



IGA COMPLAINTS POLICY

Version 1.1 - April 2025



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Introduction & Purpose

The Independent Gymnastics Association (IGA) is committed to ensuring the highest standards of service delivery and member satisfaction. We recognise that effective complaint handling is fundamental to quality assurance, service improvement, and maintaining public trust. This policy outlines how complaints are received, handled, resolved, and analysed to ensure continuous improvement. We aim to:

- Foster an environment where complaints are welcomed and valued.
- Resolve complaints promptly, fairly, and consistently.
- Learn from complaints to drive systemic changes and service enhancements.
- Protect the rights and dignity of complainants.



Scope of Policy

This policy applies to:

- All customers, members, parents, staff, contractors, and third parties engaging with IGA.
- Services and products provided by IGA, including training, competitions, and educational resources.
- Behaviour and professionalism of IGA staff, contractors, and representatives.

Exclusions:

- Disciplinary matters involving staff (managed under internal HR policies).
- Safeguarding disclosures, which follow a separate Safeguarding Policy.
- Legal proceedings initiated externally.
- Freedom of Information or Subject Access Requests (handled under Data Protection Policy).

Legal and Regulatory Framework

IGA operates within the framework of the following legislation and best practices:

- **Consumer Rights Act 2015:** Ensures fair treatment and the right to quality services and goods.
- **Equality Act 2010:** Protects against discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics.
- **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR:** Governs the use, storage, and sharing of personal data.
- **Children Act 1989 and 2004:** Imposes a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998:** Protects whistleblowers from unfair treatment.
- **Local Government Ombudsman Guidance:** Provides best practice standards for complaint handling.
- **Ofsted and UK Coaching Standards:** Relevant where educational or safeguarding aspects are involved.

Definitions

- **Complaint:** An expression of dissatisfaction about the organisation's action, lack of action, or quality of services.
- **Complainant:** A person or organisation making the complaint.
- **Safeguarding Concern:** Any suspicion or evidence that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk.
- **Whistleblowing:** Disclosure by an employee or member of malpractice, illegal acts, or omissions.
- **Anonymous Complaint:** A complaint submitted without identification of the complainant.
- **Working Days:** Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.



Roles & Responsibilities

- IGA Administrator:
 - Receives and acknowledges complaints.
 - Maintains the Complaint Register.
- Complaint Handler:
 - Objectively investigates complaints at Stage One.
 - Ensures impartiality, transparency, and fairness.
- Appeal Handler:
 - Oversees appeals at Stage Two.
 - Provides independent review and final decisions.
- Safeguarding Lead:
 - Manages safeguarding complaints under statutory duties.
- Senior Management:
 - Supports the implementation of this policy.
 - Reviews complaint trends and ensures necessary improvements.

Complaints Procedure

Stage One: Initial Resolution

1. **Submission:** Complaints must be lodged via email, post, or online form, clearly marked "Complaint".
2. **Acknowledgement:** Written confirmation issued within 10 working days.
3. **Initial Assessment:** Determines whether the complaint falls within scope. Out-of-scope issues are redirected appropriately.
4. **Investigation:**
 - Gathering relevant information.
 - Interviewing staff involved.
 - Reviewing documentation.
5. **Resolution:** A written response detailing findings, actions taken, and future measures within 28 working days.
6. **Communication:** Complainant informed of right to escalate if dissatisfied.

Stage Two: Formal Appeal

1. **Initiation:** Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of Stage One outcome.
2. **Appeal Handler Appointment:** Senior manager not involved in Stage One assigned.
3. **Reassessment:**
 - Review of original complaint handling.
 - Gathering of additional information if needed.



4. **Outcome:** A formal written response within 28 working days.
5. **Closure:** Stage Two decision is final unless new evidence emerges.

Stage Three: External Escalation

Where internal processes have been exhausted and the complainant remains dissatisfied, referrals can be made to:

- Local Government Ombudsman (for systemic or public interest issues).
- Information Commissioner's Office (data protection breaches).
- Local Authority Designated Officer (for safeguarding failures).
- Trading Standards or Ofsted where applicable.

