



Complaints Policy

Introduction

The ADD-Vantage aims to provide a service of the highest standard. We realise however that sometimes things go wrong and people may wish to complain about the quality of service received. The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear framework to assist any individual who is not satisfied and wishes to make a complaint.

The ADD-Vantage will use an open and transparent process which is easy to understand. All complaints are treated seriously, fairly and with sensitivity, respecting confidentiality as far as possible. We endeavour to act with integrity, to listen and learn.

The ADD-Vantage is a member of the British Psychological Society (BPS) and practices in accordance with The BPS Code of Ethic & Conduct and BPS Practice Guidelines. www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/bps-code-ethics-and-conduct

Scope

This policy covers all complaints in respect of:

- Any person working for or on behalf of The Add-Vantage
- Quality of services received from The ADD-Vantage including Coaching/Mentoring, Training, pre-screening diagnostic testing & administration
- Data Protection Complaints – See separate section explaining How to raise a concern with us about your personal data.

It does not extend to concerns, defined as ‘an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought’. If any person has concerns then they should seek reassurance directly from The ADD-Vantage.

General Complaints Procedure

A complaint may be defined as ‘an expression of dissatisfaction however made, about actions taken or a lack of action’. It is in everyone’s interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Some issues can be resolved informally, without the need to invoke formal procedures.

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Informal Stage

Every opportunity will be taken at the time of the initial complaint to settle the concern informally. This may include telephone conversations and/or face to face meetings or written explanation of the reasons for a decision taken.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of discussions at this stage, then a formal written complaint can be made.

Formal Stage

If you are unable to resolve the issue informally, the complainant should write by letter or email confirmation that they wish to record a formal complaint. The written account should include the name of the reason of the complaint and reiterate what outcome they are seeking.

The formal complaint will be acknowledged within 15 working days and you should receive a full written explanation within one calendar month.

The ADD-Vantage aim to resolve all matters as quickly as possible however, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to fully investigate, consequently timescales given for handling and responding to a complaint may extend beyond those stated above. If further time is required, the complainant will receive an interim response and what has been done to date to resolve the complaint together with proposed date, when to expect the full explanation with outcome of any investigation.

This stage is the final stage that can be dealt with internally by The ADD-Vantage.

External Stage

If the complainant still remains dissatisfied having followed the above procedure, then they can contact the British Psychological Society to seek further support & advice:

Quality Assurance and Standards Officer
St Andrews House
48 Princess Road East
Leicester LE1 7DR

Email: conduct@bps.org.uk

Discontinuing a complaint

A complaint can be discontinued if:

- The complainant fails or refuses to participate at any stage of the procedure without good reason
- Formally withdraws the complaint by writing (post or email)

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Recording and Communicating outcome

A record of the formal complaint will be made and held on file for a period of 6 years. Outcomes will be communicated in writing and sent by email and/or post.

Roles and Responsibilities

The ADD-Vantage's responsibility will be to:

- Communicate this policy to clients by posting it on the website.
- Practice in accordance with BPS guidelines showing respect, competence, responsibility and integrity.
- Try to resolve any issues as early as possible and informally.
- Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint.
- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time; or clearly communicate otherwise.
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- Bring their complaint, in writing, to The ADD-Vantage's attention within a reasonable timeframe, usually within 6 weeks of the issue arising.
- Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible. We ask clients to please provide us with as much detail as they can to help us investigate their complaint:
 - say what the problem is
 - say what you want to happen
 - provide information on any relevant communication with us on the subject including the times and dates of any conversations.
- Allow The ADD-Vantage reasonable time to deal with the matter;
- Recognise that some circumstances may be beyond The Add-Vantage's control.

Confidentiality

Every complaint will be treated with care and confidentiality. We will attempt to communicate clearly and directly with all complainants or their representatives in a timely manner.

The complainant is required to give permission for confidential information pertinent to the complaint to be disclosed to all parties cited within the complaint including any legal or other specialist advisors.

Vexatious Complaints

In most cases, dealing with complaints will be a straightforward process; however, in a minority of cases, the complainant may act in a manner that is deemed unreasonable.

They may act in a way that is considered abusive, unreasonably persistent or vexatious and by doing so it may hinder The ADD-Vantage's ability to investigate their complaint or the complaints of others. This behaviour may occur at any time before, during or after a complaint has been investigated. Time spent on dealing with all complaints should be proportionate to the nature of the complaint and consistent with the outcome that is being sought, being realistic and achievable.

It is The ADD-Vantage's policy not to investigate any vexatious or malicious claims.

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Policy Monitoring

The ADD-Vantage commits to reviewing this Complaints Policy on a three-yearly cycle.

