



*Company number 16601722*

## UK Fencing Project – Grievance Procedure

### 1. Purpose

This procedure sets out a fair and transparent process for employees and contracted staff to raise grievances relating to their work with the UK Fencing Project (UKFP). The aim is to address concerns promptly, consistently, and with due regard to confidentiality and impartiality, in strict adherence to the **ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures (2015)**.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All directly employed staff (full-time, part-time, casual).
- All contracted staff working regularly with UKFP (e.g., coaches and session leaders).

It covers grievances relating to working conditions, management decisions, treatment by colleagues or company representatives, and any other work-related matter.

### 3. Key Principles

- Everyone has the right to raise concerns without fear of retaliation.
- Grievances will be handled confidentially, objectively, and within reasonable timescales.
- Wherever possible, matters should be resolved informally before initiating the formal process.
- At formal stages, individuals have the statutory right to be accompanied by a **work colleague, a trade union representative, or an official employed by a trade union**.
- The company will comply with the principles of the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures throughout this process.

- All parties involved are expected to act in good faith and cooperate with the procedure.
- This procedure is regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with current UK employment law and best practice.

## 4. Informal Resolution

In many cases, concerns can be resolved informally through discussion. Staff are encouraged to raise issues directly with their line manager or immediate supervisor in the first instance. If the issue involves that person or they are unavailable, another senior colleague or director can be approached informally. Documenting informal discussions, even briefly, can be helpful for future reference.

## 5. Formal Grievance Procedure

**a. Submitting a Grievance** If the issue is not resolved informally, a formal grievance should be submitted in writing without unreasonable delay. This should be addressed to the Managing Director. If the grievance concerns the Managing Director or another director, it should be addressed to any other director not involved in the grievance.

The written grievance should include:

- A clear description of the issue.
- Relevant facts (e.g., dates, names, locations, specific incidents).
- Any steps taken to address it informally.
- The outcome or resolution the individual is seeking.

**b. Investigation.** Upon receipt of a formal grievance, an impartial investigator (who may be internal or external, and not previously involved in the matter) will be appointed without unreasonable delay. The investigation aims to establish the facts and may include:

- Interviewing relevant individuals (including the grievant and any individuals against whom the grievance is made), allowing them to state their case.
- Reviewing all pertinent evidence or records.
- Providing an opportunity for all sides to be heard and to present their version of events.
- The investigator will compile findings to inform the grievance meeting.

**c. Grievance Meeting.** The individual raising the grievance will be invited to a meeting to discuss the issue in more detail and present their case. They have the statutory right to be accompanied by a **work colleague, a trade union representative, or an official employed by a trade union**. The meeting will usually be held within **5–10 working days** of receiving the formal grievance, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, with the employee being informed of any necessary delays. Minutes of the meeting will be taken and typically shared with the employee for agreement.

**d. Outcome** Following the meeting and investigation, a written outcome will be provided, normally within **5 working days** of the grievance meeting. It will:

- Summarise the findings of the investigation and the basis for the decision.
- State clearly whether the grievance is upheld (in full or in part) or not.
- Outline any actions or remedies to be taken by UKFP as a result.
- Inform the individual of their **right to appeal** the decision and the deadline for doing so.

## 6. Appeal

If the individual is not satisfied with the outcome, they may submit an appeal in writing within **5 working days** of receiving the outcome letter.

The appeal should clearly state the grounds for appeal, which may include:

- New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the original grievance.
- A procedural concern (e.g., the process was not followed correctly).
- A disagreement with the findings or the proposed remedy.
- Any supporting information.

A different director (or, if necessary, an independent third party such as an external HR consultant or mediator) who was not involved in the original decision will review the case. This individual will typically be more senior than the original decision-maker, where practicable. The employee has the statutory right to be accompanied at any appeal meeting. A further meeting may be arranged if deemed necessary for the appeal. A final decision will be issued in writing within **10 working days** of the appeal being received, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, with reasons for any delays. This decision is final within UKFP's internal process.

## 7. Grievances Against a Director

If the grievance concerns a director:

- It should be addressed to another director not involved in the matter.
- If the grievance involves more than one director or the entire board, an independent third party (such as a mediator or external HR consultant) may be appointed to manage the process to ensure impartiality and adherence to the ACAS Code.

## 8. Confidentiality and Records

All information related to a grievance will be handled with sensitivity and stored securely in line with UK data protection regulations (UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018). Only those directly involved in handling the grievance will have access to relevant details, and information will be disclosed only on a need-to-know basis. Records of grievances will be kept confidential and in accordance with UK data protection laws.

## 9. Vexatious Grievances

While employees have the right to raise genuine concerns, grievances that are found to be malicious, vexatious, or without reasonable foundation may be subject to investigation under

the company's Disciplinary Procedure. This will be handled with extreme care and only where there is clear evidence of abuse of the procedure.

## **10. Policy Review and Communication**

This procedure will be reviewed periodically (e.g., annually) to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with current legislation and best practices. All employees will be informed of this procedure and any updates through the staff handbook or other appropriate communication channels.

## **11. Definition of Working Days**

For the purpose of this procedure, "working days" refers to Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

## **12. Related Policies**

- Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure