

Complaints Policy

v1 | Tuesday 1st December 2020

Please refer to point 10 on the QRC Constitution. This policy is adapted from the England Athletics template.

Purpose of this policy

QRC works hard to provide an efficient and effective service to all. However, we recognise that there may be occasions where we fall short of expectations and individuals may not be completely satisfied.

We believe that all individuals should have the opportunity to provide feedback on whether our standards have been met and all feedback, both positive and negative, should be acknowledged.

Should this feedback be negative, and an individual is dissatisfied, we have a formal and informal complaints process which we follow to enable us to put things right.

Scope

This policy covers all members of the Queensbury Running Club.

The aim of this policy

QRC aims to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- We deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- We respond in the right way – for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken;
- We learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints procedure.

Informal Complaints

If you have a complaint, then in the first instance, you should speak privately to the individual concerned. If this does not resolve the issue, then the complaint moves on to the formal complaints procedure.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

In the first instance, formal complaints should be directed, in writing, to the Welfare Officer who can be contacted at complaints@queensburyrc.co.uk with the subject header 'Complaint to QRC committee'.

The welfare officer will consider the complaint, acknowledge receipt to the complainant, and create a series of suggested actions and responses to be approved by the voting members of the QRC committee.

A formal complaint will always be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt and we aim to respond to you in full within 14 calendar days. If this is not possible due to further investigations being required, dependent upon the nature and severity of the complaint received, we will always formally advise the complainant of the progress made so far and advise any revised timescales.

It may be necessary to contact complainants verbally during our investigations to enable us to bring the complaint to an amicable resolution. However, we will always formalise any verbal contact in writing following an outcome or action being agreed.

The outcome of a disciplinary hearing should be notified in writing to the person who lodged the complaint and the member against whom the complaint was made within 14 days of the hearing.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the response to the complaint having followed the procedure above, then you can write to England Athletics asking for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. You will need to outline why you are dissatisfied with the initial response. You can expect them to acknowledge your request within 5 working days of receipt and they will arrange for the complaint to be reviewed by a member of staff who has not previously been involved with handling your complaint. This will involve a full independent review of the handling of your complaint and all associated evidence. The outcome of the review will be communicated within 14 calendar days.

QRC aims to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated and reviewed. Consequently, timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

Outcome

Following the conclusion of the investigation, the committee has the power to take appropriate disciplinary action including the termination of membership.

Vexatious Complaints

If a complaint is considered persistent and/or vexatious, we may bring the communication to a close.

Vexatious – a complaint instituted without sufficient grounds and serving only to cause annoyance to the receiver of the complaint; an oppressive complaint (with unjust severity); or otherwise an abuse of the procedures for dealing with complaints or conduct matters.

Persistent – a complaint that is substantially the same as a previous complaint (whether made by or on behalf of the same or a different complainant); contains no fresh allegations which significantly affect the account of the previous complaint; no fresh evidence, being evidence, which was not reasonably available at the time the previous complaint was made, is tendered in support of it.

Should further information be required on Persistent or Vexatious Complaints please see the appropriate England Athletics policy.

Confidentiality

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both QRC and the complainant maintain confidentiality. If exceptional circumstances dictate that confidentiality cannot be maintained, then the complainant will always be advised of the situation.

Monitoring and Review

QRC is committed to continuous improvement and will record and monitor complaints to enable a continual review of its processes and procedures.

This policy is to be reviewed and re-approved 12 months after its initial approval