

Disciplinary Policy

This policy will be used by Altrincham and District Athletics Club (“the Club”) to guide investigation of complaints raised by Members of the Club.

Any incident of alleged abuse or misconduct to either a child or vulnerable adult involved with the Club shall be reported to the Club and be handled by the Club in accordance with the Club’s and England Athletics Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Step 1

All complaints should be submitted to the Club Secretary in writing and should detail the alleged misconduct and supporting evidence in relation to the infringement of the club rules or any misconduct carried out in association with athletics activities. Where the matter relates to the Club Secretary the complainant should submit the complaint to the Welfare Officer. The written complaint should contain specific details and evidence in relation to the infringement of Club Rules or any other offence or misconduct carried out during or in association with the athletics activities which might reasonably be considered as bringing or having the potential to bring the Club into disrepute. Below is a non-exhaustive list of what might constitute the described behaviour:

- Abusive or aggressive language or behaviour
- Disobedience to those in authority or with responsibility
- Infringement of Club or governing body rules or Codes of Conduct
- Minor damage to property or equipment
- Misuse of Equipment
- Negligence

Step 2

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Club Secretary shall, having taken, and subject to, such advice as he or she considers it prudent to take in the circumstances, write to the Member or Members concerned to inform them of the complaint and to invite them to comment in writing within fourteen days upon the relevant allegations.

Step 3

Once the Club Secretary has reviewed the written submissions, he or she will then determine, subject to such advice as he or she considers it prudent to take in the circumstances, whether the complaint has sufficient grounds and is capable of being pursued further. If the complaint is insufficient, it will be dismissed and a formal reply will be given to both parties.

If the complaint is sufficiently evidenced the matter will be pursued. The Club Secretary will appoint three club members to sit on a Disciplinary Panel to hear and ultimately make a final decision on the matter. None of the members selected to the Panel will have any direct or indirect interest or involvement in the matter.

Step 4

The Disciplinary Panel will consider the matter on receipt of the initial complaint and formal responses from the members involved.

The Disciplinary Panel will have the power to suspend temporarily from membership any Member accused of an offence or misconduct, pending further investigations or enquiries. This suspension shall be to facilitate the investigation and be without prejudice to the outcome of the investigation. The Disciplinary Panel will investigate the matter as necessary in order to establish the facts.

The Panel will give the member alleged of the misconduct a full and fair opportunity to state their case and answer the allegations made against them. In doing so, the member may present evidence and call forward witness to support his case.

If the Panel finds that the member has acted improperly, they can impose the following penalties:

- i) Note the offence or misconduct but take no further action;
- ii) Formally warn the Member concerned as to future conduct;
- iii) Suspend or disqualify the Member from club athletic competition, club coaching and/or administration and/or use of the Club's premises for some definite or indefinite period;
- iv) Recommend to the relevant governing body that the Member be disqualified from any involvement in athletics for some definite or indefinite period and/or;
- v) Terminate the membership or such other penalty as the Disciplinary Panel considers appropriate

The decision of the Disciplinary Panel will be communicated to the member in writing and shall be final and conclusive. The member will have a right to appeal the decision.

Appeals Process

The decision of the Disciplinary Panel can be appealed by either the Complainant or the Respondent. The individual may appeal the decision by serving a Notice of Appeal on the Club Secretary within seven calendar days of receiving the written decision. The Notice of Appeal must state the grounds on which the verdict of the Disciplinary Panel is challenged.

The Club Secretary shall acknowledge a Notice of Appeal within seven calendar days of its receipt and will cast a decision in regards to 'the grounds on which the verdict is challenged', if there are sufficient grounds/evidence provided to support the challenge, the Appeal Panel process will commence, if there are insufficient grounds, the appeal will be dismissed.

Selection of Panel Members

The Club Secretary shall appoint an Appeal Panel of three members. Both parties will be informed of the Members selected to the Panel and will have the opportunity to the composition of the Appeal Panel by notifying the Club Secretary and setting out the reasons for the objection no later than seven calendar days from the date of being informed of the composition of the Panel.

The Club Secretary will then have 14 days to notify the parties in writing that either the composition of the Panel has been changed or that it has not and provide reasons for coming to the decision.

Within fourteen calendar days from the date the Club Secretary responds to the Objection above (as appropriate), the Club Secretary shall give such directions to all parties that include;

- i) the date and place at which the Appeal Panel will meet to determine the Appeal.
- ii) whether the appeal will proceed by way of written submissions or an oral hearing; and
- iii) whether the parties should be required to submit statements of their evidence and/or written submissions prior to the hearing and, if so, a timetable for doing so and the procedure for exchanging such statements and written submissions.

Powers of the Appeals Panel

The Appeal Panel shall have to power to make a decision on the facts and may:

- i) quash the original decision
- ii) confirm the original findings
- iii) case to be reheard
- iv) increase the original sanction
- v) abate the original sanction

The Appeals Panel shall inform all parties involved within 14 days together with reasons for its decision. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final.