DATA Protection Complaints Notice

This notice explains your rights, how to raise a concern with us, what to expect when you do, and what to do if you are not satisfied with our response specifically to concerns around how we store and use your data..

Your right to complain directly to us, is a statutory right under the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. You do not need to go to the ICO first, we are your first point of contact, though you are always free to contact the ICO directly if you prefer.

Under UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, you have the right to:

- Access the personal data we hold about you (sometimes called a subject access request, or SAR).
- Ask us to correct information that is wrong or incomplete.
- Ask us to delete your data in certain circumstances.
- Ask us to restrict how we use your data while a complaint is being looked into.
- Receive a copy of your data in a commonly used, portable format.
- Object to us using your data in certain ways.
- Not be subject to a decision made solely by automated means where that decision has a significant effect on you.
- Under the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, ask us to explain in plain terms how an automated decision affecting you was made, request that a person reviews that decision, and ask us to reconsider the outcome.

If you would like to exercise any of these rights, please contact us using the details below.

Data Protection Lead at The ADD-Vantage is the responsibility of Pippa Simou and you can raise your complaint by emailing directly Pippa@TheADD-Vantage.co.uk

A data protection complaint is any concern you raise about how we have collected, used, stored, shared or deleted your personal data. This is broad and covers a wide range of situations, not just formal data breaches.

Examples of the types of concern we can investigate

- We collected or used your personal data without a valid lawful basis, or for a purpose you were not told about.
- We shared your personal data with someone we should not have, or without a lawful reason to do so.

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- We did not action a request to delete, correct or restrict your personal data when we were required to.
- We kept your personal data for longer than necessary.
- A data breach or security incident affected your personal data and we did not handle it correctly.
- You continued to receive marketing from us after you had opted out.
- Our privacy notice was unclear, incomplete or did not accurately describe how we use your data.
- We used AI or an automated tool in a way that affected your personal data without proper safeguards, transparency or human oversight.
- Requests to exercise your data rights (such as a Subject Access Request) are not complaints in themselves, although concerns about how such requests have been handled may be raised through this complaints process.

To help us investigate your concern as quickly as possible, it helps if you can tell us:

- Your name and contact details.
- A clear description of your data concern - what happened, when, and who was involved.
- Any relevant reference numbers, screenshots or correspondence.
- What outcome you would like.

You do not need to provide all of this to make a valid complaint. If you are not sure what to include, just get in touch and we will help you from there.

How we will handling your Data Complaint:

Step 1 - Acknowledgement (within 15 working days)

We will send you a written acknowledgement within 15 working days of receiving your complaint. Day one of that period is the day after we receive it.

Our acknowledgement will confirm:

- That we have received your complaint and the date we received it.
- The name of the person who will be handling it.
- What happens next and an expected timescale.

Step 2 - Investigation

We will investigate your complaint fairly and thoroughly, without undue delay. This may include reviewing records and system logs, and speaking to relevant team members or suppliers.

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Step 3 - Keeping you informed

We will not go silent while we are investigating. If we need more information from you, or if anything changes, we will get in touch as soon as possible.

Step 4 - Our response

We aim to give you a full response within one calendar month of receiving your complaint. In complex cases, we may extend this by up to a further two months. If we need to do this, we will tell you within the first month and explain why.

Our response will explain:

- What we investigated and how.
- What we found, and the reasons for our decision.
- What action (if any) we have taken or will take as a result.
- Your right to take your complaint to the ICO if you are not satisfied.

***Please note:** We will not charge a fee for handling your complaint, unless it is clearly unfounded or excessive - in which case we will explain this to you before proceeding.*

Complaints specific to AI:

If your concern relates to how AI or an automated tool has been used in connection with your personal data, we will review:

- Whether AI or an automated tool was used, and at what stage of the process.
- Whether the use was lawful, fair and transparent.
- Whether appropriate human oversight was in place at the point any decision was made.

We will not use AI alone to decide the outcome of a data protection complaint a named member of our team will handle the investigation and response personally.

Where your complaint relates to an automated or AI-assisted decision, you have additional rights under the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, including the right to ask us to explain how the process worked in plain English, to request a human review, and to ask us to reconsider the outcome. The person carrying out that review has full authority to change the original decision, not simply confirm it.

Where our processes involve third-party tools, platforms or suppliers, we remain your single point of contact for any data protection complaint. You do not need to contact our suppliers directly - we will liaise with them on your behalf as part of our investigation and keep you informed of the outcome.

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If you remain unhappy after we have responded - or at any point during our process - you have the right to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's independent data protection regulator. You do not have to wait for us to finish before contacting the ICO, and you do not have to raise your concern with us first, though we would always appreciate the opportunity to put things right.

ICO Helpline 0303 123 1113 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4:30pm)

Live chat via ico.org.uk

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

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