

Murdoch University Melville FC Grievance Policy and Procedure

In organisations large and small, incidents will occur where an individual (player or parent) may encounter a problems with another member; whether a coach, team manager or another club member.

This procedure outlines the approved method for handing such issues within the constitution and rules of operation of the Murdoch University Melville FC.

Dealing with issues

1. Volunteers of the club work to help the club operate on a day to day and week to week basis. Their approach to assigned duties is to follow the guidelines set out by the committee as democratically agreed by the members at club meetings for their areas of work.
2. Should issues arise, in the first instance they should be taken up with the individual immediately responsible for the area of concern. Some examples:
 - A player or parent should approach a team manager or coach
 - A team manager or coach should approach the age coordinator
 - The age coordinator should approach the VP for the playing category or the Director of Coaching
 - The VP should approach the President
3. This gives the opportunity for the complaint or grievance to be resolved between parties without intervention from the Club representatives on an official basis. For instance, issues related specifically to decisions around coaching philosophy, decision making, and style most often can be answered by speaking directly with the coach.
4. Issues should be raised in a 1:1 discussion or via email. The person to whom the issue is raised is entitled to request a formal written outline of the issue if they are not comfortable with a discussion.
5. Players or parents should not approach coaches to voice complaints or displeasure with coaching actions or decisions either during or immediately following any game or practice. A period of 24 hours should pass after the game or practice in question.
6. If an issue is initially raised to an individual above the level of immediate concern where there has been no prior discussion, the higher level recipient of the grievance should direct the complainant back to the individual at the level of immediate concern. This is to apply unless there are extenuating circumstances.

7. At any time during the discussion, the individual to whom the complaint has been raised can invite the complainant to escalate the issue to the next highest level for a discussion and mediation, should the complainant not be happy with the handling of the issue.
8. At any time, a committee member may take the grievance or complaint to the committee for a confidential discussion about the issue.

Examples of Grievances

Grievances can take a number of forms, such as:

- A communication or interpersonal conflict.
- A member protection issue.
- An allegation of discrimination, including harassment.
- A perception by any member that equity has not been applied in any decision of the Club or the Committee.

Steps for an investigation once an issue has been raised to committee level:

1. The complainant is interviewed 1:1 and the complaint documented in writing if there is no prior written record.
2. The allegations are conveyed to the alleged protagonist.
3. The alleged protagonist is given the opportunity to respond.
4. If there is a dispute over the facts, statements from witnesses and other relevant evidence is gathered.
5. A finding is made as to whether the complaint has substance; and
6. A report documenting the investigation process, the evidence, the finding and the recommended outcome/s is submitted to the MUMFC Executive Committee for consideration:
 - a) Both parties are entitled to support through this process from their chosen support person/adviser.
 - b) If the report is endorsed by the decision maker, the organisation then carries out the recommendations of the report. These may include such actions as an apology or counselling.
 - c) Both the complainant and the respondent have the right to appeal against the findings of the investigator/committee or against the resulting recommended action if they have any concerns about procedure, bias or fairness. Appeals are handled by the President of the MUMFC.

- d) The President of the MUMFC can uphold the decision of the investigator/committee, reverse the decision of the investigator/committee, and/or modify any of the investigator/committee's recommendations for disciplinary action or remedial measures.
- e) A grievance which raises an allegation of criminal conduct must be referred directly to the President of the MUMFC or his or her delegate.

Key Principles after escalation to Committee level

- **Confidentiality:** Only the people directly involved in the grievance or complaint, and the MUMFC committee if escalated to that level, can have access to the information relevant to that complaint.
- **Impartiality:** All sides get the chance to tell their side of the story. No assumptions will be made or any action taken until all relevant information has been collected and considered.
- **Free of repercussion or victimisation:** The Committee will take all necessary steps to ensure the parties involved in a grievance or complaint are not victimised in lodging or assisting with information concerning a grievance or complaint. Disciplinary action should be expected where victimisation or repercussion is sought against people involved in a grievance or complaint handling issue.
- **Vexatious or Malicious Complaints:** Discipline should be expected if it is discovered that a party used this process against a person where the facts given were found to be deliberately untrue.
- **Sensitivity:** All grievances and complaints will be dealt with appropriately which means with seriousness and sensitivity.
- **Timely:** It is the objective of the MUMFC to deal with any grievance or complaint as quickly as possible.