

## **Guidance in Making and Handling a Complaint or Grievance**

### **Our aim and intention**

Our aim is to provide facilities for athletics and generally to promote, encourage and facilitate athletics in the area of the Forest of Dean irrespective of age, gender, creed or race.

The Forest of Dean Athletic Club encourages open and honest discussion and feedback to promote a positive and safe environment for all of its members. Our guidance is underpinned by the England Athletics Disciplinary Procedures, the Club's constitution, rules and code of conduct.

If you are unhappy about another member's behaviour, decision or something they have said then speak to them about it. If that isn't successful then speak to a coach or committee member about how to resolve your issue.

### **England Athletics guidance and best practice**

England Athletics is committed to the resolution of individual grievances informally whenever possible. An aggrieved is strongly encouraged to seek to resolve any matter with their club. All parties to a grievance should cooperate constructively to resolve matters by informal methods wherever possible / appropriate. It is hoped that grievances can be resolved amicably thereby maintaining, and where necessary, restoring good relations within the sport of athletics, our club and our community.

Grievances arising in clubs, associations, competition providers and other bodies should be resolved within those organisations and only in exceptional circumstances will England Athletics become involved as a final level of appeal.

### **What is a grievance?**

A grievance is an issue, complaint, dispute, concern or problem, which does not involve alleged serious misconduct. (Allegations of serious misconduct should be resolved in line with the club's guidance which is a separate document).

Our grievance procedure will enable individuals or groups to raise issues that affect their / their child's well-being and ability to take part within athletics effectively.

It is impossible to provide a comprehensive list of all the issues that might give rise to a grievance, but some of the more common may include:

**Breaches of health and safety; breaches of Codes of Conduct; breaches of policies, practices and procedures and equal opportunities.**

## **Who can help with my grievance?**

The Club Welfare Officer or any committee member can offer support and advice in respect of any grievance / complaint. They will not deal with the grievance directly and will inform the appropriate club officer, this is likely to be the Head Coach, Vice Chair Person or Chair Person.

## **Types of Grievance**

Anonymous – These will be dealt with by way of feedback / words of advice and no formal record will be made.

Informal – These will be dealt with by way of feedback / words of advice and no formal record will be made.

Formal – A record will be made and kept, it will include the view of the respondent and any action taken by the investigating officer.

## **Suggested remedies might include;**

- i. words of advice**
- ii. verbal warning**
- iii. written warning**
- iv. learning requirement**
- v. development plan**
- vi. exclusion from training**
- vii. exclusion from competition**
- viii. or a combination of the above**

Formal grievances will be those considered more serious in nature and the relevant form can be obtained from the Welfare Officer.

## **Who do I take my grievance to?**

Any complaint regarding a junior athlete should be directed to their age group coach. The coach may deal with this or refer to the Head Coach for support.

Any complaint regarding an adult athlete should be directed to a member of the committee.

Any complaint regarding a coach or official should be directed to the Head Coach.

Any complaint regarding a committee member should be directed to the Vice Chair Person or Chair Person.

Due consideration will be given to any history of repeated complaint as this would impact on the investigating officer's action, considerations, outcome or sanction.

### **What will happen and how long will it take?**

The club officer dealing will resolve the grievance within 14 days, they will speak to the aggrieved and the respondent, they will complete any written record if required and update all interested parties.

### **If I'm the subject of a grievance can I appeal?**

Any appeal must be made within 7 days in writing or email of their receipt of the outcome and must state on what grounds they challenge the outcome or sanction. The appeal will be reviewed by the Vice Chair Person or Chair Person or appropriate committee member with no previous involvement, who will review the appeal and any additional information. The reviewing officer may;

Quash the original decision.  
Confirm the original findings.  
Amend the sanction.

Any interested party must be kept informed of any appeal and outcome.