



Netball Northern Ireland Complaints Procedure

September 2024



Netball Northern Ireland (NNI) '**Equity Policy**' outlines the behaviours expected from all within the 'Netball Family'. NNI are committed to ensuring that, all its users are treated with fairness and respect. and this document provides a standardised process on how to manage a complaint of a breach of policy or rule.

If, for any reason, users feel that this commitment has not been honoured this document provides a standardised process on how to manage a complaint of a breach of policy or rule.

1. When an Issue Arises

If for any reason you are not happy with any aspect of the service you have received from Netball Northern Ireland, in the first instance, you should speak directly to the member of staff concerned.

NNI will try to settle complaints at this stage to the satisfaction of everyone.

2. How to make a complaint relating to a breach of policy or rule

Complaints relating to a breach of policy or rule must be set out in writing and emailed to admin@netballni.org, marked as Confidential – Complaint, or posted/delivered by hand FAO COMPLAINTS – Rachel Barr at Netball Northern Ireland's registered address. Any complaints not received in this format will be rejected.

3. Time frame

The Complaint must be received within 28 days of the alleged breach taking place. Where Complaints are received out with 28 days of the incident giving rise to it, Netball Northern Ireland may at their discretion extend this period up to 6 months in any case in which they are satisfied that it was not practicable for the complaints to be made within 28 days of knowledge of the incident. The decision in this regard of Netball Northern Ireland is the final decision and there will be no right of appeal.

4. HANDLING A COMPLAINT

All Complaint received as per the process detailed in Section 2 & 3 will be assessed by NNI for validity. If the Complaint is deemed invalid, malicious or vexatious, it will be rejected. If the Complaint is rejected, NNI shall be under no obligation to notify the party against whom a Complaint was initially made, either that a Complaint had been made to NNI or that it was rejected.

Equally, NNI shall be under no obligation to keep a Complaint made to NNI confidential at any stage. If the Complaint falls out with the scope of this process it will be rejected. If the Complaint falls within the scope of this process, NNI may appoint an Investigator. The Investigator may be internal or external to NNI. The Investigator shall be entitled to conduct such investigation into a Complaint as the Investigator sees fit. The Investigator will inform the Complainant that they are dealing with the matter and inform that the details of the Complaint will be disclosed to the Respondent. The Respondent will be given the opportunity to respond to the Complaint against them. The Respondent will be sent a copy of the written complaint or a summary of the allegations against them and then given 14 days to respond to the allegations in writing.

The Investigator will conduct an investigation and, in doing so, ordinarily contact will be made with the Complainant, the Respondent and all witnesses to deal with all questions of the Investigator. The Investigator may request signed statements from relevant parties. The Investigator shall make a written report which shall include the documentary evidence and a recommendation to NNI as to whether there is a case for the Respondent to answer or not. If NNI confirms a recommendation that there is no case to answer, NNI shall inform the Complainant and Respondent accordingly. There shall be no appeal against a decision that there is no case to answer but a Complaint may be re-examined if further evidence is later forthcoming.

If NNI confirms a recommendation that there is a case for the Respondent to answer, the Investigator's documents are passed to a Panel to deal with the Complaint. There is no right to appeal by the Complainant if the complaint is rejected as above.

The Investigator shall be entitled to depart from the procedure above to the extent that they see fit in any in any given situation, depending on the circumstances of the Complaint and the response.

5. What Might I Complain About?

Although the **following list is not exhaustive**, It gives our users an idea of the issues that may lead to a feeling of mistreatment, resulting in a complaint:

We have **failed to give you access to information** or have **given you incorrect advice or information;**

We have not treated you politely or **have not worked within the law or in line with our policies or procedures;**

We have **discriminated against you** or have not treated you fairly.

The game has been brought into disrepute.

Equal opportunities

Netball Northern Ireland are committed to equal opportunities and take complaints about discrimination very seriously.

We may record information about the ethnic background, sex, disability and community background of anyone who makes a formal complaint, to enable us to maintain our equal opportunities commitment.

We will keep all information confidential.

6. DECISION & OUTCOME

This decision may be to reject the Complaint.
The decision may be to uphold the Complaint.
The decision may be to lodge the Complaint with another body.

OUTCOME

There is a range of outcomes including:
Operational change
Mediation Education
Disciplinary action
Sanctions

7. APPEAL

There is leave to appeal against a decision of the panel.
An appeal shall be made by lodging your grounds of appeal with NNI by email to admin@netballni.org, within 14 days of being informed of the decision. The appeal will be dealt with by a panel containing persons other than the persons on the panel who dealt with the original complaint.
Following the appeal, we will inform you in writing of the final decision as soon as reasonably practicable.
There is no further right of appeal.
No decision or sanction shall be stayed on appeal unless the appeal panel receives and decides to grant an application for stay.

Fee

There is no fee associated with submission of a Complaint, however all allegations should be made in good faith. In deciding what to do with a Complaint, NNI shall be entitled to take into account any issue that they consider relevant and may make any assessment or determination that they consider appropriate including (without limitation) assessing the possible validity of the Complaint and whether the Complaint is unjust, malicious, vexatious, or being unreasonably brought, or unfounded. Action may be taken against a complainant for malicious or vexatious allegations

Comments and suggestions

We welcome comments and suggestions as these can help us improve our services. Please send any comments or suggestions to the NNI business address.