Compliments, Complaints and Disciplinary Policy

Number:	CCDP-01	**Issue:**	1.0	**Issue Date:**	October 2026
Approved By:	Sport & Communities Director				

1.0 Our Aim

1.1 Active Bolton is committed to providing a quality service and working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect.

1.2 Active Bolton will continue to improve its services by listening and responding to the views of customers, members and visitors, including responding positively to complaints.

1.3
- make giving a compliment or making a complaint as easy as possible;
- welcome compliments, feedback and suggestions;
- treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction that requires a timely response;
- deal with complaints promptly, politely, reasonably and, where appropriate, confidentially;
- respond appropriately, including providing an explanation, an apology where Active Bolton has got something wrong, or information about action taken; and
- learn from complaints, use them to improve services and review this policy and its procedures annually.

1.4 Active Bolton recognises that many concerns can be raised informally and dealt with quickly. Wherever appropriate, Active Bolton will seek to resolve informal concerns promptly and sensitively while respecting privacy.

1.5 This policy provides guidance for receiving compliments and dealing with complaints from members of the public about Active Bolton services, facilities, employees and volunteers.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 A compliment is an expression of satisfaction about the standard of service provided by Active Bolton.

2.2 A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, however it is communicated. This includes concerns raised face to face, by telephone, in writing, by email or through another communication method.

2.3 A disciplinary matter is an internal employment or volunteer-management matter relating to

alleged misconduct, unacceptable behaviour or a breach of Active Bolton requirements. A complainant will not normally be given confidential details of any disciplinary action involving another person.

3.0 Compliments and Positive Feedback

3.1 Active Bolton welcomes feedback from people who are satisfied with its services.

3.2 Compliments will be recorded and acknowledged. Relevant feedback will be shared with the appropriate service manager so that recognition can be passed to the employee, volunteer or service concerned.

3.3 Themes and examples from compliments may be used to recognise good practice and support service improvement, subject to appropriate confidentiality and data protection requirements.

4.0 Informal Concerns

4.1 Where appropriate, a concern should first be raised with the relevant employee, duty manager or service manager so that it can be discussed and resolved quickly.

4.2 An informal concern may be escalated to the formal complaints procedure where it cannot be resolved, the complainant remains dissatisfied, or the seriousness of the matter requires formal investigation.

4.3 Safeguarding concerns, allegations of abuse, serious health and safety matters, suspected criminal conduct or significant data breaches will be referred immediately through the relevant Active Bolton procedure and will not be delayed by informal resolution attempts.

5.0 Formal Complaints Procedure

5.1 The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that complaints are handled fairly, consistently and, wherever possible, resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

5.2 Formal complaints should normally be submitted in writing to the relevant Active Bolton service manager or Director within eight weeks of the issue arising. Where a complaint is made verbally, reasonable support will be offered to record it accurately.

5.3
- the complainant's name and contact details;
- the relevant venue, service or activity;
- a clear description of what happened and when;
- the names or roles of people involved, where known;

- any action already taken to resolve the matter; and
- the outcome the complainant is seeking.

5.4 Active Bolton will acknowledge a formal complaint in writing and aim to provide a substantive response within 7 working days.

5.5 Where the complaint is complex or requires a longer investigation, Active Bolton will explain the reason for the delay and provide an updated response date.

6.0 Active Bolton Responsibilities

6.1
- acknowledge formal complaints in writing;
- respond within the stated period or explain any unavoidable delay;
- deal reasonably, fairly and sensitively with the complaint;
- maintain an appropriate written record;
- provide an explanation of findings and any action that can appropriately be shared; and
- take proportionate corrective or improvement action where appropriate.

6.2 The complaint will be considered by a manager who is sufficiently independent of the matter wherever reasonably practicable.

6.3 Active Bolton may contact the complainant for clarification or further information where this is needed to understand or investigate the concern.

