

BF CUSTOMER CHARTER

Last Updated: 26th April 2023

Last Approved by Board: 20th June 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

This is British Fencing's Charter for our customers. In originally drawing this up, we looked at the Charters that existed for other sports and sought advice from Moore Stephens who handle governance audits on behalf of Sport England and UK Sport. We would welcome feedback from any member of the British Fencing community.

1.1 OUR VALUES

British Fencing's values are Honesty, Respect and Excellence. These are the key qualities we strive to demonstrate in all we do.

1.2 OUR VISION AND MISSION

British Fencing aspires to create "a strong, sustainable and successful fencing community". We will do this by inspiring and enabling people to start, stay and succeed in fencing.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE CHARTER

We recognise that in order to achieve our vision we must continually improve the way we communicate with our Customers. We are committed to meeting the needs of customers in a professional manner and this Customer Charter has been created to show that commitment.

The Customer Charter sets out:

- the standards that each customer can expect from us;
- a summary of our details of our Comments and Complaints Procedure (the details can be found in the BF Comments and Complaints Policy)
- information on how customers can contact us.

3. WHO ARE OUR CUSTOMERS?

British Fencing is the governing body for the sport of fencing in Great Britain; we are not a business, although in some areas we must adopt business principles; we are not a charity, although our volunteer network is critical to our success in all we do. We are a national sports governing body, with the goals and vision set out above. We are clear that our Customers are:

- our members
- all fencers representing GBR, whether established, new or potential and making enquiries (included here are our top athletes, e.g. those in the Athlete Development Programme).

We can identify other people and bodies with whom we must also have a Customer relationship, at least in part, or at times. These are:

- the Home Countries (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey). Primarily these are key partners
- our sponsors
- our funding partners, eg Sport England, UK Sport, Youth Sport Trust
- our licensed and affiliated delivery partners
- our clubs, coaches, team managers, parents of young athletes, all volunteers
- our suppliers.

The principles in this Charter apply to each and all of the above. Inevitably there may be differences of approach to and for the specific groups identified, but they are all of major importance to British Fencing.

4. OUR CUSTOMER CONTACT STANDARDS

4.1 OVERVIEW

British Fencing will:

- greet you, whether in person or on the telephone, in a polite and friendly manner
- provide you with advice and instructions that are easy to understand and in a variety of formats for specific types of customer.
- ensure that everyone is treated honestly, respectfully and equitably, taking full account of individual circumstances or special needs.
- respect your privacy, dignity and confidentiality and, where necessary, providing appropriate interview facilities.
- give you our full attention and remain professional at all times ensuring that any communication with you is open, honest and as clearly worded as possible.
- continually review all our methods of contact with customers, for example, telephone, email or via our website so that these services are easily accessible to all and where possible at all times.

4.2 OUR FACE TO FACE STANDARDS

- we will attend to you promptly when you are visiting our premises.
- all public areas in our buildings will be clean, comfortable and smoke-free, with all facilities well and clearly displayed.

4.3 OUR TELEPHONE STANDARDS

We are a small team with the majority of us working remotely across the UK. The most efficient way of contacting us is by email or using the query forms we publish on our website which will be directed to the person best able to help. We will publish contact details on our website - <https://www.britishfencing.com/>

If you are unable to use email then we will provide a Head Office landline. There is an answering service in place which allows callers to select the area of the organisation that they wish to contact. Selecting these options will allow a call to be forwarded to the person best able to deal with your query. If they are not available you will be able to leave a message.

Within published office hours we will aim to deal with telephone calls to our main Head Office telephone line as follows:

- answer calls within 30 seconds
- staff will answer with their name and/or "British Fencing"
- transfer your call no more than once when answering a query but if this is not possible we will take your details and contact you with the information you require
- we will, whenever possible, direct you to the correct service provider if the service you are asking about is provided by another organisation
- we will monitor our telephone calls from time to time to ensure that these standards for answering calls are met.

We are a small team and if we are busy with another call, or staff are unavailable to answer your call you may get transferred to our answering machine. The answering machine will provide details of how best to contact us at that time.

From time to time we will hold staff training events. During these times there will not be staff available to answer your call. The times of these events will be clearly displayed on our website on the Contact Us page.

Many staff members have mobile phones provided by British Fencing and customers are able to use these. We ask that you as much as possible respect normal working hours as sometimes these phones are kept on for out of hours emergency cover.

- Where staff are available to answer calls to their mobile phones, they will do within 30 seconds and staff will answer giving their names.
- If the event they are unable to help, they will provide you with the contact details of the staff member to contact, or point you at the procedure or information which you can use

4.4 OUR WRITTEN STANDARDS

We will aim to read every email and communications received from our customers. Whilst we respond to most communications that relate to the work that we do within a few working days, this may not always be possible due to pressure on resources (eg staff availability).

For 'business and usual' questions and queries that relate to the work that we do we will aim to:

- Acknowledge all written correspondence requiring a response within 10 working days
- Provide a response, where required, within 20 working days. If this is not possible because, for example, the subject requires greater attention or prolonged investigation, we will contact you to explain the reason for the delay and wherever possible, give you a date when you can expect a further response from us.
- We will use out-of-office notifications to inform you whether staff you have contacted are unable to deal with your query for an extended period of time and you will have the choice to direct your enquiry to an alternative team member, or await the return of that person.

For general enquiries, non-urgent questions and complaints relating to the work that we do we will aim to

- Acknowledge all written correspondence requiring a response within 15 working days
- Provide a response, where required, within 30 working days. If this is not possible because, for example, the subject requires greater attention or prolonged investigation, we will contact you to explain the reason for the delay and wherever possible, give you a date when you can expect a further response from us
- Provide you with the contact details of the person dealing with, or who has dealt with, your enquiry or request.

With the volume of emails received by the organisation and the resources at our disposal it is sometimes necessary to prioritise responding to those emails and we may not be able to meet the response times we are aiming for. If you feel your communication is not being dealt with the urgency the issue demands, you are invited to re-contact us within these response times if necessary.

4.5 ABUSIVE, PERSISTENT AND/OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS AND COMPLAINANTS

We reserve the right not to respond to complaints and complainants that could be reasonably described as abusive, persistent and/or vexatious.

Should communications contain implicit or explicit abuse or threats to staff or the organisation, or are sent cc'd to legal representation, we reserve the right to seek legal advice before choosing if, when and how to respond.

BF CUSTOMER CHARTER

Members that repeatedly harass, threaten or make vexatious complaints against individuals representing British Fencing or the organisation itself will be reported to the Disciplinary Procedure for breach of the BF Code of Conduct.

More information can be found in the BF Comments and Complaints Policy.

5. OUR COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

British Fencing will at all times aim to work to our watchwords above and to treat every kind of BF customer with respect, kindness and efficiency. We are committed to continuous improvement. We recognise we can always do better.

We have a Customer Comments and Complaints Procedure that includes clear standards so that you know what to expect from us. There is also a review procedure so that if you are unhappy with the response you receive you can have it reviewed by the Chief Executive.

- On-line details are available on our website at <http://www.britishfencing.com>
- e-mail us at headoffice@britishfencing.com
- phone us on 020 8742 3032

6. EQUALITY STATEMENT

British Fencing will promote equal opportunities for all sections of the community. We will combat discrimination and disadvantage at all times and with determination and focus.

7. HOW TO CONTACT US

For details of how to contact us please see <https://www.britishfencing.com/about-us-zone/contact-us/>

Main Number: 020 8742 3032 (for office opening times please see the link above)

Office Address: 1 Baron's Gate, 33-35 Rothschild Road, London W4 5HT

Website: www.britishfencing.com

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