



www.ashfordac.org.uk

ASHFORD ATHLETIC CLUB ATHLETE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE MARCH 2010

Knowing when to communicate and how to communicate with your coach/team manager is a concern for almost every athlete or parent at some time during the season.

Most often the concern is how to enquire about issues surrounding the events they are entered into at competitions or the type of training they are doing.

We would initially encourage the athlete to talk to the coach/team manager when he/she has a problem about the event they are competing in or the training they are doing. When parents have a problem that is specific to their own child, we also encourage them to first talk to their coach/team manager.

We instruct coaches and team managers not to discuss any athlete other than the parent's own, or the actions of any other Ashford Athletic Club coach/team manager. If you, as an athlete/parent, have legitimate concerns about a coach or team manager other than your own or your child's, or with an athlete other than yourself or your own; you need to speak to our Athlete Welfare Officer or the Club's Head Coach.

The procedures to follow if as an athlete or parent of an athlete you have concerns or a grievance:

Step One: The athlete should speak to their coach or team manager about the matter. The discussion between them should be conducted between them with courtesy. If possible a resolution should be reached as soon as possible.

Step Two: If the matter remains unresolved, or if the athlete has reasonable concern that speaking to the coach or team manager will not resolve the matter, the parent of the athlete should ask to speak or meet with the coach/team manager.

Parents and/or athletes are expected to call the coach/team manager on the phone to set a meeting. Meetings are to be at times other than training times, but preferably immediately before or afterwards.

If a parent approaches a coach during training, we have instructed the coach to refuse to discuss any controversial matter, and to walk away from the parent. The recommended time for a parent and/or athlete to talk to a coach about a problem is a previously arranged meeting time either before or immediately after a training session.

Step Three: If the parent or athlete is still unhappy, the parent may speak to the Welfare Officer and/or Head Coach and request a meeting with them. In certain situations, we may ask the athlete to attend the meeting, also. Meetings should be previously arranged. Meetings will not be scheduled during a training session.

Grievances should specify:

1. The details of the action, including the names of all those involved
2. The nature of the complaint
3. All prior steps taken to resolve the matter
4. The desired outcome

The Welfare Officer and/or Head Coach will respond to the athlete or their parent within two weeks of the receipt of the grievance.

Complaints must be made within 30 days of the incident. Failure to make this time limit will result in a dismissal of the grievance.

It is inappropriate for an athlete or a parent to approach other AAC members about a problem the athlete or parents having with an AAC coach/team manager, about objections to coaching or team management decisions, or about disagreement with an administrative decision. Asking uninvolved persons to take sides in an issue is unfair to the third party and to the Club.

Competitive team athletics, by its very nature, creates situations where everyone may not be happy all the time. For the psychological health of the teams and the Club as a whole, grievances need to be

handled between the parties involved and the decision-makers in the situation.

Any member who is approached and asked to listen to or express an opinion about matters between two other parties in the Club is strongly encouraged to refer the complaining party to take the matter up with either the coach in question, and/or the Head Coach.

Repetitive complaining by the athletes or other third parties that interferes with the Club's efforts to pursue its stated mission statement may be cause, in the sole determination of the Club, to ask a member to resign.

Appeals against disciplinary action:

1. An athlete who feels unhappy regarding a disciplinary action affecting him/her should submit a grievance in writing within two weeks of the incident to the Head Coach (in the event that the disciplinary action was given by the Head Coach, the written grievance should be addressed to the Chairman of the Club). Failure to meet this time limit will result in a dismissal of the grievance.

Grievances shall specify:

- a) the details of the action, including the names of all those involved
- b) the nature of the complaint
- c) all prior steps taken to resolve the matter
- d) the desired outcome

2. The Head Coach will respond to the athlete within two weeks of receipt of the written grievance.

3. The athlete may request a review by the Executive Committee within two weeks of receipt of the response from the Head Coach.

- 3 The Executive Committee will respond to the player in writing within 30 days of receiving the request to review the grievance. In the event that the dispute involves a person on the Executive Committee, then that individual should excuse him/herself from the review process.

ASHFORD ATHLETIC CLUB
EXECUTIVE MARCH 2010