# Format

Seven interviews were conducted, and two additional members provided asynchronous feedback based on the draft form.

Interviews were semi-structured, beginning with general questions about the member's feelings about the website and moderation, and then reviewing each question on the form and soliciting any feedback, concerns, questions, etc.

## Interviewees

Participation included members across the United States and a couple from outside the US. Members were generally longstanding (decade-plus), with a heavy investment in at least one subsite.

Feelings about moderation were mixed but largely positive or neutral. Some feel that the moderators are doing the best with an impossible situation, or clearly and actively working on rough spots; others feel that moderators tend to become "main characters" in drama too often and by their own making.

Key factors in satisfaction or dissatisfaction with moderators boiled down to the perceived or real levels of communication and consistency in moderation tasks. Those who were satisfied with moderation tended to describe it as clear, civil, and coming from a place of being part of the community; those who were dissatisfied stated those thing as being what they *wanted* but then described a frustrating lack of visibility or consistency in execution.

# Overall

Most interviewees described the form's questions and structure as broadly straightforward and clear. A few described it as unnecessarily complex and overlong for its purpose. More than one interviewee was surprised at the multi-page structure and thought that one page would be sufficient.

Concerns or issues that cropped up across all interviews included overly officious or overworked language (make things friendlier, more plain-text) and asking questions that feel repetitious or where the distinction between a previous question was unclear.

# Form Location

When asked where they would expect to find this form on MetaFilter itself, interviewees provided a variety of answers, including:
- In the footer, with equal weight to the "Contact Us" link, or integrated directly into the Contact Us page itself
- In the announcements eyebrow
- Alongside the subsite links in the header
- In the sidebar, under "Helpful Links"
- Integrated into the flagging mechanism

Some interviewees also suggested a MetaTalk "announcement" post to direct members to the location of the form, and considered the possibility of including the form link in multiple locations.

# Page 1 (Introduction and Consent to Discuss)

**Introductory Text**
Several interviewees noted that the introductory text is attempting to serve multiple purposes – explaining both the purpose of the MOC itself as well as the form. Some suggested cutting almost the entirety of the text, while others simply suggested moving the purpose of the form to the top of the section and either condensing the rest or moving it to an external link (e.g. an "About the MOC" page).

One described the text as "too much and not enough information at the same time", referring to the fact that it provides a lot of context *not specific to the form* while not providing much detail as to the expected or potential nature of what a person might want to submit or how it would be handled (as a direct matter, rather than as part of accumulating information or compiling recommendations).

Another interviewee suggested more impersonal, plain-text language focused on telling the form submitter ("you") what the MOC ("we") is looking for and how to provide it.

**First Question ("Would you like or welcome a response/further questions from the moderation oversight committee?")**

While the question itself seemed straightforward, some interviewees felt this question should either be omitted or moved to the end of the form. Reasons for this included:
- If no follow-up was desired, this might make more sense to be sent as a suggestion via existing channels
- A member may not know how they feel about the sensitivity or emotional difficulty of the concern until after they have taken the time to type it out, and may change their answer to this question at this point

Another interviewee suggested the possibility of accepting phone-based communication as a follow up if a member is less comfortable with text as the mode of description or of having to produce a written record.

One interviewee flagged that the explanatory text may be unnecessary, as the explained functionality is apparent from how the form pagination adjusts based on your answer.

## Page 2 (Contact Information)

Again, the general phrasing and structure of this section felt straightforward to most participants.

There was some mixed feeling about the necessity of gathering multiple contact types in this fashion, and the lack of clarity about which were or were not optional to provide. A couple of interviewees noted that were this form to be hosted on MetaFilter proper, the username could be pre-populated (if the submitter consented to that).

The final question on the page struck some interviewees as confusing or potentially overlapping with the page-1 question regarding being contacted.

## Page 3 (Issue Information and Final Agreements)

Several interviewees recommended providing context or direction on how to grab a permalink from the website for use in answering the first question. Others also suggested providing an "attach screenshot" option in cases where a permalink would be impossible or insufficient (e.g. if the issue relates to MeMail or to already-deleted posts).

