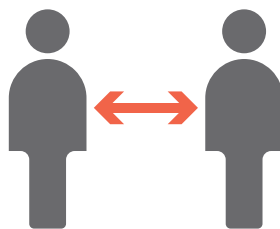
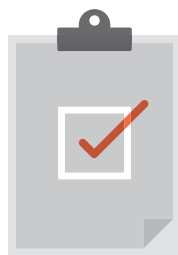


Our policy for dealing with **unacceptable** **behaviour** by those in contact with us



The purpose of this policy

- 1 Occasionally the behaviour of correspondents, complainants or others in contact with the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office¹ causes unjustified disruption, irritation or distress to our staff or contractors², and can result in a significant unwarranted burden being placed on public resources.
- 2 This policy sets out the actions and behaviours of correspondents that we consider unacceptable and how we may respond to such actions and behaviours. This supports our legal duty as an employer to ensure that our staff are not subjected to behaviour that may affect not only their performance, but also their health and wellbeing.
- 3 Our policies for handling correspondence and complaints are set out in the following leaflets:
 - [Writing to Audit Wales: Information for correspondents](#)
 - [Making a complaint about the work of Audit Wales](#)
 - [Are you concerned about wrongdoing where you work?](#)

What behaviours are considered unacceptable?

- 4 Unacceptable behaviour may include unreasonable demands on our staff and other resources, unreasonable persistence, or aggressive behaviour towards our staff.

1 Referred to as 'correspondents' in the remainder of the document for simplicity

2 Referred to as 'staff' in the remainder of the document for simplicity

Unreasonable demands

- 5 We may consider that someone is making an unreasonable demand if the amount of information they seek, the nature and scale of service they expect or the number of approaches they make, is excessive. What amounts to unreasonable demand may depend on the circumstances, including the seriousness of the issues raised by the correspondent.
- 6 Examples include:
 - demanding responses within an unreasonable timescale;
 - insisting on seeing or speaking to a particular member of staff (or the Auditor General);
 - requesting action on matters that are not relevant to our functions, particularly when we have explained our functions;
 - subjecting us to repetitious or otherwise unnecessarily voluminous communication;
 - repeat requests for action on matters that we have already considered.
- 7 Demands may be unacceptable if in the circumstances they start to take up a disproportionate amount of our time and resources.



Unreasonable persistence

- 8 From time to time, some correspondents do not accept, or appear not to accept, that we are unable to assist them in the way they want. Similarly, some correspondents persist in disagreeing with our actions or decisions or contact us persistently about the same issue.
- 9 Examples include:
- persistent refusal to accept a decision made in relation to correspondence;
 - persistent refusal to accept explanations relating to what we can or cannot do; and
 - continuing to pursue correspondence without presenting any new information.

Aggressive or abusive behaviour

- 10 Aggressive or abusive behaviour includes, but is not restricted to, physical and verbal acts of aggression. It includes behaviour or communication – whether face to face, by phone, letter, email or social media – that may cause our staff to feel afraid, threatened or abused.
- 11 Examples include threats, physical violence, personal verbal abuse, inflammatory or derogatory remarks, unsubstantiated allegations and rudeness.
- 12 Aggressive or abusive behaviour towards our staff is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.



How we deal with unacceptable behaviour by correspondents

- 13 Staff may end telephone calls if the caller's behaviour is unacceptable. The staff member taking the call has the right to make this decision, tell the caller that the behaviour is unacceptable and end the call if the behaviour does not stop.
- 14 Staff may decide not to deal with correspondence (in whatever form) that displays unacceptable behaviour on the part of the correspondent. On receiving such correspondence, the recipient will inform the team who manage our correspondence. We will write to the correspondent informing them that their manner of communication is unacceptable and ask them to stop communicating in this way. We will make it clear that we will no longer enter into correspondence with a correspondent if they continue to behave unacceptably.
- 15 In addition, where a correspondent's behaviour or actions are unacceptable, we may decide to:
 - inform the correspondent that we will no longer respond to phone calls or further correspondence on a particular matter;
 - require future contact to be in writing only;
 - advise the correspondent that future correspondence will be read and filed, but only acknowledged or responded to if, in our opinion, the correspondent provides significant relevant new information; or
 - take other appropriate action.
- 16 Threats, use of physical violence, verbal abuse or harassment of our staff are all likely to result in us ending all direct contact with the correspondent. Such behaviour may also constitute an offence and may be reported to the police. If a correspondent considers that any action taken in relation to them in connection with this policy is unjustified, they may raise the matter using our [complaints policy](#).



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We welcome correspondence and
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Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a
galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.