

## How to complain to us

If you wish to make a complaint, you can do so by email or letter.

If you are disabled, and need a reasonable adjustment to ensure you can register your complaint, you can contact us alternatively by:

- telephone (one of our officers will help you by writing out your complaint)
- asking a member of staff to help you in writing out your complaint

Our contact details are

[admin@welshtriathlon.org](mailto:admin@welshtriathlon.org)

0300 3003128

Alternatively, you can contact the CEO Welsh Triathlon directly: [beverleylewis@welshtriathlon.org](mailto:beverleylewis@welshtriathlon.org) 07824 145 085

Please find our Complaints Policy below which outlines the process your complaint will follow and further information



# Welsh Triathlon

## Complaints Policy

WT/POL/0010	Version 3.0	October 2016
Approved By:	Paul Tanner - Chair of the Board	Date: 20th October 2016 Review Date: October 2019

## Principles

1. Where possible Welsh Triathlon will seek to resolve complaints informally at a staff, volunteer officer or committee level.
2. Where a complaint cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint should be made in writing to the Executive Officer of the Welsh Triathlon Board. Formal complaints will be investigated by the Executive or an individual appointee if conflict of interest exists.
3. It is intended that complaints procedures should be easily accessible, that complaints are fully and fairly investigated, and that the complaints process should provide an effective response and appropriate redress.
4. Welsh Triathlon will respect complainants' desire for confidentiality wherever possible.
5. Welsh Triathlon will use the feedback provided by complaints to ensure that its systems and services are improved.

## What is a Complaint?

6. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not.
7. A complaint may involve dissatisfaction with the conduct of the organisation, its Committees, volunteer officers, athletes, or with alleged unfair practice in connection with the sport.
7. Grounds for a complaint shall include but shall not be limited to the following:
  - a. if the conduct of any individual, body, or organisation brings or is likely to bring the sport into disrepute;
  - b. the violation of Welsh Triathlon regulations
  - c. a breach of any of the Rules or Codes of Conduct applicable from time to time to Welsh Triathlon activities or members
8. A Complaint may be made by:
  - a. a member of Welsh Triathlon,
  - b. the parent of or other person with parental responsibility for a member of Welsh Triathlon, under the age of 18 years on his/her behalf;
  - c. a committee of Welsh Triathlon through its Chair or other officer acting on its behalf;
  - d. a person working for or on behalf of the Welsh Triathlon;
  - e. any third party where the complaint concerns Welsh Triathlon, its members or its activities
9. No complaints may be made under this policy against an employee of the British Triathlon Federation (excluding those employees employed by British Triathlon but working for Welsh Triathlon) acting on behalf of Welsh Triathlon and relating to any action taken in the course of his/her employment. Any complaint about such an action shall be dealt with through the employee's terms and conditions of employment as outlined in the

Staff Handbook and should be addressed to the Chief Executive of the BTF, or the President of the BTF where the complaint concerns the Chief Executive.

10. No complaints may be made under this policy regarding decisions made by officials at competitions held under the jurisdiction of Welsh Triathlon or decisions regarding team or squad selections. Appeals procedures exist in respect of these matters.

### **Our Standards for Handling Complaints**

- We can receive complaints by letter or email, or alternatively if required by virtue of reasonable adjustments. We treat all complaints seriously.
- You can expect to be treated with courtesy, respect and fairness at all times. We expect that you will also treat our staff dealing with your complaint with the same courtesy, respect and fairness.
- We will treat your complaint in confidence within the organisation.
- We will deal with your service complaint promptly. We will acknowledge receipt of a written complaint within five working days where we have a return address and you can expect to have a full reply within 20 working days. In a few cases we will not be able to send a full reply within 20 working days of receipt, for example if your complaint is very complex. If this happens, we will tell you the reason why and let you know when we will be able to reply in full, keeping you fully informed of progress.
- We will not treat you less favourably than anyone else because of your:
  - sex or legal marital or same-sex partnership status: this includes family status, responsibility for dependants, and gender (including gender reassignment, whether proposed, commenced or completed)
  - sexual orientation
  - colour or race: this includes ethnic or national origin or nationality
  - disability
  - religious or political beliefs, or trade union affiliation
  - any other unjustifiable factors, for example language difficulties, age, pregnancy and maternity.