More than one interviewer noted that the "please describe your concern" question has a single-line for the answer field, making it unclear whether there's a strict text limit (there isn't).

There was some thought about the existing categories and whether they currently represent a comprehensive and granular enough set of categories to be useful. At a minimum, several interviewees noted that the "Other" option should include a text field to specify, which could be used to further refine the available options over time.

One interviewee expressed concern that the final question (regarding sharing data) would create an impossible situation for the MOC in terms of storing and sharing data more generally, especially if it has or needs access to administrative data from MeFi itself. They suggested instead language that tells a member that if they submit this form, they are agreeing to have the data potentially shared in this way. Others were less concerned about this but did feel that the question should be smoothed out and clarified, including adding an explicit "None of these" option below the others and linking to pages for more context on the BIPOC board or the MeFi Board of Directors. One interviewer pointed out that the "the moderator who made this decision" checkbox might be used antagonistically, to attempt to harass or at least poke at the moderator in question based on the member's own feelings about them.

# Post-Submission and Workflow

Several interviewees expressed surprise at the "three days" turnaround time promised by the form, particularly depending on both the volume of responses and availability of volunteers over time. They suggested extending that timeline or broadening the language to allow for more flexibility.

A few interviewees noted that the language that appears when a member hits "submit" ("In the next 3 days, if you indicated you wanted follow up, we will assign someone to look after your concern") suggests that concerns won't have someone assigned if the member didn't want follow up. This clearly isn't the intent but could be clarified with a rewrite.

Interviewees largely expected that their submission would trigger a "thank you for responding" email sent back to them (assuming they provided an email address), possibly with a copy of the information they provided when sending the form.

Past this, the expectation was that future communication would depend on a) what they agreed to in the process of filling out the form and b) the nature of their concern/request. All seemed to expect that the process would involve some amount of direct, human (i.e. non-boilerplate) response and assessment.

# Draft form language (used for testing)

# Draft MetaFilter moderation review request form

## Page 1

The role of the MetaFilter Community Moderation Oversight Committee is to:

1. Look into any issues and work with the member and the moderators to come to a mutually agreeable solution, or if that cannot be achieved:
2. Pass the issue up to the MetaFilter Community Board members.

We also will make policy recommendations from time to time; occasionally based on single cases but more likely on patterns of issues.

If you have a concern about a moderation decision or action on MetaFilter (any subsite) please fill out the form below.

We appreciate your time in doing so and a member of the committee will reach out to you within 3 days (if you indicated you would like follow up.)

**Would you like or welcome a response/further questions from the moderation oversight committee?**

If you answer yes you'll be prompted for contact details and then to the area to enter the details of your concern/issue. If you answer no you'll go to straight to the details area.*
  ● Yes, via MeMail or email
  ● No follow up / I prefer not to be contacted

## Page 2

How may we contact you?

**Your MetaFilter username: ___**

**Your email (optional but is helpful for follow up and is more efficient for our group): ___**

**Are you okay with us reaching out to you if we have questions or need more detail? If so please make sure you have answered yes to the contact question above and provided your contact information.**
- Yes, you can ask me questions
- No, I just want to report/know your decision

# Page 3

## Details of your concern/issue

**Please enter the URL of the post or comment to which your concern/issue pertains, if it's still available on the site: ___**

**Please describe your concern/issue**

_____

**Please pick the closest category for your concern/issue**
- Comment deleted
- Inappropriate comment visible/left (after flagging)
- Post or question deleted, disallowed, or changed
- Privacy concern
- Other

**Anything else you think we should know? ___**

**The MetaFilter Community Moderation Oversight Committee will read this complaint, and details may be shared with the MetaFilter Community Board of Directors. Please indicate below who else we may share this with:**
- ☐ The moderator who made this decision
- ☐ All the moderators as a group
- ☐ The BIPOC committee

# After submission

Thank you so much for getting in touch about your concern/issue with MetaFilter moderation!

In the next 3 days, if you indicated you wanted follow up, we will assign someone to look after your concern and they will reach out to let you know what is going on, and (again, if you gave permission) to ask any further questions.