



Compact Compliance Enquiries:

What to do if you believe an organisation has not complied with the Sunderland Compact.

Step 1: Talk to the organisation you have the concern about

The Sunderland Compact is about relationships and the best way to improve relationships is to talk to each other.

If your concern is with a Sunderland Partnership organisation and is in relation to Funding, Procurement, Involvement or Consultation, you should have a named person who you can contact. If you cannot identify a contact person then please contact the Partnership Manager (details below) who will try to assist.

In either circumstance please complete a Compact Enquiry form (available at <http://www.sunderlandpartnership.org.uk/documents/Compact%20enquiry%20template.doc>) to let us know what's happening. Your situation may provide learning points for others.

Step 2: If informal discussions don't work

And you have completed a Compact Enquiry Form, please contact either:

the Partnership Manager at Sunderland Partnership (compact@sunderland.gov.uk or 0191 561 1614) or VCAS Sunderland (info@vcasunderland.co.uk or 0191 565 1566) to let them know that you need further support. They will then take your enquiry to the Compact Implementation Group (a sub-group of the Sunderland Partnership with responsibility for the Sunderland Compact) who will put a formal mediation processes in place.

If you haven't completed a Compact Enquiry Form, please complete one and send to either the Sunderland Partnership or VCAS who will ensure that you are contacted by a member of the Compact Implementation Group to get a better understanding of your enquiry and put a formal mediation process in place.

Step 3: If your enquiry still isn't resolved

The Compact Implementation Group will escalate your case to the Partnership's Sunderland Innovation and Improvement Group, SIIG (made up of senior officers from Partnership organisations and VCS representatives). Evidence will need to be presented both in support and defence of the case. After hearing the evidence the SIIG will present their conclusions, suggest a way forward and nominate an individual to help ensure their proposals are implemented.

Step 4: If you are still unhappy with the situation

You will need to escalate your concern to the Compact Advocacy Programme which is run by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/compactadvocacy>

They will want to know the full history of the case, including steps that you have taken to address the situation. They will be able to advise if support from the national mediation programme is available, or if there are grounds to take forward a challenge in the legal system under Public Law.

General advice if you are raising an issue of non-compliance

You must present your enquiry based on a suspected breach of one or more Compact principles or commitments.

Organisations may not yet have full organisational compliance to the Compact, in which case they should explain this to you as well as the steps they are taking to rectify the situation.

A degree of tolerance and flexibility is expected from all parties involved in an enquiry.

There is a lot of learning that can be achieved by logging Compact Enquiries, so please do let us know about any situation you have been involved in – especially if you have resolved it informally. Cases can be anonymous if required.

An organisation can not be discriminated against because they have made an enquiry under the Compact. If you suspect that discrimination of this nature has occurred you should inform us immediately as there may be wider legal implications. There should never be a link made between a compact enquiry and a funding application – they are completely separate processes.