

## 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

Excel Housing Solutions 2025 Complaints Handling Self-Assessment.

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
1.2	<p>A complaint must be defined as:</p> <p><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></p>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions has adopted the Housing Ombudsman’s definition of a complaint. The definition is contained within our Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 1 and 6.	<p><i>Section 1 and 6 of the Complaint Policy state. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made and whatever language used, 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></p>
1.3	<p>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.</p>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 6.	<p>Policy section 6 states that a complaint or dissatisfaction can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. Any language that is an expression of dissatisfaction qualifies as a complaint, and an individual should be encouraged to submit a complaint.</p> <p>Policy section 6 states that a Service user can if</p>

				appropriate and they wish to do so, have a third party represent them and attend or accompany them to meetings in relation to the complaint.
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 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.	YES	Service requests are set out in our Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 5.	Section 5 of Excel Housing Solutions Complaints Policy states-A service request is a request from a resident to the Excel Housing Solutions requiring action to be taken to put something right. Service requests are not complaints, but must be recorded, monitored, and reviewed regularly. If a resident is dissatisfied with our response to their Service Request, a complaint can be made.
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	The Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 Section 5	Section 5 of the complaints policy sets out a timeframe that service requests must be responded by, if there remains dissatisfaction the policy states. <i>If a resident is dissatisfied with our response to their</i>

				<i>Service Request, a complaint can be made.</i>
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 9.	Feedback can be provided directly or via Tenant satisfaction surveys to inform us about whether you have received an excellent service from Excel Housing solutions or are dissatisfied. They will include questions about had you been informed how to make a complaint and how easy it is to make a complaint. If possible, links to how to make a complaint will be included within surveys.

## 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	The Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 7 contains valid reasons to consider not accepting a complaint	Excel Housing Solutions will accept all complains unless there is a valid reason not to do so. With regards to complaints submitted after 12 months, if valid reasons for the delay are submitted the organisation may re-consider its position and investigate the complaint
2.2	<p>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 residents. Acceptable exclusions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</li> <li>• Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and</li> </ul>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions will accept complaints unless there are valid reasons (as set out in the Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 7) not to accept the complaint.	<p>Exclusions in section 7 of the complaints policy may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago.</li> <li>• Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim,</li> </ul>

	<p>Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.</li> </ul>			<p>having been filed at court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Complaints.</li> <li>• If the complaint relates to a service not provided by Excel Housing Solutions or on behalf of Excel Housing Solutions.</li> <li>• Insurance Claims.</li> <li>• Matters that have previously been considered under the complaints policy.</li> </ul>
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>In line with the Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 and the Handling Complaints Code all complaints will be accepted that have been received within 12 months of the issue.</p>	<p>Section 9 of the policy states.  <i>Excel Housing Solutions will respond to all Complaints referred within 12 months of the issue. Complaints should be made within a reasonable period, which would normally be within 12 months of the issue occurring, in exceptional circumstances we may</i></p>

				<i>respond to a complaint made outside of 12 months.</i>
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	As per the Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 7 and 10 all complaints will be responded to in writing including rejections that set out the reasons for the rejection.	In section 7 of the Policy it states. Where we are unable to deal with a complaint through this policy, we will inform the customer in writing and be clear about the reasons why. All rejection letters will include an appeal process and the details of how to contact the Housing Ombudsman. If the Housing Ombudsman subsequently rules that Excel Housing Solutions should accept the complaint, we would then comply with the ruling.
2.5	Landlords must not take a blanket approach to excluding complaints; they must consider the individual circumstances of each complaint.	YES	As per the Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 7	Section 7 of the Policy states, <i>We will consider the circumstances of each complaint submitted and will not apply a blanket approach to excluding complaints.</i>



