



Club Grievance Procedure

Calne Divers takes seriously its responsibilities towards members and visitors in ensuring that it provides a safe and equitable environment for all. It adopts transparent policies and welcomes constructive interaction with members and others. Notwithstanding this it recognises that on occasions individuals may wish to register a complaint or grievance and, in such cases, it will follow this procedure.

Policy

It is club policy that this procedure will be adopted in a manner so as to make those wishing to register a complaint or grievance to feel they may do so safe in the knowledge it will be dealt with fairly and that they should feel free to raise their concerns without fear of victimisation or reprisal. It is further considered to be appropriate that wherever possible such matters should be dealt with amicably within the club itself, preferably bilaterally between the aggrieved party and the person believed by them to be the cause of the issue or concern. It accepts that in some circumstances this may be considered to be inappropriate in which case the matter may be referred to another party within the club.

Procedure

Rather than allowing an issue or concern to fester it is strongly advised that any person suffering a grievance should raise it promptly as soon as the issue manifests itself. It is anticipated that the following stages be followed in sequence although it is understood that in some circumstances the first stage may be omitted where the aggrieved party considers it to be inappropriate or potentially inflammatory.

Stage 1 - Informal review

This stage applies only to grievances against club officials; under no circumstances ought members air grievances with or against other members other than directly with club officials. As soon as an aggrieved party is clear about their concerns they ought, wherever reasonably possible, approach the club official they believe to be the principle source of the grievance for an informal discussion. Such discussions must not be held in open forum or, if involving an instructor, during training times if there is any reason to consider that discussion might become prolonged or disruptive. All club officials are charged with making themselves available to listen to such concerns objectively and, where the concerns are legitimate and appear to be in breach of club policy, to remedy the issue as soon as is reasonably practicable. Should the concern not be considered legitimate for good reason and such reasons are clearly stated to the aggrieved party who accepts the explanation then no further action is required. In the event the parties are unable to reach such an agreement the procedure will proceed to stage 2.

Stage 2 - Formal review

Any formal grievance must be submitted in writing to the club's committee for the attention of either the:

- Training Officer where it relates to a training matter, Diving Officer where it concerns a Diving matter
- Club Secretary where it relates to any other issue (or to one of the above).

All such complaints will be registered by the Club Secretary and become a matter of record (subject to appropriate confidentiality being maintained). Upon receipt of a written grievance the recipient (Responder) will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the grievance within 5 days of its receipt
- Consider the significance of the grievance (with other designated responders where appropriate) in order to determine an appropriate course of action.
- Should the grievance be considered serious it may be referred directly to the Committee.

Where a decision is made to progress the complaint within the club the Responder will inform the person(s) against whom the complaint is made and provide detail of the allegations or complaint. The accused person will be invited to provide a signed written statement in response to the allegations within 5 days of receipt. Upon receipt of the accused person(s) statement the Responder may request written statements from other relevant persons/witnesses to obtain corroborative evidence. Then, depending on the nature or significance of the complaint, the Responder may either:

- Attempt to resolve the situation by implementing an action, which is fair, reasonable and proportional to the complaint,

Or, if the matter cannot be resolved,

- Pass to the next higher designated authority or body.

Responders will aim to respond fully to all grievances within 15 days of receipt of the original grievance or, where that is not reasonably practicable, to provide an alternative timescale. Once an action has been determined the accused person(s) will be notified in writing of the course of action to be taken and the aggrieved party will be informed about the outcome of the enquiry. In the event the grievance is upheld and action is taken against the accused person(s) they will have the right to appeal within two weeks of receipt of the letter describing the course of action and Stage 3 of this procedure will then be implemented.

Should a grievance not be upheld, the aggrieved party will have the right to appeal within two weeks of receipt of the letter describing the outcome and Stage 3 of this procedure will then be implemented.

Stage 3 – Escalation or Appeal

Appeals will be made in writing to the Chairman. Such appeals must include the original grievance, the documented response and clear justifications for the basis of the appeal explaining why the outcome was flawed. Appeals made to the Chairman become a matter of club record (subject to appropriate confidentiality being maintained) and will be acknowledged within 5 days of receipt. Such appeals made to the Chairman will be submitted on the basis that the outcome will be binding on all parties; should appellants not wish to be bound by this they may pursue the SAA grievance procedure directly. Upon receipt of an appeal the Chairman will:

Review the submission and determine whether there is a clear case of error or not. In the event the appeal is considered frivolous or argumentative the appeal may be rejected at this stage without further review. Where the Chairman considers the appeal may have merit he/she will:

- Appoint three other club committee members, who should, if possible, not be involved with the grievance, to review the appeal in a closed meeting with the Chairman (the Appeal Committee).

Following such meeting the Appeal Committee will arrange a formal review with the appellant, the accused Person(s) (should they not be the appellant(s)), any witnesses the Appeal Committee consider necessary and any person(s) the appellant/accused person(s) may wish to represent or assist them. The date of such review will not be set so early as to prevent adequate preparation, nor so late as to incur inappropriate delay. Normally such reviews will take place behind closed doors starting one hour before a scheduled committee meeting.

Chair the Appeal Review inviting submissions from all relevant parties, directing discussions and summarising the events/issues as described by the parties present. Wherever possible, following such review, the Appeal Committee will either uphold the original decision or reject it. Exceptionally they may consider it appropriate to modify the original determination in which case such ruling may itself become subject to Appeal.