### **Third Party Reporting**

Complainants may wish to have a third party act on their behalf. A third party is any person or organisation acting on behalf of or making enquiries for the complainant. For example, third parties may include:

- advice organisations
- professionals such as social workers, community psychiatric nurses, doctors or solicitors
- family members or friends

Where a third party is helping a complainant with a particular complaint, we need written consent to that effect. Where we have this authority, we will endeavour to take all possible steps to keep the third party informed of progress on the complaint.

Also, some lawyers and attorneys are legally empowered in certain circumstances to act on behalf of a complainant, and consent to disclose information is not required.

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- fax
- asking a member of staff to help you in writing out your complaint

Our contact details are on the Welsh Triathlon website. If you require different adjustments, let us know and we will try and put those arrangements in place where we can.

## **Complaints Procedure**

We have a two-stage complaints handling procedure. At each stage it will help us to resolve your complaint quickly if you can give us as much clarity and detail as possible, including providing any documents and correspondence and stating that you are making a complaint. If we do not have all the details required to deal with the complaint, we may contact you and ask you for further information.

### **Stage 1**

This is the first opportunity for us to resolve your dissatisfaction. We expect the majority of complaints to be resolved at this stage. On receipt of your complaint the Executive Officer of Welsh Triathlon will respond to your complaint within 5 working days.

### **Stage 2**

If you are dissatisfied with the response at stage 1, you may request a review. This will be carried out by a responsible Director. Your request together with all subsequent correspondence relating to it should be sent to the Chair of Welsh Triathlon, who will forward your request to the relevant Director to be reviewed. You will receive a response within 28 working days.

## **If you are dissatisfied**

If having followed the two internal stages of our service complaints procedure you remain dissatisfied, you can ask to have your complaint reviewed by a mutually agreed independent. The independent will assess whether there is evidence of service failure or maladministration on our part. You have a maximum of 28 days from the date of the Director's final response to register a wish to take the matter to an independent.

## **Unreasonably Persistent or Vexatious Complaints**

Welsh Triathlon does not expect employees or key volunteers to tolerate unacceptable behaviour by complainants at any time during the general complaints procedure.

Unacceptable behaviour includes behaviour which is abusive, offensive or threatening and may include

- Using abusive or inappropriate language on the telephone or face to face
- Sending multiple emails
- Leaving multiple voicemails

Raising legitimate queries or criticisms of a complaints procedure as it progresses, e.g. if agreed timescales are not met, should not in itself lead to someone being regarded as a vexatious or an unreasonably persistent complainant. Similarly, the fact that a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint and seeks to challenge it once, or more than once, should not necessarily cause him or her to be labelled vexatious or unreasonably persistent.

If a complainant behaves in a way that is unreasonably persistent or vexatious, this procedure will be followed.

Welsh Triathlon defines unreasonably persistent and vexatious complainants as those complainants who, because of the frequency or nature of the complaints, they hinder the work of the organisation. The description 'unreasonably persistent' and 'vexatious' may apply separately or jointly to a particular complainant.

If it is suggested that a complainant is acting in an unreasonably persistent or vexatious way the EO will ensure that the complaint is being, or has been, investigated properly according to the complaints procedure before any further action is taken.

The EO will contact the complainant either by telephone, in writing or by email to explain why their behaviour is causing concern and ask them to change this behaviour. The EO will explain the actions that Welsh Triathlon may take if the behaviour does not change. If the disruptive behaviour continues, the EO will issue a reminder letter to the complainant advising them that the way in which they will be dealt with by Welsh Triathlon in future will be restricted. The EO will make this decision following consultation with the Chair and inform the complainant in writing of what measures have been put in place and for what period.

When the decision has been taken to apply this policy to a complainant, the EO will contact the complainant in writing (and/or as appropriate) to explain:

- why Welsh Triathlon has taken the decision
- what action(s) are being taken
- the duration of that action
- the review process of this policy and
- the right of the complainant to contact the Board of Directors about the fact that they have been treated as a vexatious/persistent complainant

Where the behaviour is so extreme or it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff and/or volunteers Welsh Triathlon will consider other options e.g. reporting the matter to the police or taking legal action. In such cases, Welsh Triathlon may not give the complainant prior-warning of that action. In every case, full and complete records of all decisions and actions will be maintained.

