**Goalball UK Complaints Procedure**

This document sets out the procedures for bringing a complaint against an individual, a club, and Goalball UK under Goalball UK (GUK) policies.

Last reviewed: July 2021.

# Who may bring a complaint

A complaint may be started by:

* An individual GUK member
* A club
* A volunteer
* GUK, acting through a member of its staff or its Board

# Against whom can a complaint be brought

A complaint may be brought against an individual, a club, or GUK

# What may be complained about

This procedure can be used in the following matters:

* an allegation of misconduct at a GUK competition or on social media
* an allegation of bringing the game into disrepute at a GUK tournament or on social media
* an allegation of a specific breach of competition rules
* an allegation of a breach of the Equality and Diversity Policy, including the Policy on the Inclusion of Trans People in Goalball
* an allegation of a breach of the code of conduct, anti-doping, illegal betting and match fixing, corruption or any other policy adopted by Goalball UK specifically related to competitions run under the auspices of GUK

GUK will specifically keep the scope of the application of this procedure under review to ensure that it applies in all appropriate circumstances.

**Note 1: Safeguarding issues have their own procedures for bringing matters to the attention of GUK. Do not use this Complaints procedure for any matter that falls under the Safeguarding procedure**. **More information on GUK Safeguarding can be found** [**here**](http://goalballuk.com/about-us/safeguarding/)**.**

**Note 2: Issues that amount to an Employment Law matter between GUK and an employee will be dealt with in accordance with GUK’s HR policies and applicable legislation.**

# Timescale for bringing a complaint

The timescale for making a complaint depends on what it is about:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Issue** | **Deadline for making a complaint**  |
| Alleged breach of competition rules or bringing game into disrepute at a specific tournament.  | Must be received by the GUK office by 4pm on the [fifth (5th)] working day after the tournament.  |
| Allegation of bringing game into disrepute outside a competition**.**  | As soon as possible, in any event no later than four weeks of the complainant becoming aware of the matter.  |
| Alleged breach of league rules not relating to a specific competition.  | As soon as possible, in any event no later than four weeks of the complainant becoming aware of the matter.Note: this time limit does not apply to a complaint brought by GUK. |
| Alleged breach of social media policy  | As soon as possible, in any event no later than four weeks of the complainant becoming aware of the matter.Note: this time limit does not apply to a complaint brought by GUK. |
| Alleged breach of equality policy  | As soon as possible, in any event no later than 12 months of the complainant becoming aware of the matter.Note: this time limit does not apply to a complaint brought by GUK. |

GUK will consider any exceptional reasons put forward why the relevant deadline was not met in a specific matter and may in its absolute discretion accept a complaint made outside the relevant timescale.

GUK reserves the right for one of its staff to instigate a complaint outside the relevant timescale where it relates to a pattern of behaviour across more than one tournament or season, so long as the complaint is brought within a reasonable time considering all the circumstances.

# How to begin a complaint

A complaint is begun by setting out the details of the matter in writing. Attached is **Form 1**. This should be used to set out all the information needed for a complaint. This form should be sent to:

thecc@goalballuk.com

If **Form 1** is not fully completed, the matter cannot proceed. The GUK office may ask you to fill in further details.

Resourcing a complaints procedure has an impact on staff time and GUK’s finances. Therefore, a fee (£25) will be required with each complaint. The fee must be received by GUK before the matter can proceed. Details of how to pay the fee are on **Form 1**. GUK staff and appointed official volunteers are exempt from the fee.

# Procedure

GUK is committed to making the procedure as fair and transparent as possible.

The following sections describe the process that will be followed. The table in section 10 sets out the timescales for the process.

As a general rule, GUK will share all the information provided in writing with the other person/s involved in a complaint. Please bear this in mind when filling in any documents or writing any other messages. If you wish to raise matters of a more confidential nature, you should first speak with the GUK office to discuss how to proceed. In exceptional circumstances, GUK may withhold identifying information about a person involved in a complaint, but this will depend entirely on the facts of the matter.

