



Grievance and Discipline Policy

This policy is in line with English Athletics club standard 3,

1. Grievances

1.1 Any member of Aldridge Running Club (“the club”) may raise a grievance (called a complaint) against any other member (or members) of the club.

1.2 A Grievance in this policy means any perceived unfair or unwarranted treatment received as a result of any conduct (or course of conduct) by another member or members of the club. The conduct concerned may be of a degrading, insulting, intimidating, bullying, harassing or sexual nature. It may be on the basis of race, gender or religion or belief. Conduct may be verbal or written and include via social media. Any reasonable instruction by the committee to the members will not be considered unwarranted.

1.3 Any member of the club must first raise a grievance in strict confidence with either a club welfare officer, the club chair or vice chair within 4 weeks of the last act of conduct or behaviour as defined in 1.,2 above. The club chair (unless the club chair is the subject of the grievance) will always have to be informed of the nature of the grievance albeit this will be treated in the strictest confidence by the club chair or vice chair.

1.3. The grievance raised must have some connection with or based upon being members of Aldridge Running Club

1.4 The ultimate aim of the club will be to resolve issues raised in 1.3 above with a view to promote harmony between all members of the club.

1.5 The member raising the grievance or complaint shall be asked by the welfare officer, club chair or vice chair if after hearing the complaint whether they wish to make it official.

(a) If they do not wish to make it official then a confidential record shall be kept of the nature of the grievance and no further action will be taken.

(b) if the member does wish to take the matter further the member shall be given the option of an informal meeting with the member or members concerned with the presence of a welfare officer or club chair/vice chair with a view to resolving any differences within the spirit of the aims of the club to create harmony within the club. Any welfare officer, club chair or vice chair may act as mediator and suggest a course of action to both parties. Notes of the meeting may be kept in confidence and made available to the parties should they require them. The meeting should be held in the strictest confidence.

(c) In b above, the member or members who are the subject of the grievance /complaint shall be contacted by oral or written communication within 7 days of the complaint as to the nature of the complaint and the desire to resolve it in the method described in b above.

(d) if the member making or member or members subject to the complaint do(es) not wish to take part in the process as at b above then the member making the complaint shall be informed whereupon the member making the complaint will have the option of proceeding to the next stage or agreeing not to go any further. A written record shall be kept of this decision.

1.6 Should the member making the complaint.

(a) not opt for the procedure in a1.5 to d above and still wishes to pursue the complaint

AND

(b) the welfare officer, club chair or vice chair having considered the issue to be serious to proceed to referral to the committee for further consideration below

OR

(c) the process in 1.5(a to d)does not achieve a result that both parties are content with

Then the matter will be referred to the full club committee for further investigation. The member making the complaint must consent to the full committee of the club being made aware of the nature of the complaint. Notes kept in the mediation process shall be made available to the committee (however these must not be taken into account if there is an investigation)

1.7 The full committee of the club will discuss whether the matter is one that should be investigated under this policy. The committee will have regard to the substance of the complaint, the criteria for grievances, the likely effect that this will have on the members of the club in general, the likelihood of cross complaints and the general aim to promote harmony within the club. If there is to be no investigation, then the member making the complaint shall be advised of this.

1.8 If the committee decides that there is to be an investigation into the complaint then,

(1) the committee will appoint an investigator who shall be on the committee. He or she may be assisted by up to two other members of the committee.

(2) however the person receiving the initial complaint nor anyone who acted as mediator shall not be eligible to investigate

(3) . Any member of the committee must declare an interest if at any point they become a witness to any material fact, which would again prevent that person's eligibility to investigate.

(4) anyone directly involved in the complaint may not investigate or be a part of the investigation team.

(5) if there are insufficient persons from the committee to investigate the committee may appoint any member or members (up to 3).

1.9 Upon an investigation team (or investigator) being appointed all parties should be advised in writing as to who the investigating team are. This should be done by the lead investigator.

1.10 The parties will have 7 days to raise any objections as to their appointment. Such objections can only be based upon 1,8 (1 to 4) above. They will also have 7 days to appeal to the chair or vice chair as to the committee's decision whether to investigate or not.

The Investigation.

1.10 The investigator will

(a) obtain an account from the complainant which should then be disclosed to person or persons subject to the complaint for their account in reply. Any relevant documents or information must be sent to the investigator at these times.

(b) The investigator should write to all parties setting out what is required from them by way of clarification and further evidence and when by. If there are witnesses any party relies on then the party should notify the investigator of their existence and what evidence they can give, The investigator will determine its relevance and decide timescales for receipt of such evidence.

1.11 The investigator may extend any time limits that he or she has set in accordance with 1.10 above. The investigator has full power to conduct the investigation in whatever way he or she thinks fit however must act reasonably in doing so.

1.12 Upon being satisfied that there is no further evidence required to formulate a decision then the investigator has 14 days to create a report in writing to the committee as to their decision as to whether they find the complaint proved or not proved or proved in part. The standard of proof is the balance of probabilities.

1.13 After the report in 1.12 above has been given to the committee the committee shall advise the parties of the investigator's findings and issue brief reasons in writing No other persons will be advised of this (to include any witnesses).

1.14 If the decision in 1.11 is that the complaint is found in part or in full the committee will deal with the matter under the discipline procedure.

1.15 where the complaint results in a cross complaint from the person subject to the complaint the committee shall decide whether the same investigator can investigate both complaints without there being a conflict of interest or whether a second investigator (or team) be appointed to deal with the cross complaint. The complaint shall be dealt with as per 1.10 to 1.14 above.

1.16 where an investigation does not proceed or if it is found not proved then any notes made of the mediation and upon any initial complaint shall be destroyed

1.17 Otherwise than in 1.16 above all notes made and decisions recorded will be kept securely in accordance with current Data Principles.

1.18 any previous finding in this procedure can be cited in any further instances and relied on for a period of two years since the finding and at any time in an application to rejoin the club. All notes made of any previous finding will be destroyed after two years. However the details of the finding will remain.

2 Discipline

2,1 The committee will consider disciplinary measures against any member of the club where

- (a) a grievance has been proved (or proved in part) against the member(s)
- (b) the member has been in breach of the club's constitution.
- (c) the member is guilty of gross misconduct.

2.2 The committee will consider the nature of the conduct or breach in question and will either

(a) take no action (where the matter is considered to be a technical breach of the constitution where no harm has been caused)

(b) issue “words of advice” to the member concerned

(c) issue an oral or written (if the matter is more serious) warning to the member concerned in that should similar conduct be repeated in the future ,either a written warning or expulsion from the club will follow.

(d) Suspend the member for a defined period where the member will not enjoy any privileges of the club for a specified period

(e) Ask the member to leave the club forthwith when all privileges of the club be ceased (exclusion) for the member concerned. No refunds of any subscription will be made,

2.3 in the case of 2(d and e) above privileges include, communications from the club, invites to club events, running as a member of the club on training nights and events In the case of (e) England Athletics will be advised,

2.4 Gross misconduct includes the following.

(a) Theft from or assault on a fellow member of the club

(b) Stealing club property

(c) Bringing the club into disrepute

(d) Conduct which is dangerous or likely to cause serious harm to any member (or members) of the club

(e) Making a vexatious complaint against another member,

2.5 Any member being the subject of this procedure may appeal against any sanction in 2.2 c, d or e above to the Chair or Vice chair of the club in writing within 14 days of the decision being conveyed to him/her in 2.12 above.

2.6 Any member excluded from the club may reapply to rejoin at any stage after 1 year after the decision to exclude was made. The committee will consider the matter however they may either agree or refuse the application. The circumstances of the exclusion will be taken into account