### 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	As per the Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 Section 10.	Section 10 of the complaints policy states Complaints can be made via our website, by phone, email, letter or made in person to staff. Many of our tenants have protected characteristics, and we will accept complaints in any way that is best for our tenant.
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	As per the Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 10, a complaint can be made to any member of staff.	The complaints policy states in section 10 that complaints can be made to any member of staff. Training is available to all staff and Complaints are covered in the induction process. All staff are in receipt of the new process and can access all supporting documents via the staff shared drive. Posters, leaflets, team meeting

				agendas and supervision and appraisal platforms will all have the new Code as a standing agenda item.
3.3	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.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	The impact of the Complaint handling code has seen an increase in Complaints for the period 2024-2025 in section 2 of the policy it states. The introduction of this policy and the high-level promotion of the complaints process may see an increase of complaints. This is not something that the organisation should immediately see as a negative it can also be a measure of the accessibility for our service users to make a complaint and tell us what they are dissatisfied with.
3.4	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	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 is published on the organisations website. The Complaints process is also available on the website	Section 9 of the complaints policy sets out the two-stage process. Easy read leaflets and posters are displayed throughout each service.

	must also be published on the landlord's website.			
3.5	The policy must explain how the landlord will publicise details of the complaints policy, including information about the Ombudsman and this Code.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 1 and 2 of the policy provides details of how we publicise the policy and who with including the Housing Ombudsman. Section 2 states. This policy will be made available to all service users. Information and guidance around making complaints is included in resident handbooks and publicised via leaflets and posters throughout all services.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	The Complaints Policy sets out in Section 6 that third party representation is acceptable. We would require the request in writing which includes consent from the complainant to share information relating to the complaint with a third party.
3.7	Landlords must provide residents with information on their right to access the Ombudsman service and how the	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the Policy contains details of the right of the complainant to

	individual can engage with the Ombudsman about their complaint.			contact the Housing Ombudsman at any point during the investigation. All complaint acknowledgements and response letters include the right to contact the Housing Ombudsman Services and include the Housing Ombudsman contact details.
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## 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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 2 of the policy states. Excel Housing Solutions has a designated Complaint Officer who is the Director of Operations. This person has responsibility for monitoring and handling complaints, liaising with third parties, including the Housing Ombudsman. In addition, the Complaints Officer is responsible for generating reports for the Senior Management Team and the MRC and other Board Members.
4.2	The complaints officer must have access to staff at all levels to facilitate the prompt resolution of complaints. They must also have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes promptly and fairly.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	The Complaints Officer has access to all levels of staff across the organisation. The Complaints Officer has access to all staff who are empowered to resolve disputes within timeframes and fairly.

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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Following a 2025 review of complaint handling future monitoring and quality assurance responsibility of the Complaint Handling Process was allocated to the newly formed Compliance team who have responsibility for regulated activities and training requirements. All staff are provided with training during their induction and annual refresher awareness sessions.
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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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	We have one single policy for complaints covered by the code. Residents will be supported to make complaints but not treated differently. Section 2 of the policy states. Excel Housing Solutions welcomes complaints from

				dissatisfied customers; we will ensure that no individual who makes a complaint will be treated any differently and will continue to receive high quality services whatever the outcome.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	We have only the two-stage process and we do not refer to informal resolution
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Our process has two stages, and is detailed in Section 10 of the policy
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Service Users will not be expected to go through two complaints processes. Section 2 of the policy states that complaints regarding third parties acting on behalf of Excel Housing Solutions will follow the same two stage process. If the complaint relates to a third party not related to or

				commissioned by Excel Housing Solutions, they will be signposted to the correct route.
5.5	Landlords are responsible for ensuring that any third parties handle complaints in line with the Code.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 2 of the policy states that complaints regarding third parties acting on behalf of Excel Housing Solutions will follow the same two stage process.
5.6	When a complaint is logged at Stage 1 or escalated to Stage 2, landlords must 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.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Our complaint acknowledgment letters at stage 1 and stage 2 set out our understanding of the complaint. Service Users are asked to tell us if this covers the complaint. If any aspect is unclear, the investigating officers will ask for further clarification.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	This is included in the Complaint acknowledgement letters for Stage one and two.
5.8	At each stage of the complaints process, complaint handlers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. deal with complaints on their merits, act independently, and have an open mind;</li> </ul>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025 section 9	Section 9 of the policy sets out our Complain Handling guidance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. give the resident a fair chance to set out their position;</li> <li>c. take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest; and</li> <li>d. consider all relevant information and evidence carefully.</li> </ul>			
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the policy states. If the complaint is going to take longer than this to resolve, the Investigating Officer will write to the complainant to explain why there is a delay and advise them that there may be a delay up to a maximum of 10 working days. Any delay must be authorised by the Complaints Officer or the Compliance Officer.
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 resident has disclosed. Any agreed	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	As per section 14 of the Compliments and Complaints policy we will make reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Records of disability are recorded on our housing database system.

