



Whistleblowing Policy

Scope

This policy outlines the process by which any individual involved at any level of the sport of athletics can raise concerns with UK Athletics for investigation. For the avoidance of doubt, UK Athletics encompasses the British Athletics brand, and includes application to British Athletics Teams.

With the exception of England Athletics (see below), where such concerns fall within the remit of the relevant Home Country Athletics Federation (“HCAF”), the complaint will be passed to the relevant organisation to be processed under their own policy (unless explicitly requested by the complainant to do otherwise).

Application to England Athletics

The Welfare team is a shared UK Athletics and England Athletics function – as such, this policy will also cover any concerns specifically relating to England Athletics. For the purposes of this policy, the terms ‘UK Athletics’ and ‘England Athletics’ are interchangeable – consequently, on receipt of any complaint relating to England Athletics, the process outlined below will apply in the same way. Where any references are made to the ‘UK Athletics Board’ within this policy, they may be replaced with the ‘England Athletics Board’ where relevant.

Definition

‘Whistle-blower’ is a term commonly used to describe a person who alerts an authority to acts of wrongdoing, usually by someone within the authority’s jurisdiction. Whistle-blowers are witnesses to a malpractice and must not be penalised for any disclosure of information, in fact certain categories of whistle-blowers are protected by the law’. UK Athletics is committed to encouraging a culture of openness: to uphold the reputation of the organisation, maintain the sport’s and the public’s confidence, and to protect its members (i.e. athletes, coaches, staff, officials, volunteers etc.).

It is in the interests of the sport and its membership that individuals with genuine concerns are able to raise them in a confidential and effective way. This policy outlines the mechanism by which serious concerns can be lodged with UK Athletics and addressed appropriately. Anyone approaching UK Athletics, in good faith, with information regarding matters of wrongdoing, such as fraud, misappropriation, bad practice in child (and/or vulnerable adult) protection or safety, discrimination or breach of codes of conduct, by staff (including contractors) or volunteers working for UK Athletics, will have the matter dealt with in an appropriate manner with a duty of care to all those involved.

Process

If you discover any wrongdoing, including bad practice or abuse you should report it to the UK Athletics Welfare and Compliance Officer (“the Compliance Officer”) using any of the following methods:

- Via post to: UK Athletics Welfare and Compliance Officer, UK Athletics, Athletics House, Alexander Stadium, Walsall Road, Perry Barr, Birmingham, B42 2BE
- Via email to: whistleblowing@uka.org.uk
- Via telephone (secure, recorded voicemail service) by calling: 0121 7138440

You will receive a written receipt, usually within 48 hours (if received during business hours), which will outline the proposed next steps and timeline. Should you raise your concerns via telephone message service, a member of our compliance team will call you back to discuss the complaint in person, usually with 48 hours of receipt.

Your concerns will normally then be considered by the Compliance Officer in the first instance and referred for investigation either to a relevant staff member with responsibility for that area, or if the nature of the complaint warrants it, directly to the UK Athletics Board (“the Board”). The relevant staff member (or the Board) will investigate the matter and take any remedial action to rectify the situation or, where any such action is not in the power of that staff member, they will then make recommendations to the Board to take appropriate further steps.

Any investigation will not, at any stage, be carried out by any person against whom allegations are made, and details will only be shared with those individuals who are considered vital to the effective functioning of any investigation.

Enquiries will be undertaken promptly, although more complex matters may require a longer and more thorough investigation. The relevant staff member will advise you of the outcome of any enquiry and any remedial action taken. If the issue is not resolved in a satisfactory manner by the staff member, or if the concern relates to that person (or the Compliance Officer), you may raise the matter directly with the any member of the Board – including specifically the CEO, Chair or HR Committee Chairperson, via post to:

- UK Athletics, Athletics House, Alexander Stadium, Walsall Road, Perry Barr, Birmingham, B42 2BE

Should you wish to raise the matter directly with the England Athletics Board (including CEO or Chair), please send to the following address:

- England Athletics, Athletics House, Alexander Stadium, Walsall Road, Perry Barr, Birmingham, B42 2BE

The relevant Board will make enquiries and, if appropriate, investigate the matter and take any remedial action to rectify the situation (which may include passing to an independent investigatory body such as Sports Resolutions UK). Investigations will not be carried out by any person previously involved in the matter and at no stage will they involve any person against whom allegations are made. Again, any investigation will be done promptly, although more complex matters may require a longer and more thorough investigation. The Board will advise you of the outcome of any enquiry and any remedial action taken. In some instances, particularly those involving child safety, it may be necessary to refer the matter to an external authority, for example the police. If this is the case both the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made will be notified of this, unless UK Athletics is prohibited from doing so by law or at the direction of the external authority.

Any person approaching UK Athletics with genuine concerns will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against in any way because of the disclosure. However, UK Athletics will take a serious view and act accordingly, including taking disciplinary action against appropriate parties, should it be found that the allegations have been intentionally portrayed as untrue or have been raised maliciously. Individuals are therefore encouraged to put their name to any disclosure. Allegations raised anonymously may be investigated depending on the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern, and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

Where possible confidentiality will be maintained, although it must be stressed that in serious cases of fraud and in cases of child protection it will not always be possible to maintain strict confidentiality if the concerns reach the investigation stage.

Additional assistance/external processes

Athletes who wish to raise any concerns via this policy are advised that the British Athletes Commission (“BAC”) is available to offer additional advice and assistance. Further details, including contact information can be found at (<http://www.britishathletes.org/>.

Please note that grievances or disputes with UK Athletics should be raised in the normal way under UK Athletics’ Disciplinary/grievance procedure outlined on the Governance/Policies section of our website (<http://www.britishathletics.org.uk/governance/policies/>) rather than under this procedure.

Complaints regarding staff employed (or contracted) by the relevant Home Country Athletics Federation (other than England Athletics, to whom this policy also applies) or Home Country Sporting Institute (i.e. English Institute for Sport) with whom UK Athletics have a regular working relationship, should consult the separate relevant organisation’s whistleblowing policy.

Complaints regarding staff employed (or contracted) by UK Sport (with whom UK Athletics may work) should consult the separate UK Sport whistleblowing policy (available at <http://www.uk sport.gov.uk/resources/complaints-appeals-and-whistleblowing>).