



Grievance and disciplinary policy

See also: Riviera Racers Club Constitution – Section 5

Glossary of Terms/Definitions (as provided by England Athletics)

A **disciplinary** is a method for dealing with a club member and/or volunteer who causes problems or does not obey club rules.

A **grievance** is a dispute, disagreement, or argument between two or more people or groups of people.

A **complaint** is a concern or grievance a club member raises with their club committee. A complaint can be either informal, or if this approach does not work, can be formal.

Misconduct is unacceptable or improper behaviour and can be classed as serious misconduct or misconduct (*Fig. 1*).

Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children and adults and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children and adults from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children or adults' health or development
- ensuring children and adults take part in athletics and running safely
- taking action to enable all children and adults to experience the best outcomes.

MISCONDUCT

Using inappropriate language

Internet misuse

Bullying or harassment

Breach of codes of conduct

Health and safety breaches

SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

Violent behaviour

Theft or fraud

Safeguarding breaches

Figure 1 Types of Misconduct: England Athletics



Complaints and Disputes

1. All concerns, allegations or reports of malpractice or abuse relating to the welfare of vulnerable adults will be recorded and responded to swiftly and appropriately in accordance with the Club's and England Athletics' safeguarding policy and procedures. The Welfare Officer shall be the lead Officer for all Members in the event of any safeguarding concerns.
2. Any complaints of misconduct (improper or unprofessional conduct) regarding the behaviour of Members or Officers shall be dealt with by the Club in accordance with its discipline and appeals process* and must be presented in writing to the Secretary (and where the matter relates to the Secretary, the complaint must be submitted to the Welfare Officer). Unless exceptional circumstances apply, the Secretary will hear complaints within fourteen days of receiving a complaint. If the complaint is sufficiently evidenced, the Secretary will appoint 3 (three) Club Members (who have no direct or indirect interest/involvement in the matter) to sit on a disciplinary panel. Subject to rule 3 below, a decision of the disciplinary panel shall be final and conclusive.
3. Any appeals must be received by the Secretary within 7 (seven) days of receiving the written decision and, if appropriate, the appeals process will be followed.
4. Any complaints of serious misconduct (including, without limitation, theft, doping violations, fraud, physical violence, safeguarding policy breaches, serious breach of applicable health and safety, gambling and/or ticketing regulations or any act or omission of the Member or Officer which in the opinion of England Athletics, acting reasonably, brings or is likely to bring the sport of athletics into disrepute) regarding the behaviour of Members or Officers shall be reported and dealt with by England Athletics in accordance with its Disciplinary Procedures.
5. If a dispute arises between any Members or Officers of the Club about the validity or propriety of anything done by any Member or Officer under these Rules and the dispute cannot be resolved by agreement, the parties to the dispute must first try in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation before resorting to litigation.

Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

6. Complaints should be made to the Secretary, who will acknowledge the concern.
7. The Secretary is responsible for deciding whether the complaint is a grievance or disciplinary issue.
8. Depending on the severity of the complaint, the response will be informal (verbal or written decision); include some investigation; or will undertake a full disciplinary process as outlined in point 2 of this document.
9. The Secretary (or nominated Committee member) will explain any decision to all concerned, with reasoning. If the person accused of wrongdoing wishes to appeal, they must do so within 7 days, as given in point 3 of this document.
10. Grievances will remain fully confidential and will be recorded. They will not usually require formal disciplinary action.



11. If the complaint needs to be taken further (i.e. the issue is not resolved informally and a formal complaint is made; or the complaint is deemed to be serious):
 - a. The secretary will investigate or appoint someone neutral to investigate (if this is possible.)
 - b. Evidence will be gathered from all parties and any witnesses. This can include text messages, social media (including WhatsApp) posts, emails, photos, or other information sources.
 - c. A decision will be made based on this and communicated accordingly. This may include the use of a formal decision panel to agree what action should be taken.
12. Repeated and/or escalating misconduct, including breaches of the Code of Conduct and associated policies, will be treated as serious misconduct and will be subject to disciplinary procedures that may include referral to England Athletics.
13. Appeals – as outlined in point 3 of this document, appeals should be made to the Secretary. Appeals can only be made by those accused of wrongdoing. If there is deemed to be insufficient reasoning for the appeal, the appeal will be dismissed. If it is agreed that there are sufficient grounds, or new evidence, supporting an appeal, this will be considered by a panel and the final outcome decision will be communicated within 14 days, with written reasoning given. **Panel decisions are final.**

Procedures follow England Athletics guidance on managing disputes.
<https://www.englandathletics.org/clubhub/resource/club-guide-managing-disputes/>