



## Oxford City FC Complaints Policy

### Introduction

Oxford City FC (“the club”) is committed to providing the highest standard of service across all its operations. The club is committed to ensuring that the concerns from people using its services are acknowledged, responded to and that the club learns from them.

This policy complies with guide from the FA: [www.thefa.com](http://www.thefa.com)

### 1. Definitions

**1.1 Complaint** – is an expression of dissatisfaction requiring a response, communicated verbally, electronically, or in writing. Complaints may be made by any users of our club.

**1.2 Concerns or enquires (Incidents)** – is a problem raised that can be resolved/responded to straight away. These are not reported as complaints and fall outside the complaints arrangements.

**1.3 Unreasonable or Persistent Complainant** – Every effort must be made to resolve a complaint before someone can be described as unreasonable. A complainant who displays threatening or abusive behaviour/ language that causes staff or club volunteer to feel threatened or abused and/or continues to contact Oxford City FC with unreasonable demands following a complaint investigation, may be considered an unreasonable or persistent complainant. Unreasonable demands can include seeking excessive amounts of information, demanding an unrealistic nature or scale of service, or seeking to prolong contact with Oxford City FC by continually raising new issues throughout an investigation.

The Oxford City FC management team will make the decision regarding when the complainant is making unreasonable demands.

**1.4 Staff** – a paid member of Oxford City FC’s workforce.

**1.5 Volunteer** – an unpaid member of Oxford City FC’s workforce that has a role of responsibility within the club. This includes, but is not limited to, coaches and matchday volunteers.

### 2. Applications

This policy applies to all those working and volunteering for Oxford City FC in whatever capacity. Failure to follow the requirements of the policy will result in investigation and disciplinary action being taken where appropriate.



### 3. The Aims of the Policy

The aims of the policy are to ensure that the complaints process is flexible and responsive to the needs of individual complainants. The policy seeks to ensure that:

- Users who complain are listened to and treated with courtesy and empathy.
- Users who complain are not disadvantaged as a result of making a complaint.
- Complaints are investigated promptly, thoroughly, honestly and openly.
- Complainants are kept informed of the process and outcome of the investigation.
- Apologies are given as appropriate.
- Action to rectify the cause of the complaint is identified, implemented and evaluated.
- Learning from complaints informs service development and improvement.
- Complaints handling complies with confidentiality and is transparent.
- Staff/volunteers involved in complaints are given support.

All staff and volunteers must be familiar with complaints handling processes. This includes details of how users can make complaints and to whom.

### 4. Principles

- We will
  - Respond in a courtesy, sensitive and timely way.
  - Provide guidance for staff and volunteers on preparing statements in response to a complaint.
  - Make every effort to maintain confidentiality.

### 5. The Process

#### 5.1 Concerns

All staff and volunteers are responsible for working to resolve concerns raised by users. Prompt action to resolve concerns can prevent escalation into more serious complaints.

Staff and volunteers must:

- Ensure they take time to listen and ensure they fully understand the concerns.
- Reassure the user that complaints are welcome as a means of enabling the service to improve.
- Respond to the issues raised or refer the complainant to someone who can assist them further.
- Contact a senior member of staff if any issue is serious or cannot be resolved.

#### 5.2 Complaints

A complaint can be made in writing or electronically. Any member of staff/volunteer receiving a complaint in person should document the details and pass them to the relevant senior management team member.

The senior management team must contact the complainant within three days to acknowledge the receipt of the complaint. The acknowledgement of the complaint must



include confirmation of the issues raised, to ensure accuracy and confirmation of the complainant's expectations.

### **5.3 Complaints Investigations**

All complaints will be assigned to an investigation lead. The level of the investigation into a complaint will reflect the complexity of the complaint and may be undertaken by a single head of department or by the senior management team.

Complete and accurate records must be kept and be available. These must include:

- The original complaint and other relevant information.
- The issues considered.
- Decisions or actions taken.
- Discussions/correspondence with the complainant.
- Copies of staff responses and other information collected during the investigation.
- External advice taken and details of advisor.

All complaint investigations should address the underlying causes of complaints and provide clear action plans to prevent them happening again.

### **5.4 Preparing a Response**

1. The response must include a summary of the investigation findings and any actions taken to resolve the problems.
2. The response will include the contact details for complainants to contact if they remain dissatisfied and wish to escalate.
3. A response must be sent as soon as practicable.

### **5.5 Local Resolution Meetings**

Many complaints arise from misunderstandings or poor communication. A meeting will often provide an opportunity to clarify and resolve these issues, reassuring the complainant that Oxford City FC take their concerns seriously.

### **5.6 Independent Investigation**

If all avenues of resolution and escalation are exhausted and a complainant is still dissatisfied with the response they have received, they can escalate their complaint to the Oxfordshire FA.

### **5.7 Action Planning and Learning**

Complaints identified as significant or high risk must have an action plan in place to manage the risk or prevent a recurrence. Oxford City FC will undertake annual reviews of complaints and incidents.



### **5.8 Unacceptable Behaviour**

The actions of complainants who are angry, demanding or persistent may result in unreasonable demands or unacceptable behaviour towards staff/volunteers. Staff/volunteers are not expected to tolerate abusive or threatening behaviour. The complaints will still be investigated. However, the club reserves the right to begin disciplinary procedures against those complainants are deemed to be behaving in an unacceptable way.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **6.1 Senior Management Team**

The senior management team is responsible for ensuring that the right systems are in place to manage and resolve complaints.

### **6.2 Heads of Department**

It is the responsibility of the Heads of Department to:

- Lead on complaints management within their area.
- Ensure that action is taken to address issues raised in complaints and provide evidence of improvements.
- Ensure that the staff and volunteers within their area are aware of and understand the complaints policy.

### **6.3 Investigation Lead**

The lead will have responsibility for facilitating the complaint investigation and preparing a draft response, with the support of their line manager.

The investigator will review the complaint and agree issues, methods and timescales to be responded by.

The investigator will plan and undertake the investigation. The investigation may include:

- Identifying key staff involved.
- Collection of statements.
- Informal discussion with staff.

On completion of the investigation, the investigator will draft an action plan to resolve issues raised in the complaint. This will be monitored by the senior management team.

### **6.4 All Staff and Volunteers**

It is the responsibility of all staff to:

- Work to resolve any concerns expressed by users.
- Escalate to their heads of department any concerns which cannot be resolved locally.

**All complaints should be sent to the [club@oxcityfc.co.uk](mailto:club@oxcityfc.co.uk)**