used within the summary of our internal Standard Operating Procedure and the ‘Definitions and Scope’ of our Complaints Policy. Further guidance is provided to colleagues in section 2 of our Complaint Standard Operating Procedure.	
1.3	A resident does not have to use the word ‘complaint’ for it to be treated as such. Whenever a resident expresses dissatisfaction landlords must give them the choice to make complaint. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must be handled in line with the landlord’s complaints policy.	Yes	The ‘Definitions and Scope’ section of our policy sets out our definition of a complaint, which includes consideration to the fact that the word ‘complaint’ does not have to be used. It also confirmed our approach to accepting complaints via appropriate third parties and representatives. Section 2 of our SOP also confirms this commitment.	
1.4	Landlords must recognise the difference between a service request and a complaint. This must be set out in their complaints policy. A service	Yes	The ‘Definitions and Scope’ section of our policy sets out our definition of a service request	

	request is a request from a resident to the landlord requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored and reviewed regularly.		Section 2 of our SOP also confirms this commitment. Our definition matches that of the Housing Ombudsman	
1.5	A complaint must be raised when the resident expresses dissatisfaction with the response to their service request, even if the handling of the service request remains ongoing. Landlords must not stop their efforts to address the service request if the resident complains.	Yes	Section 2 of our Complaints Policy 'Definitions and Scope' states that: 'if the resident is dissatisfied with the response to their service request, this can be raised as a complaint. We will continue to address the service request while any complaint is investigated.'	
1.6	An expression of dissatisfaction with services made through a survey is not defined as a complaint, though wherever possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue a complaint if they wish to. Where landlords ask for wider feedback about their services, they also must provide details of how residents can complain.	Yes	We confirm within section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our Complaints Policy that we will not record feedback from surveys as a complaint. When surveys take place, we also confirm as such, and provide links to relevant sections of our website for further information on how to raise a complaint.	

Section 2: Exclusions

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
2.1	Landlords must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so. If landlords decide not to accept a complaint they must be able to evidence their reasoning. Each complaint must be considered on its own merits	Yes	<p>Section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our Complaints Policy detail situations where a complaint may not be accepted, and considerations to alternative resolutions avenues may be better suited.</p> <p>Appendix 3 of our SOP also confirms for colleagues.</p> <p>A 'Complaint Rejection' letter template is also provided to colleagues to ensure that the Housing Ombudsman details are provided, alongside guidance on ensuring that our written responses meet the requirements stated.</p>	
2.2	A complaints policy must set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered as a complaint or escalated, and these circumstances must be fair and reasonable to	Yes	Section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our Complaints Policy detail situations where a complaint may not be accepted, and considerations to alternative	

	<p>residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago. • Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court. • Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy. 		<p>resolutions avenues may be better suited.</p> <p>Appendix 3 of our SOP also confirms for colleagues.</p> <p>A 'Complaint Rejection' letter template is also provided to colleagues to ensure that the Housing Ombudsman details are provided, alongside guidance on ensuring that our written responses meet the requirements stated.</p>	
2.3	<p>Landlords must accept complaints referred to them within 12 months of the issue occurring or the resident becoming aware of the issue, unless they are excluded on other grounds. Landlords must consider whether to apply discretion to accept complaints made outside this time limit where there are good reasons to do so.</p>	Yes	<p>Section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our Complaints Policy detail situations where a complaint may not be accepted, and considerations to alternative resolutions avenues may be better suited.</p> <p>Appendix 3 of our SOP also confirms for colleagues.</p> <p>Despite our 12-month guidance, we are clear that colleague should consider all cases on their individual merit and exceptional circumstances that may require us to accept</p>	

			complaints in situations such as after the 12 month timeframe.	
2.4	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, an explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman does not agree that the exclusion has been fairly applied, the Ombudsman may tell the landlord to take on the complaint.	Yes	<p>Section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our Complaints Policy detail situations where a complaint may not be accepted, and considerations to alternative resolutions avenues may be better suited.</p> <p>Appendix 3 of our SOP also confirms for colleagues.</p> <p>A 'Complaint Rejection' letter template is also provided to colleagues to ensure that the Housing Ombudsman details are provided, alongside guidance on ensuring that our written responses meet the requirements stated.</p>	
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	Yes	<p>Section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our Complaints Policy detail situations where a complaint may not be accepted, and considerations to alternative resolutions avenues may be better suited.</p> <p>Appendix 3 of our SOP also confirms for colleagues.</p>	