## **6.1 Initial steps**

The CEO will have overall responsibility for dealing with a complaint.

The CEO may decide on first review of a complaint, not to proceed it

because it is incomplete, is not accompanied by the fee, frivolous,

vexatious or malicious, the complainant will be informed immediately.

When a complaint is received, the CEO will assign a staff member to deal with gathering further information about the matter.

At the same time, the CEO will ask the staff member to establish a Complaints Panel to look at the matter.

The Complaints Panel will comprise of three (3) people:

* Chair - GUK Staff member, the same person who will gather the information
* One member of The Clubs and Competitions Committee
* One member of the GUK Board or Performance Advisory Committee

No-one with a connection to the complainant or the person/club complained about will be on this panel or assigned to gather the information.

The panel may, in its absolute discretion, seek advice or information from any person who may assist depending on the complexity or technical nature of the case in hand.

## **6.2 Information Gathering**

The GUK staff member assigned by the CEO will review the complaint and acknowledge its receipt, and may do any of the following:

* Seek further information from the complainant
* Ask the person or club complained about to comment on the complaint. This will be shared with detail from Form 1 unless there are good reasons at the discretion of the GUK staff member
* Seek information from anyone else who may have witnessed or have knowledge of the event
* Invite the complainant to make further comment in light of the above additional information, and allow the person or club complained about to make further responses

Once as much information as can be reasonably gathered has been compiled, the staff member will present this to the Panel.

## **6.3 The Panel**

The Panel will discuss the matter, either in person together or via audio/video conferencing.

Based on the seriousness of the allegation or the potential of serious sanction, the Panel may allow the person or club complained about to make oral representations to the Panel. This may be at a separate time from the Panel’s own discussion of the matter.

The Panel has the discretion not to proceed with a matter if they conclude that the complaint is frivolous, vexatious, or malicious. In this instance the complaint will receive a warning. Repeated misuse of the complaints procedure will result in GUK bring a complaint against the person or club.

The Panel will reach its decision and will communicate this to both the complainant and person, or club complained about separately. The Panel will include a reminder of any rights of Appeal when doing this.

Once a matter has reached a conclusion, either at the Panel stage or after an Appeal, any matter which leads to the sanctioning of a person or a club will be reported in a short summary on the GUK website. The individual/s and club names will not be disclosed.

# Who can Appeal and on what grounds

If the complaint is upheld, the person or club complained about may Appeal against the decision and or the sanction.

If the complaint is dismissed, the complainant may Appeal against the decision.

# Appeals Process

The Appeals process will be overseen by the Chair of the Board of Goalball UK. The Appeal must be made on **Form 2** and sent to thecc@goalballuk.com no later than 5 working days after the Panel’s decision has been communicated. No extension of this timescale will be granted.

The Chair may determine that the Appeal cannot proceed because it is incomplete, is not accompanied by the fee, is frivolous, vexatious, or malicious.

The Chair will appoint a member of GUK staff or some other suitable person who has not yet been involved in the process to collate the information presented to the Appeals Panel to review the Appeal and any further information that is needed. This person will have the right to do such things as mentioned in section 6 (B) above.

An Appeals Panel will be arranged by the Chair, or by someone appointed by the Chair to do so. The Panel will comprise:

* 1 member of the Board
* 1 other senior GUK person, either from the Board or from senior staff
* The person appointed by the chair to collate, review and gather information

The Appeal Panel will meet in the same way as described in section 6 (C) above, including the right to allow any of the parties to make oral submissions if deemed necessary.

The Appeals Panel has the right to not proceed with an Appeal based on it being frivolous, vexatious, or malicious and not proceed.

The panel may, in its absolute discretion, seek advice or information from any person who may assist depending on the complexity or technical nature of the case in hand.

The Appeals Panel will communicate its decision and its reasons for it, including any change to the original Panel’s decision, to all the parties involved. The outcome will be published in the manner described in section 6 (C) above. The decision of the Appeals Panel is final.