	reasonable adjustments must be kept under active review.			
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 stage 1 of the policy states. Excel Housing Solutions complaint handlers must not refuse to escalate a complaint to the next stage if the complainant wishes to do so.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section nine of the policy states. Excel Housing solutions will maintain a full record of all complaints including. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of Complaint.</li> <li>• Date received.</li> <li>• All correspondence and dates of correspondence with the complainant.</li> <li>• Any relevant supporting information.</li> <li>• Outcome.</li> </ul> Details of non-compliance with the code at any point in the investigation

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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 2 of the policy states. The investigating officer will attempt to find appropriate options to resolve the complaint wherever possible, therefore preventing the need for further escalation to Stage 2.
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 must keep restrictions under regular review.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	We have in place Sustaining Placements Policies and Procedures, Behavioural contracts and Lease and Tenancy rules
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	We have in place Sustaining Placements Policies and procedures, Behavioural contracts and Lease and Tenancy rules that have regard for the Equality Act 2010.

## 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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the policy sets out that Excel Housing solutions will aim to resolve all stage 1 complaints as quickly as possible and will identify complainant vulnerabilities and risk.
6.2	Complaints must be acknowledged, defined and logged at stage 1 of the complaints procedure <b><u>within five working days of the complaint being received.</u></b>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the policy sets out that Excel Housing solutions will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 5 days of receiving the complaint.
6.3	Landlords must issue a full response to stage 1 complaints <b><u>within 10 working days</u></b> of the complaint being acknowledged.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the policy states that Excel Housing Solutions will provide a full written response from the person dealing with the complaint within <b>10 working days of the complaint being acknowledged.</b>

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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the Policy states. If the complaint is going to take longer than this to resolve, the Investigating Officer will write to the complainant to explain the delay the reason for it and advise them that there may be a delay up to a maximum of 10 working days. Any delay to the response must be authorised by a member of the Complaints Officer or the Compliance Director.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	All correspondence to complainants contains the contact details of the Housing Ombudsman.
6.6	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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the policy states. The outcome will be accompanied by a full explanation based on available evidence and will address all points raised in the complaint definition and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where

				<p>appropriate. The complaint is considered resolved once the outcome is shared with the customer. If the complaint has been upheld the correspondence must include how we will put it right and the timescales of when further actions will be completed. We will provide details of future preventative measures and any appropriate compensation if applicable.</p> <p>The complainant will be updated once resolution actions are completed.</p>
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	<p>Section 10 of the policy states.</p> <p>will 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.</p>
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	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	<p>Section 10 of the policy states.</p> <p>If during the stage 1 response the complainant raises further complaints</p>

	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.			these must be incorporated into the stage 1 response if they are related and the stage 1 response has not been issued. If the stage 1 response has been issued or the complaints are unrelated then the issues will 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"> <li>a. the complaint stage;</li> <li>b. the complaint definition;</li> <li>c. the decision on the complaint;</li> <li>d. the reasons for any decisions made;</li> <li>e. the details of any remedy offered to put things right;</li> <li>f. details of any outstanding actions; and</li> <li>g. details of how to escalate the matter to stage 2 if the individual is not satisfied with the response.</li> </ul>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 Stage 1 response includes guidance for Complaint Investigators to follow that includes each of the points a-g.