			Despite our 12-month guidance, we are clear that colleague should consider all cases on their individual merit and exceptional circumstances that may require us to accept complaints in situations such as after the 12 month timeframe.	
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Section 3: Accessibility and Awareness

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
3.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which they can make a complaint. Landlords must consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and anticipate the needs and reasonable adjustments of residents who may need to access the complaints process.	Yes	<p>Section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our Complaint Policy details avenues through which complaints can be made. Further information is also provided through our website and colleagues.</p> <p>Our 'Roles and Responsibilities' section of our SOP also confirms that all colleagues are responsible for providing an avenue for raising a complaint.</p>	
3.2	Residents must be able to raise their complaints in any way and with any member of staff. All staff must be aware of the complaints process and be able to pass details of the complaint to the appropriate person within the landlord.	Yes	<p>Section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our Complaint Policy details avenues through which complaints can be made. Further information is also provided through our website and colleagues.</p> <p>Our 'Roles and Responsibilities' section of our SOP also confirms that all colleagues are</p>	

			<p>responsible for providing an avenue for raising a complaint.</p> <p>All customer facing staff are required to complete annual, mandatory complaints training.</p>	
3.3	<p>High volumes of complaints must not be seen as a negative, as they can be indicative of a well-publicised and accessible complaints process. Low complaint volumes are potentially a sign that residents are unable to complain.</p>	Yes	<p>L&Q welcome complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve services.</p> <p>Section 9 'Monitoring and Learning' of our Complaints Policy highlights our commitment to reviewing complaint numbers and themes to aid service improvement.</p>	
3.4	<p>Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the two stage process, what will happen at each stage, and the timeframes for responding. The policy must also be published on the landlord's website.</p>	Yes	<p>Our complaints Policy is published through our website and available on request. The policy details our two-stage complaint process, as well as the avenues available to customer after a final stage 2 response has been provided.</p> <p>Our policy also provides timescales associated to each complaint stage.</p>	
3.5	<p>The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.</p>	Yes	<p>Section 11 'Communication' of our complaints policy provides the details highlighted within this section.</p>	

3.6	Landlords must give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord.	Yes	<p>Section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our complaints policy details our commitments to work with representatives for whom permissions have been given to represent the complainants.</p> <p>We also recognise that complainants may wish to be accompanied by a representative within meetings within the same section of our policy.</p> <p>This commitment is also detailed within section 2 of our complaint SOP.</p>	
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.	Yes	<p>We also provide details on residents rights to access the Ombudsman service within our 'Complaint Rejection', 'Extension' and Stage 2 letters.</p> <p>Section 4 of the complaints Policy also details residents rights to access the Housing Ombudsman. Section 12 providing the Housing Ombudsman's contact details.</p>	

Section 4: Complaint Handling Staff

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
4.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling, including liaison with the Ombudsman and ensuring complaints are reported to the governing body (or equivalent). This Code will refer to that person or team as the 'complaints officer'. This role may be in addition to other duties.	Yes	<p>L&Q operate a HUB and spoke model to complaints handling. Our central complaint HUB has overall responsibility for our complaints system.</p> <p>For service areas who receive larger numbers of complaints, a dedicated complaint SPOKE operates under the guidance of our central HUB.</p> <p>The responsibilities of wider teams in the complaints process is also outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure, supported by a Complaints Policy and Complaint Standard Operating Procedure.</p> <p>Overall accountability for complaints sits within a single Directorate and under our Customer Service and Revenue Director.</p>	
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate	Yes	Complaints handlers work with colleagues across all teams to	

