

# BF Comments and Complaints Policy

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## 1. Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the BF Customer Charter which sets our intentions for the service that we provide.

## 2. The Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out how British Fencing will handle comments and complaints.

## 3. Your Complaints

We hope you will be fully satisfied with the service you receive from British Fencing, but if you have a complaint about our service we want to hear from you. We will take your complaint seriously, and will address it and respond to it as quickly as possible. Only by listening to our customers can we hope to improve our overall levels of service.

## 4. How to Send Your Feedback

You can send us your comments or complaints on our service, which we will deal with confidentially, by telephone, online or in writing.

### By telephone

Please call 0208 742 3032 and speak to a member of the Customer Services team.

### In writing

If you wish to write to us with your comments or complaints about British Fencing service, you can email us, direct to [complaints@britishfencing.com](mailto:complaints@britishfencing.com) or write to:

British Fencing Head Office, 1 Baron's Gate, 33-35 Rothschild Road, London W4 5HT

## 5. What We Need to Know

To help us investigate your complaint, please provide as much of the following information as possible when you contact us:

- Whether it is an original complaint, or a follow-up to a reply you were not satisfied with
- A clear description of the complaint and what you would like us to do to sort things out
- Details of any relevant membership number, license numbers and/or other reference numbers relating to any contacts you may previously have had with British Fencing on this subject (for example when calling our telephone service, or sending an email to volunteers or staff members)
- Your full postal address, telephone number (including dialling code), and email address if you have one.

## 6. What Happens Next?

We will acknowledge your complaint within seven working days. We hope to respond in full within this time, but if this is not possible we will explain why and give you a date by which you can expect a full reply.

## **7. The Definition of a Complaint**

A complaint is...

"An expression of dissatisfaction about British Fencing's action, or lack of action, or about the standard of a service, whether the action taken or the service was provided by a British Fencing staff member, a volunteer acting on behalf of British Fencing, or a body or organisation acting on behalf of British Fencing".

A complaint is not...

An initial request for a service to be delivered within a published timescale, except where the consequential actions of British Fencing mean the definition of complaint, as defined above, are met.

## **8. Who Can Make a Complaint?**

Any member of the public or their representatives, staff, businesses, public and voluntary bodies can make a complaint about, or to, British Fencing.

## **9. Confidentiality**

All complaints are treated with confidentiality in mind. Only the CEO and the staff resolving specific complaints in each service area will be aware that a complaint has been received and is being dealt with. We will respect anonymity, with respect to complainants, but, it is better for the complainant to provide contact details, so that they can be informed of the outcome.

## **10. Aggressive or Obsessive Complaints**

British Fencing wants to deal honestly and respectfully with complainants and ensure that other service users, staff or British Fencing as a whole do not suffer detriment from persons making vexatious complaints. The CEO and Chair of British Fencing will write to vexatious complainants to inform them that their behaviour is considered to be unacceptable.

## **11. Complaints about Partners, Suppliers and Sponsors**

British Fencing recognises complaints regarding British Fencing's Partners, Suppliers and Sponsors and any organisation contracted to work for British Fencing, and will seek to resolve such complaints. These complaints are useful to guide learning in future service delivery and contractual arrangements, and feedback on performance is given to Partners, Suppliers and Sponsors, on a regular basis. British Fencing will forward complaints received in respect of other organisations or appropriate bodies.

## **12. Equalities Statement**

British Fencing aims to handle all complaints honestly and respectfully regardless of who makes a complaint. British Fencing treats all members of the community equitably and will not show bias to any particular individual or group.

## **13. Matters that are outside this Policy**

The following matters are not included in this policy:

- Complaints which are subject to legal proceedings
- Complaints about member behaviour contrary to the British Fencing Code of Conduct (please see the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure)
- Adult statutory complaints
- Children statutory complaints

## **14. Monitoring Performance**

British Fencing enforces a staff appraisal system which includes an agreed Job Description for every member of staff, so that each member of staff has an agreed personal development plan. These plans are reviewed at least every six months. This regard for the development and training of our staff will ensure that, wherever possible, you will receive the best customer experience in your dealings with our organisation.

We want and will actively seek customer feedback on the way we operate and the way we interact with our customers. These feedback procedures are defined above and will form an integral part of our ability to continually improve our service to our customers.

## **15. Appendix A Complaints regarding Refereeing decisions**

It is not the role of British Fencing, after the fight is finished, to investigate individual referees decisions or comment on whether a hit was correctly awarded. We are aware that more and more bouts are recorded on devices, however once the fight is over, the result stands. Our position is that it is the responsibility of the fencer at the time to appeal to the referee or DT as appropriate within the rules of the sport.

The only decision that will get officially referred to BF for investigation is a decision involving a Black card. This is because we use the Disciplinary Process to put in place additional sanctions if appropriate.

We may from time to time review the types of complaints and use this to feedback to/or educate our referees, either individually or as a group, with the intention of helping and supporting them as they undertake a difficult but hugely valued role in the sport of Fencing.

**Last Approved by Board: 04/07/2017**