

SC/013/09

Committee Standards Committee

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Anonymous Complaints policy

1. Purpose of the Report

To agree a policy in respect of anonymous complaints

2. Law and guidance

There is nothing in the legislation, which requires a complaint to be signed by the complainant. It is noted that in the past The Standard Board has entertained some anonymous complaints, and this has given rise to considerable unease. In such cases, it is, of course, not possible to meet the requirements to notify the complainant of the decision in respect of the complaint.

The Standards Board's guidance states that an anonymous complaint should only be referred for investigation, or some other action, if it includes documentary or other photographic evidence indicating an exceptionally serious or significant matters.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee should take a policy decision that anonymous complaints will not be entertained except where a complaint made anonymously includes documentary and/or photographic evidence which shows a very serious or significant matter, but that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to keep the identity of a complainant confidential where he is of the opinion that this is in the public interest to do so.