	the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.		resolve cases. Our internal communications and training encourages colleagues to escalate quickly to senior staff as necessary.	
4.3	Landlords are expected to prioritise complaint handling and a culture of learning from complaints. All relevant staff must be suitably trained in the importance of complaint handling. It is important that complaints are seen as a core service and must be resourced to handle complaints effectively	Yes	<p>Section 9 'Monitoring and Learning', and Section 11 'Communication' detail our commitment on prioritising and learning from complaints.</p> <p>All front-line colleagues are required to complaint annual training, complaint governance is overseen through our Complaint Operations Group, and Complaint Management Learning Group, with regular reports numbers, themes, learning and assurance being presented through these as well as Customer Group and Resident Services Board. All staff also have access to our 'Central Complaints HUB' that provides guidance and information on complaints management at L&Q.</p> <p>Complaints Handlers received detailed support, training and materials through avenues such</p>	

			<p>us Continuous Development Review sessions, Quarterly Podcasts, and monthly Complaint Handlers meetings.</p> <p>Facilities to contact staff with urgent messages between the regular sessions are available.</p>	
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Section 5: The Complaint Handling Process

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
5.1	Landlords must have a single policy in place for dealing with complaints covered by this Code. Residents must not be treated differently if they complain.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy has been revised in line with the amended Code and is published on our website. A review takes place where any significant need to change is identified such as an amendment to internal practices or the Housing Ombudsman Code.	
5.2	The early and local resolution of issues between landlords and residents is key to effective complaint handling. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'informal complaint') as this causes unnecessary confusion.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy and Complaint Standard Operating Procedure set out a two-stage complaints process, in compliance with the Code.	

5.3	A process with more than two stages is not acceptable under any circumstances as this will make the complaint process unduly long and delay access to the Ombudsman.	Yes	Our Complaints Policy and Complaint Standard Operating Procedure set out a two-stage complaints process, in compliance with the Code.	
5.4	Where a landlord's complaint response is handled by a third party (e.g. a contractor or independent adjudicator) at any stage, it must form part of the two stage complaints process set out in this Code. Residents must not be expected to go through two complaints processes.	Yes	Our Complaint Policy details our two-stage complaint process. Section 2 'Summary' of our SOP confirms that where third parties do handle complaints on our behalf, this must form part of our two stage complaints process.	
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	Yes	Our Complaint Policy details our two-stage complaint process. Section 2 'Summary' of our SOP confirms that where third parties do handle complaints on our behalf, this must form part of our two stage complaints process. The same section of our complaints SOP confirms that any third parties must manage complaints in line with our Policy and the Housing Ombudsman code.	
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must	Yes	Section 6 and 8 of our Complaints SOP detail the	

	set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. The Code will refer to this as “the complaint definition”. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification.		<p>requirements for the definitions to be highlighted with the acknowledgement letters.</p> <p>We also provide a suite of letter templates that complaint handlers must use. These support them in ensuring that all requirements are included. Cases sampling takes place as part of the Coaching Development Reviews (CDRs) for assurance of compliance.</p>	
5.7	When a complaint is acknowledged at either stage, landlords must be clear which aspects of the complaint they are, and are not, responsible for and clarify any areas where this is not clear.	Yes	<p>Section 6 and 8 of our Complaints SOP detail the requirements for the definitions to be highlighted with the acknowledgement letters.</p> <p>We also provide a suite of letter templates that complaint handlers must use. These support them in ensuring that all requirements are included. Cases sampling takes place as part of the Coaching Development Reviews (CDRs) for assurance of compliance.</p>	
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must:	Yes	Section 1 ‘Purpose and Approach’ of our Complaint Policy details our commitments to work in line with the Housing	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind; b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position; c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully. 		<p>Ombudsman Dispute Resolution Principles.</p> <p>Our package of training and support for complaints handlers is consistent with these principles, with assurance gained through our CDR process.</p>	
5.9	Where a response to a complaint will fall outside the timescales set out in this Code, the landlord must agree with the resident suitable intervals for keeping them informed about their complaint.	Yes	<p>Section 6 and 8 of our complaints SOP details how our complaint handlers must provide updates in writing to residents where extensions are required in line with the Housing Ombudsman Code, as well as the need to agree with residents where further extensions are required.</p> <p>Section 4 'The Complaints Process' also provides details on our approach to complaint extensions.</p>	
5.10	Landlords must make reasonable adjustments for residents where appropriate under the Equality Act 2010. Landlords must keep a record of any reasonable adjustments agreed, as well as a record of any disabilities a	Yes	Section 10 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' explains our commitments to reasonable adjustments, supported by our 'Supporting Residents with Additional Needs' policy.	