# Fees

The following fees must be paid:

* [£25] on submission of a complaint using **Form 1**
* [£25] on the submission of an Appeal using **Form 2**

Result of complaint relating to fees:

* Complaint succeeds and no Appeal - £25 returned to the complainant
* Complaint succeeds but is overturned at Appeal - £25 returned to the successful appellant
* Complaint succeeds and is upheld at Appeal - £25 returned to complainant

GUK staff and appointed official volunteers are exempt from paying fees.

GUK reserves the right to demand a further fee of [£25] in the event of a complaint or Appeal being dismissed because it is frivolous, vexatious or malicious. GUK also reserves the right to bring a complaint on the grounds of misconduct against any person persistently abusing the complaints procedures.

# Timescales

The timescales set out below are target times for GUK to complete all matters in a timely fashion. In circumstances where these timescales will not be met all parties will informed. An example of this may include availability if independent panel members or a complex case that requires detailed information gathering.

This table sets out the time periods for each step of a complaint or an Appeal. “Working Day” means any day that is not a weekend or one of the following bank holidays: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year’s Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, both early and late May holidays, and the late August holiday.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| STAGE  | STEP | TIMING  |
| Complaint | Receipt of Form 1 and fee | See Section 4 above – Timescales for Making a Complaint  |
|  | CEO appoints GUK staff member to lead the process; receipt of complaint acknowledged  | No later than 5 working days from receipt of Complaint  |
|  | Panel appointed; information gathered and report completed  | No later than 15 working days from receipt of complaint  |
|  | Panel meets | No later than 20 working days from receipt of complaint  |
|  | Decision communicated to all parties  | No later than 5 working days from decision being made by Panel  |
| Appeal | Receipt of Form 2 and fee | No later than 5 working days from communication of Panel decision  |
|  | Panel appointed and information gathered  | No later than 15 working days from receipt of Appeal |
|  | Panel meets  | No later than 20 working days from receipt of Appeal  |
|  | Decision communicated  | No later than 5 working days after decision made  |

# FORM 1 – Submission of a Complaint

Please complete all relevant sections of the form and submit to thecc@goalballuk.com. Failure to complete the form and submit within the required timescales will invalidate any complaint.

## **Your Details**

Full Name:

Email:

Number:

Role:

Goalball Club (if applicable):

## **Complaint Details**

Name of person / organisation being complained about:

Date of incident:

Indicate whether it involved allegation of:

* + Misconduct
	+ Bringing the game into disrepute
	+ Breach of a specific rule
	+ Breach of Social Media Policy
	+ Breach of Equality policy

Summary of complaint

*Provide as much detail as possible. Please also attach any relevant documents to your submission as required.*

Suggested Outcome

*State what you would like to see happen* as a result of the complaint.

## **Payment**

Make payment of £25 to account name: Goalball UK

Account number: 63877078 Sort Code: 20-32-00

Payment Reference: Form 1 – OIO OTH

## **Goalball UK Office Use Only**

Date of receipt: Person dealing with the complaint:

Payment of fee: Y/N Acknowledgment sent:

# FORM 2 – Submission of an Appeal

Please complete all relevant sections of the form and submit to thecc@goalballuk.com. Failure to complete the form and submit within the required timescales will invalidate any complaint.

## **Your Details**

Full Name:

Email:

Number:

Role:

Goalball Club (if applicable):

## **Appeal Details**

Indicate if the appeal is about:

* + Decision including procedure
	+ Sanction

Original decision date:

Summary of appeal

*Provide details of the decision being appealed.*

Reason for change

*Explain why the original decision should be changed.*

## **Payment**

Make payment of £25 to account name: Goalball UK

Account number: 63877078 Sort Code: 20-32-00

Payment Reference: Form 2 – OIO OTH

## **Goalball UK Office Use Only**

Date of receipt: Person dealing with the Appeal:

Payment of fee: Y/N Acknowledgment sent: