



Grievance

Policy & Process

Purpose

The following policy has been developed to provide guidance in relation to grievances within the Brighton Districts and Old Scholars Football Club (BDOS).

The purpose of this procedure is to encourage all members, players, and volunteers to:

- raise their grievance without fear of victimisation or disadvantage
- promote timely resolution
- ensure there is a fair process in resolving grievances.

This procedure applies to all Brighton Districts and Old Scholars Football Club (BDOS) community members.

Context

For general complaints – please refer to the Complaints Management Policy and Procedure

Definition

Grievance – any problem or concern related to the BDOS environment

Informal grievance – a grievance made verbally

Formal grievance – a grievance made in writing

Support person – a person assisting the person raising the grievance. They cannot speak on the person's behalf

Procedural fairness – lack of bias, use of evidence to support decisions, process directed by procedures, investigation appropriate to the circumstances and history

Natural justice – ensuring all parties affected by a grievance have a fair hearing prior to attempting a resolution.

Investigation process – standardised system of enquiries designed to discover the facts of a series of events. A repeatable, consistent process

Complainant – a person who raises a concern against another party, alleging harm by that person

Respondent – a person called upon to issue a response to a communication made by another

Grievance principles

Privacy and confidentiality – only people directly involved in the grievance, or in managing it can have access to information about the grievance.

Fairness – all parties to the grievance will have the opportunity to present their side of the matter. No assumptions will be made, or action taken until all relevant information has been collected and considered. All parties will have access to support if required.

Freedom of victimisation – all necessary steps are taken to ensure that those involved in a grievance are not victimised by anyone for coming forward with the grievance or for helping to manage it. Any victimisation will lead to relevant counsel.

Timely – all grievances are dealt with in a timely manner. BDOS aims to manage all grievances within four weeks if possible, and if the process falls outside this time frame the participants will be advised of the reasoning behind this.

Procedure

BDOS community members have the option of raising any concern and seeking a resolution to any grievance formally or informally. It is the intent of these procedures that grievances be settled as early as possible.

Managing an informal grievance

A grievance may be lodged informally or formal.

BDOS community members may raise their informal grievance with any of the Coaches or Committee Members.

However, if the grievance relates to any of the Coaches or Committee Members, then a neutral third party will be made available as an alternative.

A suggested workflow is outlined below.

In accordance with the complainant's wishes, some or all of the following measures should be taken: -

- discuss with the complainant the range of options and strategies for dealing with the situation. Set clear parameters and expectations of what can and cannot be achieved.
- ensure all parties are aware of the relevant policies (Bullying and Inappropriate Behaviours Policy, Code of Conduct, etc.)
- discuss the matter confidentiality with the parties identified as causing the concern, informing them to negotiate to a solution. Remind them of the relevant clause in this policy regarding victimisation.
- review any agreed follow-up actions to establish whether the matter has been resolved, further action, training or coaching is required, or formal proceedings instigated. Ensure this is also inclusive of the complainant and that confidentiality is maintained.
- strictly monitor the situation and follow up with the complainant to ensure victimisation is not occurring
- the respondent may request to have the complaint dealt with formally
- comply with our safety policy and procedures.

Managing a formal grievance

A formal grievance will need to be submitted in writing.

A grievance should contain as much evidence and detail as possible, including dates, witnesses, location, incident description and how this made the complainant feel.

It should be made clear that additional information will not be sought from them so details about the allegation should be complete and accurate.

BDOS will:

- acknowledge the grievance within 2 working days
- provide a letter of allegation to the Respondent within five working days containing the specifics of the complaint, the time frame for response and the relevant policy for reference.

Investigation

BDOS must nominate a person to conduct the investigation (the Investigator).

- the Investigator will interview the complainant, any witnesses, the respondent and any other relevant parties. Note that interviews should take place in a secure and confidential environment to ensure the integrity of the investigation.
- the Investigator must review any previous file notes or complaints from all parties
- any party can have a support person attend and ensure that enough time is allowed to arrange this if required (usually 24 to 48 hours)

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- the Investigator must clearly identify the issues of the complaint, the type of evidence required and then gather and document this in a systematic manner. Full notes will be required from each interview and signed by the interviewee to ensure accuracy.

The investigation process will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner and include:

- preparation and information collection
- interviewing relevant parties
- findings
- documenting a report and recommendations to resolve the matter.