	resident has disclosed. Any agreed reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.		Within our complaints SOP, section 6 and 8 detail how we will identify vulnerabilities during the acknowledgement stage, whether these are impacted by the complaint, and whether the issues are still outstanding, prioritising where required. This requirement is also monitored through our CDR process.	
5.11	Landlords must not refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure unless it has valid reasons to do so. Landlords must clearly set out these reasons, and they must comply with the provisions set out in section 2 of this Code.	Yes	Section 2 'Definitions and Scope' of our Complaints Policy detail situations where a complaint may not be escalated, and considerations to alternative resolutions avenues may be better suited. Appendix 3 of our SOP also confirms for colleagues.	
5.12	A full record must be kept of the complaint, and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties, and any relevant supporting documentation such as reports or surveys.	Yes	All information relating to a complaint case is recorded in our systems. Detailed instructions on how this should be done are provided throughout our Complaint Standard Operating Procedure and reinforced through our training programme for colleagues.	

5.13	Landlords must have processes in place to ensure a complaint can be remedied at any stage of its complaints process. Landlords must ensure appropriate remedies can be provided at any stage of the complaints process without the need for escalation.	Yes	<p>Section 1 of our Complaints Policy explains how we aim to “put things right as quickly as possible”.</p> <p>Section 4 ‘The Complaint Process’ of our Complaints Policy makes clear that ‘where possible we aim to resolve a complaint there and then.’ This would include agreeing appropriate remedies.</p> <p>Section 2 of our Complaint SOP details how our handlers aim to agree an appropriate resolution for the customer.</p> <p>Working practices are align to these commitments, and the CDR process will check that working requirements aimed at meeting this principle are being adhered to.</p>	
5.14	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives. Landlords must be able to evidence reasons for putting any restrictions in place and	Yes	<p>Section 7 ‘Unreasonable Behaviour’ is covered within our complaints policy.</p> <p>Staff are supported through our ‘Unreasonable Resident Behaviour’ SOP which ensures</p>	It has been agreed that to strengthen our position, a new ‘Unreasonable Resident Behaviour’ standalone policy will be developed by our central policy team during 2025/26

	must keep restrictions under regular review.		<p>practices are inline with the Housing Ombudsman Code.</p> <p>Section 15 of our complaints SOP also directs colleagues to the 'Unreasonable Resident Behaviour' SOP.</p>	financial year. This review will cross-reference against the SOP and any opportunities to strengthen will be considered.
5.15	Any restrictions placed on contact due to unacceptable behaviour must be proportionate and demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	<p>Our 'Unreasonable Resident Behaviour' SOP provides an avenue for customers to appeal decisions made.</p> <p>The SOP also guides colleagues to consider personal circumstances and refers colleagues to consider vulnerabilities as part of their decision making and support offering process.</p>	It has been agreed that to strengthen our position, a new 'Unreasonable Resident Behaviour' standalone policy will be developed by our central policy team during 2025/26 financial year. This review will cross-reference against the SOP and any opportunities to strengthen will be considered.

