



## Queensland Weightlifting Association

### Grievances Policy

#### Background

At QWA, our values underpin the way in which we act and behave.

The QWA acknowledges that there may be occasions when an individual or group of individuals have a concern about the behaviour of another or others or the decisions of others. The QWA have therefore established a framework to promote timely and transparent resolution of these issues.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the approach adopted by the QWA to ensure that grievances raised are managed in a timely and confidential manner.

#### Scope

This policy applies to all QWA members, employees, Affiliated Region or Affiliated Club and third-party associates of the QWA.

#### Policy

For the purpose of this policy, a grievance is defined as any type of problem, concern, dispute or complaint arising from their respective involvement in Weightlifting.

This policy is also linked to the AWF Member Protection Policy specifically but not exclusive to the following:

- Part D1: General Code of Behaviour
- Part D2: Coach Code of Conduct
- Part D3: Official Code of Conduct
- Part D4: Athlete Code of Conduct
- Part D5: Administrator (Volunteer) Code of Conduct

All grievances need to be handled promptly and with transparency. The following principals must be adhered to in managing grievances:

### **Confidentiality**

If you come forward with a grievance, the QWA (subject to our legal obligations and any appropriate processes e.g. an investigation) will treat the matter confidentially.

It is important that participants (including support persons) also maintain confidentiality of the process.

Participants (including witnesses) may discuss the matter in the course of seeking advice.

Whilst complaints may be on a confidential basis and the QWA will maintain confidentiality where possible, it may become necessary to disclose your identity in order to give a respondent sufficient details to understand the basis of the allegation against them.

### **Impartiality**

Where a grievance has been raised, it will be treated seriously. In some circumstances it will be necessary to investigate a grievance in which case the QWA will do so in a confidential and impartial manner.

This may mean that you, the person or persons complained about, and any witnesses will be interviewed.

No findings will be made in relation to the grievance until the investigation is completed.

### **Sensitivity**

If you come forward with a complaint, you will be treated fairly. All people handling the grievance must be sensitive to the needs of those directly involved, you will have the opportunity to provide your side of the story. You may bring an appropriate support person.

An **appropriate support person** is someone who is **not** involved, and not likely to be involved in the grievance. The role of a support person is to provide emotional support to you, not to advocate on your behalf. You should always advise the QWA (Operations Manager and President) prior to your interview if you intend to bring a support person and who that will be. The same requirements in relation to the management of grievances, in particular confidentiality, apply the same to persons participating in the capacity as a support person.

## **Timeliness**

Each grievance will be dealt with in as short time as possible in the circumstances whilst giving regard to thoroughness.

## **Grievance Process**

There are several options to consider when you have a grievance:

### **Speak to the person(s) causing the problem**

If you feel comfortable with speaking to the person(s) about whom the grievance is in relation to, then you should do so as this can sometimes be the easiest way of resolving the issue.

The person may have been unaware of the effect of their behaviour or decision on you. By discussing it with them you provide the person with a chance to redress the situation.

If you don't feel that you can approach the person(s) directly, you should consider the steps below:

### **Speak to a member of the QWA Committee**

If you cannot speak to the person(s) directly, you can speak to a QWA Committee member about your grievance. They can tell you what your options are. If you agree, the Committee member may approach the person(s) complained about and talk to them informally about your grievance.

The person with whom you raise your grievance will:

- obtain specific details of the grievance including what outcome you are seeking
- explain how the grievance management and resolution process works, including providing you with a copy of this policy
- provide you with guidance about the options for resolving grievances

The specific details required in writing upon submission of the grievance are:

- A description of the incident(s), decision or behaviour in question
- The time and date of the incident(s)
- The names of any witness; and
- The date of the complaint

During proceedings the subject(s) of the proceedings may be suspended, on such terms and for such period as the penalising authority thinks fit and shall remain under suspension unless the relevant referring authority decides otherwise.

### **Effect of Penalty**

- a. Where an affiliated Club is suspended under these Regulations, its membership of, and representation rights and privileges in, QWA activities shall be forfeited during the period of suspension. Members of QWA, who may be members of a suspended Affiliated Club shall not be affected by such suspension.
- b. Where an individual member is suspended under these Regulations, all rights and privileges of that member shall be forfeited, either partially or completely, during the period of suspension. In the case of complete suspension, a member shall also forfeit all affiliated Club rights during the currency of the suspension. Partial suspension shall prevent a member's participation in Inter-Club, Regional and State activities, but shall not interfere with that members rights as an individual club member.
- c. Where an Affiliated Club or individual member is expelled under these Regulations, it's or his/her membership of, and representation rights and privileges in, QWA activities shall be forfeited immediately and membership shall cease. The provisions of QWA Constitution Articles (8. Admission & Rejection of Members and; 9. Termination of Membership) shall apply.

### **Options for Resolution**

Depending on the nature of your grievance and following discussion with you where possible the QWA will decide whether an informal or formal approach is required to resolve the grievance.

#### **Informal options**

These can include discussions facilitated by a member of the QWA (Operations

Manager and/or President), mediation or conciliation. These options are generally focused on finding a resolution which is acceptable to all parties and are suitable to less serious grievances where the aim of the process is to maintain relationships. Outcomes are determined through discussion and consultation with the parties concerned. Attempts will be made to resolve grievances between parties involved where appropriate (e.g. arising from miscommunication or differences of perception)

## Formal Options

Where informal resolution options are not appropriate (e.g. allegations of serious misconduct, discrimination or sexual harassment) the Operations Manager and President (and possible consultation with the Committee) will work with you to initiate a formal investigation of the grievance.

If the conduct complained of in a grievance is deemed to potentially be in breach of the QWA Constitution, it may be investigated as soon as it is brought to our attention.