Stage 2

Code provision	Code requirement	Comply: Yes / No	Evidence	Commentary / explanation
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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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	In Section 10 at the conclusion of the stage 1 process it states. If the customer is not satisfied with the response received, or that the complaint has not been resolved, they can request a review and proceed to stage two of the procedure, details of which will be explained within their response letter.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	In Section 10, Stage 2 it states. On receipt of a request to review the stage 1 decision, Excel Housing Solutions will log and acknowledge the complaint at stage 2 within <b>5 working days</b> of receipt, outlining details of the stage 2 process.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the policy states. At this point they do not have to identify why they are dissatisfied with the Stage 1 outcome. The responsibility is on Excel Housing Solutions to make efforts to understand why the

				complainant remains unhappy at the conclusion of the stage 1 process
6.13	The person considering the complaint at stage 2 must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10, Stage 2 states. The Compliance team will log and allocate to a Senior Manager (not the same complaint handler from the stage 1 process) to acknowledge and investigate the complaint at stage 2 within <b>5 working days</b> of receipt, outlining details of the stage 2 process.
6.14	Landlords must issue a final response to the stage 2 <b><u>within 20 working days</u></b> of the complaint being acknowledged.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the policy, stage 2 states. The written stage 2 decision response will be issued within <b>20 working days of the acknowledgement.</b>
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10, stage 2 states. If the complaint is going to take longer than this to resolve, the Investigating Officer will write to the complainant to explain the delay and advise them that there may be a delay up to a maximum of 20 working

				days and the detailed reasons for it.
6.16	When an organisation informs a resident about an extension to these timescales, they must be provided with the contact details of the Ombudsman.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10, stage 2 states.  The notification of a stage 2 delay letter must also contain the Housing Ombudsman contact details.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the policy stage 2 states. The stage 2 outcome will be accompanied by a full explanation based on available evidence and will 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. The complaint is considered resolved once the outcome is shared with the customer. If the complaint has been upheld the correspondence must include how we will put it right and the timescales of when further actions will be completed. We will provide details of future preventative

				measures and any appropriate compensation if applicable. The complainant will be updated once resolution actions are completed.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10 of the policy stage 2 states. will 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.
6.19	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage 2 in clear, plain language: 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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10, stage 2 includes the following. The stage 2 response will include the complaint definition, the decision on the complaint, the reasons for any decisions made, the details of any remedy offered to put things right, details of any outstanding actions and details of how to escalate the matter to the Ombudsman Service if the individual remains dissatisfied.

6.20	Stage 2 is the landlord's final response and must involve all suitable staff members needed to issue such a response.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 10, stage 2, Stage 2 response will be carried out by a member of the Senior Team or the Compliance Director. Stage 2 is Excel Housing Solutions final response.
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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"> <li>• Apologising;</li> <li>• Acknowledging where things have gone wrong;</li> <li>• Providing an explanation, assistance or reasons;</li> <li>• Taking action if there has been delay;</li> <li>• Reconsidering or changing a decision;</li> <li>• Amending a record or adding a correction or addendum;</li> <li>• Providing a financial remedy;</li> <li>• Changing policies, procedures or practices.</li> </ul>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	<p>Section 11 of the policy states. When we get things wrong, we will apologise and consider an appropriate remedy. This is important in helping us to rebuild the trust we may have lost.</p> <p>Examples of remedies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing a decision.</li> <li>• Apologise</li> <li>• Amending a record.</li> <li>• Providing a financial remedy/compensation.</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing policies, procedures or practices.</li> </ul> <p>Any remedy offered will reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the customer as a result. Compensation may be offered where there has been a financial loss. The remedy offer will set out proposals and timelines to completion and must be agreed with the recipient.</p>
7.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the impact on the resident as a result of any fault identified.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	<p>Section 11 of the policy states.</p> <p>Any remedy offered will reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the customer as a result.</p>
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	<p>Section 11 of the policy states.</p> <p>The remedy offer will set out proposals and timelines to completion and must be agreed with the recipient. Remedy actions will be followed through to completion.</p>

7.4	Landlords must take account of the guidance issued by the Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate remedies.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 11 of the policy states that Excel Housing Solutions will take guidance from the Housing Ombudsman when deciding on appropriate resolutions for complaints.