Section 6: Complaints Stages

Stage 1

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.1	Landlords must have processes in place to consider which complaints can be responded to as early as possible, and which require further investigation. Landlords must consider factors such as the complexity of the complaint and whether the resident is vulnerable or at risk. Most stage 1 complaints can be resolved promptly, and an explanation, apology or resolution provided to the resident.	Yes	<p>Section 6 of our complaints SOP provide details on how complaint handlers must identify vulnerabilities and the actions that must be taken to prioritise.</p> <p>As part of this, handlers are also asked to ensure they consider risk and complexity when acknowledging complaints that may shape how we prioritise or resolve the case.</p>	
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u>	Yes	<p>Our KPIs are aligned to the Housing Ombudsman code which are detailed within Section 5 'Compliance Criteria' of our complaints SOP.</p> <p>Confirmation of our alignment is also detailed within section 4 'The Complaints Process' of our Complaint Policy.</p>	
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <u>within 10 working</u>	Yes	Our KPIs are aligned to the Housing Ombudsman code which are detailed within Section	

	<u>days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.		5 'Compliance Criteria' of our complaints SOP. Confirmation of our alignment is also detailed within section 4 'The Complaints Process' of our Complaint Policy.	
6.4	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 10 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	Our KPIs are aligned to the Housing Ombudsman code which are detailed within Section 5 'Compliance Criteria' of our complaints SOP. Confirmation of our alignment is also detailed within section 4 'The Complaints Process' of our Complaint Policy.	
6.5	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	Yes	Section 4 of our Complaints Policy confirm our approach to extensions, which are aligned to the Housing Ombudsman Code requirements. Section 6 of our Complaints SOP also confirms the same. Letter templates are provided to complaint handlers to ensure that the Housing Ombudsman details are provided.	
6.6	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the	Yes	Section 4 of our Complaints Policy states that 'after	

	complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.		confirming our decision in writing, we will monitor progress until all outstanding actions are complete' Section 6 of our Complaint SOP explains how colleagues can create 'complaint action tasks' to ensure cases can be closed once a decision is reached and actions clearly tracked subsequently.	
6.7	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	Section 6 of our Complaints SOP details that these requirements form part of the decision letters. Letter templates have been built with resident in order to support colleagues in ensuring that this requirement is adhered to.	
6.8	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. Where the stage 1 response has been issued, the new issues are unrelated to the issues already being investigated or it would unreasonably delay the response, the new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	Section 4 of our Complaint Policy (The complaint Process) confirms the requirements in line with the Housing Ombudsman code. Section 6 of our Complaints SOP also confirms to colleagues when a new issue can be added to a complaint (prior to the issuing of a stage 1), and that after the	

			issuing of a stage 1, any new issues must be logged as a new complaint.	
6.9	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 1 in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response. 	Yes	<p>Section 6 confirms the details that must be provided in the complaint response, in line with these requirements.</p> <p>Letter templates have also been produced in conjunction with residents to support handlers in ensuring that all aspects are included as required.</p>	

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
6.10	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage 1, it must be progressed to stage 2 of the landlord's procedure. Stage 2 is the landlord's final response.	Yes	<p>L&Q provide a two-stage process as confirmed within Section 4 of our Complaints Policy confirms our alignment to this requirement.</p> <p>Our Complaints SOP also details our alignment within section 6, 7 and 8.</p>	

			Appendix 3 of our Complaint SOP and section 2 of our Complaints Policy confirm that we will not investigate something that has already been investigated through our complaints process.	
6.11	Requests for stage 2 must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 2 of the complaints procedure within five working days of the escalation request being received.	Yes	<p>Our KPIs are aligned to the Housing Ombudsman code which are detailed within Section 5 'Compliance Criteria' of our complaints SOP.</p> <p>Confirmation of our alignment is also detailed within section 4 'The Complaints Process' of our Complaint Policy.</p>	
6.12	Residents must not be required to explain their reasons for requesting a stage 2 consideration. Landlords are expected to make reasonable efforts to understand why a resident remains unhappy as part of its stage 2 response.	Yes	<p>Section 4 of our Complaints Policy confirms that, although we will ask for reasons for escalation, the reasons do not have to be given.</p> <p>Section 7 of our Complaints SOP confirms that residents do not need to give a reason for escalation and highlights the benefits in understanding the reasons.</p>	