An investigation into the grievance will be facilitated by the Operations Manager and/or President of the QWA or an appropriate person employed by the QWA (external to the QWA). This would require you to provide details of the grievance to the appointed external Investigator. It may require additional witnesses or the person about whom the complaint is made to provide information.

The external Investigator appointed by the QWA will decide who needs to be interviewed. This could include:

- you
- any witnesses
- the person against whom the complaint is made
- the QWA Operations Manager, President or any other QWA Management Committee members

Any person interviewed is entitled to have a support person present when the interview is being conducted.

Any documentation created during the course of the investigation will remain confidential.

Rating	Description	Example	Possible Outcomes
<b>1</b>	No direct or indirect impact to individual/community or QWA	I want to complain about the qualifying dates/League Round/competition uniforms/QWA calendar	Email response with explanation/noted  (No investigation required)
<b>2</b>	Indirect impact to individual/community or QWA	Email response with explanation/noted  (No investigation required)	Any form of discipline the QWA considers appropriate based on the nature of the grievance (May require investigation)
<b>3</b>	Direct impact to person/community or QWA	Defamation/fraud/negligence/inappropriate behaviour	Suspension or Termination of membership  A direction that any rights, privileges and benefits provided to the individual be suspended for a specified period
<b>4</b>	Direct and indirect impact to person/community or QWA	Bullying/harassment/physical contact/illegal (requires police)	Suspension or Termination of membership  A direction that any rights, privileges and benefits provided to the individual be suspended for a specified period

			Any other form of discipline the QWA considers appropriate
--	--	--	--

### **Complainant obligations**

Complainants are required to cooperate with any investigation process including attending interviews and answering questions honestly. Investigations conducted under this Policy are confidential and should not be discussed with anyone else without express permission from the QWA Operations Manager and/or President. Any individual who raises a grievance or participates in an Investigation under this Policy should not be victimised. Failure by any individual to observe these requirements may result in termination of membership.

### **Outcomes**

If the grievance is substantiated and the grievance concerns the behaviour of a member then action will be taken accordingly under The Constitution of the QWA Termination of Membership 9.2a.

The Operations Manager and/or Investigator will inform relevant parties of the outcome of the investigation as appropriate. This generally does not extend to witnesses or other participants ancillary to the grievance.

### **Penalties**

Penalties that may be imposed include:

- a. A reprimand
- b. Suspension of such activities, on such terms and for such period as the penalising authority thinks fit:
- c. Exclusion from a particular activity, event or events
- d. Suspension or termination of membership
- e. Fines, imposed in such manner and in such amount as the penalising authority thinks fit
- f. Such combination of any of the above penalties as the penalising authority thinks fit.

### **Effect of Penalty**

- a. Where an affiliated Club is suspended under these Regulations, its membership of, and representation rights and privileges in, QWA activities shall be forfeited during the period of suspension. Members of QWA, who may be members of a suspended Affiliated Club shall not be affected by such suspension.
- b. Where an individual member is suspended under these Regulations, all rights and privileges of that member shall be forfeited, either partially or completely, during the period of suspension. In the case of complete suspension, a member shall also forfeit all affiliated Club rights during the

currency of the suspension. Partial suspension shall prevent a member's participation in Inter-Club, Regional and State activities, but shall not interfere with that members rights as an individual club member.

- c. Where an Affiliated Club or individual member is expelled under these Regulations, it's or his/her membership of, and representation rights and privileges in, QWA activities shall be forfeited immediately and membership shall cease. The provisions of QWA Constitution Article Objects 2 (b) shall apply.

### **Frivolous or vexatious complaints**

If you make a complaint which is fabricated, frivolous or vexatious, appropriate action may be taken against you.

### **External Reporting**

In order to enforce compliance with this and other policies and in order to assist law enforcement agencies, the QWA may provide information and other assistance to third parties including law enforcement agencies from time to time without notice. This may include the subject matter of a grievance raised in accordance with this policy.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The QWA:** are responsible for:

- being familiar with the Policy and ways in which grievances are dealt with by the QWA
- ensuring that grievances are dealt with in a prompt and in a sensitive way and in the first instance and where appropriate manage through informal channels
- providing the complainant with the grievance with a copy of this Policy or ensuring they are aware of the Policy and know how to access it
- considering (in consultation with the Committee) if the subject matter of any grievance raised under this Policy should be reported to an external third party for investigation or other appropriate purposes; and
- Acting in accordance with the Policy

**Complainant:** is responsible for:

- being aware of obligations under the Policy and how grievances are managed by the QWA, in particular confidentiality and co-operation; and

- Raising or responding to grievances promptly and in good faith

## Appeals

- a) A member who has received a penalty or an adverse finding may, within fourteen (14) days from the determination make an appeal to the QWA Management Committee.
- b) The rights of appeal by a member penalised shall proceed provided:
  - i. The member concerned has properly availed him/herself of any right of appeal that may be provided in the Constitution of the relevant referring authority
  - ii. Application is made within fourteen (14) days of the imposition of the penalty or the handing down of the finding
  - iii. Application is made through to the QWA Management Committee as soon as practicable,
  - iv. Whatever the decision, the decision to the appellant and the initial referring authority in writing.
  - v. The QWA Management Committee shall either by itself or by a further Judiciary Committee appointed for the purpose hear the appeal
  - vi. The decision to refuse the appeal shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

## Document Control

<b>Policy Owner</b>	QWA
<b>Issue Date</b>	01/07/2020
<b>Review Date</b>	01/07/2022
<b>Review Completed by</b>	Rawena Tairi (President)
<b>Status</b>	Updated
<b>Policy Approver</b>	QWA Committee
<b>Version</b>	2.0
<b>Email</b>	qwa@qwa.org