Outcome

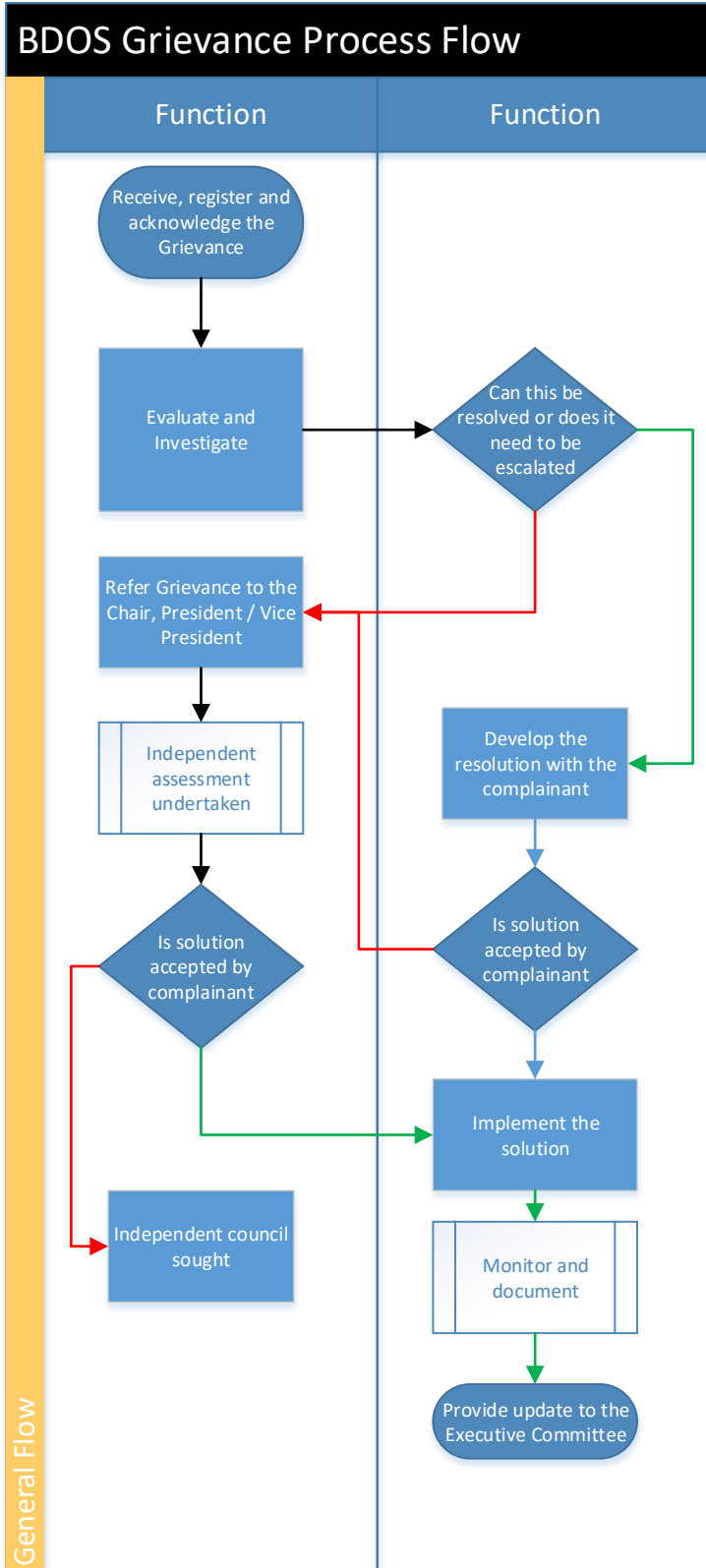
The Investigator will provide a report and recommendations to senior management for decision making.

There are three possible outcomes:

- if the complaint was substantiated, the disciplinary process or performance management process will be followed. This decision to substantiate the complaint will be shared with the complainant but not the details of the disciplinary process.
- if the allegation is unsubstantiated the complainant and the respondent will be advised of the reasoning behind the decision and any expectations of future actions.
- if the complaint is found to be consciously vexatious, appropriate action may be taken against the complainant. The decision to find the complaint vexatious and any information about appropriate actions will not be shared with the Respondent.

BDOS must:

- choose the appropriate person to conduct the investigation considering the skill set required
- ensure the complainant understands the process and limitations, and is aware of the relevant policies and options open to them
- check that representation or support has been offered to all parties prior to each meeting.
- ensure there are no conflicts of interest or personal relationships between the investigator and the parties to the investigation
- take appropriate action against the complainant if the complaint is found to be consciously vexatious
- obtain background information, previous complaints, and relevant policies
- keep records of all communication interviews and correspondence. This information must be kept confidential



POLICY REVIEW

This Policy is subject to regular review at a maximum interval of two (2) years. For the purposes of carrying out and giving effect to this policy, the Treasurer or President may from time to time prepare, adopt or vary, and otherwise issue to members of BDOS, guidelines and directions relating to any aspect of this policy

Document Version Control

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