7.0 Complainant Responsibilities

7.1
- raise concerns promptly and directly with the relevant Active Bolton manager;
- normally submit a formal complaint within eight weeks of the issue arising;
- explain the concern clearly and as fully as possible, including any action already taken;
- provide relevant evidence or information available to them;
- allow Active Bolton a reasonable opportunity to investigate and respond;
- communicate respectfully with employees, volunteers and other people involved; and
- recognise that some matters or requested outcomes may be outside Active Bolton's control.

7.2 Unreasonable, abusive, threatening, discriminatory or persistently repetitive behaviour may be managed separately. This will not prevent Active Bolton considering the substance of a legitimate complaint.

8.0 Investigation and Outcome

8.1 The investigating manager may review relevant records, speak to the complainant and other people involved, and consider applicable policies, procedures or service standards.

8.2 The written outcome will normally summarise the complaint, the steps taken to consider it, the findings, whether the complaint is upheld in whole or in part, and any service action that can appropriately be disclosed.

8.3 Possible responses may include an explanation, an apology, corrective action, service improvement, additional guidance or training, or referral to another procedure.

8.4 Where the complaint concerns conduct that may require disciplinary action, the matter may be referred under the relevant Active Bolton disciplinary or volunteer-management procedure.

9.0 Disciplinary Matters

9.1 A complaint may result in a separate internal disciplinary process where there is evidence of potential misconduct or a breach of Active Bolton standards.

9.2 Any disciplinary process will be managed separately from the complaint response and in accordance with the applicable Active Bolton procedure.

9.3 To protect confidentiality and employment rights, the complainant may be told that appropriate action has been taken but will not normally receive details of confidential warnings, sanctions or other personnel information.

9.4 Nothing in this policy prevents Active Bolton from taking immediate protective or precautionary action where this is necessary to manage risk while a matter is investigated.

10.0 Review and Escalation

10.1 If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the formal outcome, the complainant may request a review by a Director or another senior manager who has not previously determined the complaint, where reasonably practicable.

10.2 A request for review should normally be made in writing within 10 working days of the complaint outcome and should explain why the complainant believes the response or process was inadequate.

10.3 The review will consider whether the complaint was handled fairly, whether relevant information was considered and whether the conclusions and actions were reasonable. It will not automatically repeat the full investigation.

10.4 The review response will normally represent the final stage of Active Bolton's internal

complaints procedure.

11.0 Confidentiality and Data Protection

11.1 Every reasonable effort will be made to respect confidentiality. Information will be shared only with people who need it to consider, investigate, respond to or learn from the complaint.

11.2 It may not be possible to maintain complete confidentiality where the nature of the complaint requires information to be shared, where there is a safeguarding or legal obligation, or where a fair investigation requires a person to understand and respond to an allegation.

11.3 Where confidentiality cannot be maintained, the position will be explained to the complainant where it is appropriate and lawful to do so.

11.4 Complaint records will be stored securely, accessed only by authorised people and retained in accordance with Active Bolton's data protection and records-retention requirements.

12.0 Learning and Monitoring

12.1 Compliments, complaints, outcomes and agreed actions will be recorded to support oversight and service improvement.

12.2 Active Bolton will review complaint themes, response times and improvement actions at least annually.

12.3 Information used for organisational learning or reporting will be anonymised or minimised where appropriate.

13.0 Related Policies and Procedures

13.1 This policy should be read alongside relevant Active Bolton policies and procedures, including:

13.2
- Disciplinary Procedure;
- Safeguarding Policies and Procedures;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
- Data Protection and Retention Policies;
- Health and Safety Policy; and
- Codes of Conduct.

14.0 Policy Review

14.1 This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where there is a change in legislation, organisational arrangements or significant learning from complaints or disciplinary matters.

Updates of Policy:

Issue No	Description of Revision	Date
1.0	First Active Bolton issue, reformatted to the QMS policy standard and updated from the previous venue policy.	October 2026