



Offaly Rowing Club Complaints & Disciplinary Procedure

Version	Date	Author	Changes
0	5 th January 2022	Offaly Rowing Club (using Rowing Ireland template)	New Document
Approved: <i>Brenda O'gan Chairperson 11.1.22</i>			



Offaly Rowing Club views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Offaly Rowing Club.

Where Complaints Come From

Complaints may come from any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Offaly Rowing Club, e.g., members, funders, members of the local community etc.
A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, email or in writing.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

If the complaint involves junior or vulnerable members, parents/guardians of the member must be informed, and be present at any interview or disciplinary procedure.

Complaints Procedure

Publicised Contact Details for Complaints

Written complaints may be sent by e-mail to secretary.offalyrowingclub@gmail.com. It is preferable to have complaints in writing, as it documents the complainant's concerns in their own words rather than any inadvertent interpretation by a club officer.
In exceptional circumstances, verbal complaints may be made by phone or in person to any of the club's officers, who will report the issue to the secretary.

Receiving Complaints

Complaints must be recorded. The person who receives a verbal complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint.
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number.
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to Offaly Rowing Club.
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

Practical Guidance for Handling Verbal Complaints for club officers

- Remain calm and respectful throughout the conversation.
- Listen - allow the person to talk about the complaint in their own words.
- Don't debate the facts in the first instance, especially if the person is angry.
- Obtain details about the complaint before any personal details.
- Ask for clarification wherever necessary.
- Show that you have understood the complaint by reading back what you have noted down
- Ask the person what they would like done to resolve the issue.
- Be clear about what you can do, how long it will take and what it will involve.
- Don't promise things you can't deliver.
- Make sure that the person understands what they have been told.

Resolving Complaints

Stage One

1. In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate (Informal resolution).
2. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Disciplinary Sub-committee* by email within one week.
3. On receiving the complaint, the Disciplinary Sub-committee records it in the complaints electronic log (maintained securely by the club secretary).
4. If it has not already been resolved, they should identify the appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.
5. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
6. Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within one week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply.
7. A copy of this Complaints Procedure should be attached.
8. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
9. Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Stage Two

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is officially reviewed by the Board of Offaly Rowing Club.

This must be done within two weeks of receiving Offaly Rowing Club's response to stage one



*Note: The disciplinary sub-committee is appointed by the committee on taking office post AGM. It may consist of the club president, captain, and a child welfare officer. The club secretary is included for administrative purposes. The sub-committee may be expanded on an adhoc basis if required.