

## INTRODUCTION

Acrobay places the welfare and safety of its members as the highest priority. Any complaint must be dealt with in accordance with the club's constitution. Remember: by joining Acrobay, members are bound by the constitution, policies, codes of conduct and procedures of the club, this applies to: office bearers, coaches, judges, technical officers, adult helpers, gymnasts and all persons registered with Acrobay in any capacity.

We believe that taking time to try and resolve a complaint at the outset, through a more informal route i.e. facilitation meeting will result in a quicker and often more acceptable outcome for all parties.

A "complaint" includes grievance, allegation, and query, expression of concern or identification of an issue. However, wherever possible, those making a complaint should identify whether their communication to the club concerning matters of this kind, which they want the club to deal with, is or is not intended to be a complaint. Use our complaints template form to help with this.

- Anyone who is the subject of a complaint has the right to be notified of the allegations against them and must be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations
- At the initial investigation/fact gathering stage, they do not need to know the identity of the complainer

## Making a complaint:-

- Any complaint must be made in writing using the complaints template form and must contain specific details including dates and times
- Complaints surrounding poor practice and or child wellbeing issues should be addressed to the Safeguarding Officer. This can be sent to [safeguarding@acrobay.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@acrobay.co.uk)
- Complaints not connected with poor practice/child wellbeing should be directed to the Trustees. This can be sent to [trustees@acrobay.co.uk](mailto:trustees@acrobay.co.uk)
- An initial assessment of the complaint should be made to consider whether interim suspension is appropriate pending further investigation
- Matters will be dealt with confidentiality and only those who need to know will be informed

## Responding to a complaint:-

- The Safeguarding Officer or Trustees will respond to the complainant within five working days, acknowledging receipt of the letter, explaining the process and confirm the timescales which will be followed
- The appropriate club investigation officer will gather the facts and will arrange to interview all those involved in the complaint.
- Details of the interview(s) will be recorded (written) and signed/dated by the witness
- A meeting will then be arranged with the person against whom the complaint is being made. A copy of the complaint along with the evidence will be provided. He/she will be asked to comment, and all details of the interview will be recorded, agreed signed and dated.

## Reviewing the evidence:-

All correspondence and evidence will then be considered by the appropriate club investigation office and one other person who is not connected with the complaint.

## Is there a case to answer?

The relevant guidelines from Scottish Gymnastics will be followed [Scottish Gymnastics complaints flowcharts](#)

**Example 1:** complaint against a coach - **minor breach** of club rules or poor practice:

- An interview will be conducted with the coach to go over the code of practice and expected standards of behaviour. The interview can be conducted by the Safeguarding Officer, Trustee or Head Coach
- A caution or warning as to future conduct will be issued
- Provide additional safeguarding training if required •
- The interview and caution / warning should be recorded and kept on file
- The decision made and the action taken will be notified in writing to those who required to know

**Example 2:** complaint against a coach - **serious poor practice** or breach of club rules. We will seek guidance from Scottish Gymnastics. If a formal hearing is requested, then the following will be adhered to:

- A disciplinary committee will be set up, which will consist of a Trustee plus two others, who were not involved in the investigation
- The Chair of the committee will determine which members of the committee shall hear any issue brought before it
- Those entitled to sit shall, in the reasonable opinion of the Chair of the committee, should have no interest in the case to be heard which would render their involvement in the process unfair
- The quorum of the committee shall be three members
- The Chair will set the date, time, and venue of a hearing and arrange the attendance of any witnesses
- The coach will be provided details of the hearing, and will be entitled to bring someone with them for support
- The deliberations of the committee shall be in private
- Notes (minutes) of the hearing will be taken, circulated to all committee members to agree, sign and date
- The person, against whom the complaint is being made, will be advised in writing by the chair of the decision of the committee and of the right to appeal the decision of the committee
- The decision of the committee will be notified in writing to all interested parties including Scottish Gymnastics as soon as reasonably practicable after conclusion of

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

the hearing but no later than fourteen working days from the date on which the committee concludes its deliberations

- All paperwork pertaining to the issue will be kept in a secure password protected file

## Appeal:-

- The individual who has been the subject of a decision of the disciplinary committee has the right of appeal against the decision
- The appeal must be lodged in writing with the Trustee/Chair of the disciplinary committee within 7 calendar days of the issue of the written decision of the committee
- The appeal must state the ground(s) of appeal and contain the full reasons and basis on which the ground(s) of appeal are being pursued
- An appeal panel will be set up will consist of a Trustee/Chair plus two others, who were not involved in the investigation or the disciplinary hearing
- Those entitled to sit shall, in the reasonable opinion of the Chair of the panel, should have no interest in the case to be heard which would render their involvement in the process unfair
- The quorum of the panel will be three members
- The deliberations of the committee will be in private
- Notes (minutes) of the hearing will be taken, circulated to all panel members to agree, sign and date •
- The person submitting the appeal will be advised in writing by the Chair with the decision of the panel
- The decision of the panel will be notified in writing to all interested parties including Scottish Gymnastics as soon as reasonably practicable after conclusion of the appeal but no later than fourteen working days from the date on which the panel has made the decision
- All paperwork pertaining to the issue should be kept in a secure password protected

## Review:-

Following any complaint, we will review our procedure and codes of conduct. Update if required and notify all members.

**Updated 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024**