## 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> <p>a. the annual self-assessment against this Code to ensure their complaint handling policy remains in line with its requirements.</p> <p>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;</p> <p>c. any findings of non-compliance with this Code by the Ombudsman;</p> <p>d. the service improvements made as a result of the learning from complaints;</p> <p>e. any annual report about the landlord's performance from the Ombudsman; and</p> <p>f. any other relevant reports or publications produced by the Ombudsman in relation to the work of the landlord.</p>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	<p>Section 17, Assurance states.</p> <p>In line with the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman and the Complaint Handling Code, Excel Housing Solutions will prepare and publish on its website the following annual reports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An annual assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code to ensure the organisation is compliant with the code.</li> <li>• An annual Complaints and Performance and Improvement report to be reported annually to the Board for formal comment and publication on the website.</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Quantitative analysis of Excel Housing Solutions Complains Handling Performance.</li> <li>• Annual review of the complaints policy.</li> <li>• Any other performance reports required by the Housing Ombudsman.</li> </ul>
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 17 states An annual Complaints and Performance and Improvement report to be reported annually to the Board for formal comment and publication on the website.
8.3	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure, merger and/or change in procedures.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 17 of the policy states Excel Housing Solutions will produce; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An annual assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code to ensure the organisation is</li> </ul>

				compliant with the code.
8.4	Landlords may be asked to review and update the self-assessment following an Ombudsman investigation.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 17 of the policy states. The above reports may be reviewed early following an investigation from the Housing Ombudsman or a change in circumstances.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 19 of the policy states. If at any time Excel Housing Solutions is unable to comply with the Code due to exceptional circumstances, such as a cyber incident, the Complaints Officer will inform the Housing Ombudsman, provide information to residents who may be affected, and publish this on our website. We will provide a timescale for returning to compliance with the Code and publish this on our website.



**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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	<p>Section 2 of the policy states.            Managing and responding to complaints well will enable us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate our commitment to our service users and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Demonstrate our commitment to providing an excellent standard of service.</li> <li>• Understand where, why and how an issue has occurred.</li> <li>• Learn from a situation and prevent it happening again in the future.</li> <li>• Consider whether service improvements can</li> </ul>

				be made as a result of any learning from the complaint.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 3 of the policy, sets out how Excel Housing Solutions uses Complaints as a learning and improvement process.
9.3	Accountability and transparency are also integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints to stakeholders, such as residents' panels, staff and relevant committees.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 2 of the policy sets out how we will use Complaints as a learning tool an to drive service improvements.
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	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	The complaints officer is the Director of Operations, supported by a Compliance lead who is a Director of Services. Section 2 of the policy sets out how the Complaints Officer will assess any trends or themes to identify any systemic themes.
9.5	In addition to this a member of the governing body (or equivalent) must be appointed to have lead responsibility	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 16 of the policy sets out the roles of key staff including the MRC.

	for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This person is referred to as the Member Responsible for Complaints ('the MRC').			
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 information and staff to perform this role and report on their findings.	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 16 of the policy sets out the key roles within the organisation responsible for managing and reporting on findings to the Board.
9.7	As a minimum, the MRC and the governing body (or equivalent) must receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. regular updates on the volume, categories and outcomes of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance;</li> <li>b. regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling;</li> <li>c. regular updates on the outcomes of the Ombudsman's investigations and progress made in complying with orders related to severe maladministration findings; and</li> <li>d. annual complaints performance and service improvement report.</li> </ul>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	Section 2 of the policy sets out the volume of information to be collected and shared with the MRC and 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"> <li>a. have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments;</li> <li>b. take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than blaming others; and</li> <li>c. act within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</li> </ul>	YES	Excel Housing Solutions Complaints and Compliments Policy 2025	<p>Section 2 of the policy sets out the following objective that is aligned with the Housing Ombudsman requirements.</p> <p>Excel Housing Solutions is committed to having a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with our customers, stakeholders and commissioners, colleagues across our SMT, Leadership Team and all colleagues. We will take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints, rather than adopting a blame culture. Acting within the professional standards for engaging with complaints as set by any relevant professional body.</p>
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