Special Categories of Complaints

Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns supersede the complaints process and are referred immediately to:

- IGA Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- External authorities where appropriate (e.g., Police, LADO).
- Recorded and handled confidentially under the Safeguarding Policy.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is distinct from complaints and involves disclosures made in the public interest. Individuals will be protected from retaliation and must report:

- Criminal offences.
- Breaches of legal obligations.
- Health and safety risks.
- Environmental damage.
- Deliberate concealment of information.

Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints will be investigated to the extent feasible but may be limited by the lack of information. They are assessed based on:

- Seriousness.
- Credibility.
- Likelihood of confirming allegations without further information.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

At all times, IGA is committed to upholding the principles of confidentiality and data protection in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.



- **Use of Personal Information:** Personal information provided during the complaint process will be used solely for investigating and resolving the complaint. No information will be used for unrelated purposes.
- **Access to Information:** Only those directly involved in the complaint handling process will have access to personal data. Access is strictly controlled and monitored.
- **Disclosure of Information:** Information may only be disclosed to third parties where necessary to progress an investigation, fulfil a statutory obligation, or when required by law, such as disclosures to safeguarding bodies or regulatory authorities.
- **Anonymity and Redaction:** Where appropriate, identifying details will be removed or anonymised to protect individuals' privacy.
- **Retention of Records:** All records of complaints, including personal information, correspondence, investigation notes, and outcomes, will be securely stored for a minimum of six years before confidential destruction, unless a longer retention period is justified.
- **Rights of Individuals:** Complainants have rights under data protection law, including the right to access their data, request rectification of inaccuracies, or request erasure where applicable.

Learning from Complaints

Complaints are invaluable in identifying service weaknesses, systemic issues, and opportunities for staff development.

- **Data Collection:** All complaints will be logged in a central complaints management system to facilitate analysis and reporting.
- **Root Cause Analysis:** For significant complaints, a root cause analysis will be conducted to identify underlying issues rather than isolated faults.
- **Action Planning:** Learning points will be documented and an action plan developed, specifying responsibilities, deadlines, and success measures.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Summaries of learning points and improvements will be communicated internally to relevant teams and, where appropriate, externally to members and stakeholders.
- **Annual Report:** An annual complaints report will be produced summarising complaint volumes, types, outcomes, trends, and improvements made.



Making a Complaint

All complaints, whether pertaining to our goods and/or services, our customer service, or our employees, should be submitted using one of the following methods:

- In writing, addressed to IGA, Unit 6, 52 Edison Business Centre, Aylesbury Bucks HP19 8TE.
- By email, via info@igauk.com with the title 'IGA Complaint'

When lodging a complaint, please provide the following information in as much detail as possible:

- Your full name, address, telephone number, and email address.
- If you are submitting a complaint on behalf of someone else, please include their name and contact details, as well as your own.
- If your complaint pertains to a specific transaction, please provide the online order number or invoice number.
- If your complaint involves a particular employee of ours, please include their name and, if applicable, their position.
- Additional details regarding your complaint, including relevant dates, times, events, and individuals involved.
- Any documents or evidence you wish to include in support of your complaint.
- Your desired resolution from IGA to address and rectify your complaint. (Please note that while we will make every reasonable effort to accommodate your requests, we are not obligated to take action beyond our contractual or legal obligations.)



Monitoring & Review

Effective complaint management requires ongoing oversight and evaluation.

- **Monitoring Metrics:**

- Number and nature of complaints received.
- Timeliness of acknowledgements and resolutions.
- Satisfaction ratings from complainants post-resolution.
- Identification of recurring issues.

- **Review Activities:**

- Monthly internal reviews by the Complaints Lead.
- Quarterly reporting to the Board.
- Annual independent audit to assess compliance with this policy and associated legislation.

- **Triggers for Immediate Review:**

- Serious safeguarding breaches.
- Significant reputational incidents.
- Introduction of new statutory requirements or regulatory guidance.

Adjustments to processes and training needs identified through monitoring activities will be actioned promptly to enhance complaint management effectiveness.

Contact Information

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