			Our Stage 1 letter templates also ask residents to 'help us understand' reasons for escalation.	
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	Yes	Section 4 of our Complaints Policy confirms that our Customer Relations Team, or someone who wasn't involved at stage 1 will carry out a review of the complaint.	
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being acknowledged.	Yes	Our KPIs are aligned to the Housing Ombudsman code which are detailed within Section 5 'Compliance Criteria' of our complaints SOP. Confirmation of our alignment is also detailed within section 4 'The Complaints Process' of our Complaint Policy.	
6.15	Landlords must decide whether an extension to this timescale is needed when considering the complexity of the complaint and then inform the resident of the expected timescale for response. Any extension must be no more than 20 working days without good reason, and the reason(s) must be clearly explained to the resident.	Yes	Our KPIs are aligned to the Housing Ombudsman code which are detailed within Section 5 'Compliance Criteria' of our complaints SOP. Confirmation of our alignment is also detailed within section 4 'The Complaints Process' of our Complaint Policy.	
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these	Yes	Section 4 of our Complaints Policy confirm our approach to	

	timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.		<p>extensions, which are aligned to the Housing Ombudsman Code requirements.</p> <p>Section 8 of our Complaints SOP also confirms the same.</p> <p>Letter templates are provided to complaint handlers to ensure that the Housing Ombudsman details are provided.</p>	
6.17	A complaint response must be provided to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned promptly with appropriate updates provided to the resident.	Yes	<p>Section 4 of our Complaints Policy states that 'after confirming our decision in writing, we will monitor progress until all outstanding actions are complete'</p> <p>Section 6 and 8 of our Complaint SOP explains how colleagues can create 'complaint action tasks' to ensure cases can be closed once a decision is reached and actions clearly tracked subsequently.</p>	
6.18	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	<p>Section 8 of our Complaints SOP details these requirements as part of the decision letters.</p> <p>Letter templates have been built with resident in order to support</p>	

			colleagues in ensuring that this requirement is adhered to.	
6.19	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the complaint stage; b. the complaint definition; c. the decision on the complaint; d. the reasons for any decisions made; e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right; f. details of any outstanding actions; and g. details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied. 	Yes	<p>Section 8 of our Complaints SOP confirms the details that must be provided in the complaint response, in line with these requirements.</p> <p>Letter templates have also been produced in conjunction with residents to support handlers in ensuring that all aspects are included as required.</p>	
6.20	<p>Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.</p>	Yes	<p>Section 8 of our complaint SOP details our approach to stage 2 investigations.</p> <p>Section 4 of our Complaints SOP 'Roles and Responsibilities' highlights how all colleagues must support complaint handlers in resolving issues.</p> <p>The above highlights ensures a collaborative approach is taken to the resolution of complaint,</p>	

			supported by a complaint objective for all front-line colleagues that requires a “collaborative approach” to be taken.	
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Section 7: Putting things right

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
7.1	<p>Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right. These can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologising; • Acknowledging where things have gone wrong; • Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons; • Taking action if there has been delay; • Reconsidering or changing a decision; • Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum; • Providing a financial remedy; • Changing policies, procedures or practices. 	Yes	Section 6 of our complaints SOP specifies the specific requirements as outlined within this section of the Complaint Handling Code.	

7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	Yes	Section 6 of our Complaint SOP highlights the need for colleagues to consider the impact on residents as part of their complaint but also expands to ensure that Complaint Handlers consider the impact on other residents and the wider community.	
7.3	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Section 6 and 8 of our complaint SOP mandates the need to ensure that Complaint Handlers meet the requirements of this section of the code. In addition, a suite of decision letters is available to support Complaint Handlers in ensuring that this requirement is clearly laid out in final decision letters.	
7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	Yes	Section 6 and 8 of our Complaints SOP details the requirement for Complaint Handlers to consider Housing Ombudsman guidance when deciding on appropriate remedies.	

Section 8: Self-assessment, reporting and compliance

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
8.1	<p>Landlords must produce an annual complaints performance and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements. b. a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the landlord's complaint handling performance. This must also include a summary of the types of complaints the landlord has refused to accept; c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman; d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints; e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord. 	Yes	<p>Our annual report is produced and publicised in line with requirements, passing through our MRC, Customer Group, Resident Services Board, and Group Board for challenge and sign-off.</p>	

8.2	The annual complaints performance and service improvement report must be reported to the landlord's governing body (or equivalent) and published on the on the section of its website relating to complaints. The governing body's response to the report must be published alongside this.	Yes	An annual report is developed as required by the code and passed through all required governance routes in line with the Housing Ombudsman code – this is also publicised in line with requirements.	
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	Yes	When required a reassessment can take place in line with the Housing Ombudsman code.	
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	Yes	If required, resources are available to undertake a revised assessment on request.	
8.5	If a landlord is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, they must inform the Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on their website Landlords must provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code.	Yes	Where required, we are able to update the Housing Ombudsman and to residents	

Section 9: Scrutiny & oversight: continuous learning and improvement

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
9.1	Landlords must look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether service improvements can be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.	Yes	<p>Section 9 of our complaint policy highlights our commitment to monitor numbers, outcomes, satisfaction, and try to identify trends and root causes so we can address weaknesses and opportunities to do things better.</p> <p>These are monitored through COG, CMLG and regularly reported to RSB on a quarterly basis to enable learning.</p>	
9.2	A positive complaint handling culture is integral to the effectiveness with which landlords resolve disputes. Landlords must use complaints as a source of intelligence to identify issues and introduce positive changes in service delivery.	Yes	<p>Section 9 of our complaint policy highlights our commitment to monitor numbers, outcomes, satisfaction, and try to identify trends and root causes so we can address weaknesses and opportunities to do things better.</p> <p>These are monitored through COG, CMLG and regularly reported to RSB on a quarterly basis to enable learning.</p>	
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report	Yes	Outcomes and learning is reported through our quarterly	

	back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.		complaints reports to Customer Group, RSB and Group Board. Local reporting and oversight is present to resident and external stakeholders such as local authorities on request, instilling a culture of transparency and accountability.	
9.4	Landlords must appoint a suitably senior lead person as accountable for their complaint handling. This person must assess any themes or trends to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks, or policies and procedures that require revision.	Yes	Our Customer Services and Revenue Director is appointed as our senior lead for complaints and is actively engaged in all oversight and governance activities as required by the code.	
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').	Yes	L&Q have an active MRC as required by the code.	
9.6	The MRC will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight on the landlord's complaint handling performance. This person must have access to suitable	Yes	L&Qs MRC has access to all performance data and information in line with the code.	

	information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.			
9.7	<p>As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance; b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling; c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report. 	Yes	A quarterly report covering the information detailed is produced and reported through the required governing bodies which include RSB and Group Board.	
9.8	<p>Landlords must have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all relevant employees or third parties that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments; b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and 	Yes	<p>L&Q have a standard complaint objective for all complaint handlers and relevant colleagues, which meets all requirements outlined within the code.</p> <p>This has been tailored for Direct Maintenance operatives, where objectives are based around behaviours, all of which would serve to prevent complaints and build trust and confidence</p>	

	c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.		between L&Q as a service provider and its residents, so whilst this does not meet the requirements of a 'standard' objective, it does achieve the same outcome, but in a more practical way relevant to maintenance operatives.	
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