

# HOW TO COMPLAIN

## A Guide to Submitting Complaints to the Standards Committee

28 January 2013

The purpose of this document is to give guidance on how to compile complaints for submission to the Standards Committee (the committee).

1. Seek local resolution - it cannot be over emphasised that you must raise any issues/concerns as close as possible in both time and place to the original event. There is no point in trying to raise anything direct with the committee, your complaint will simply be referred back to you.

Even at this initial stage, it is advisable to write down what happened and record as many details as possible such as time, date, place, witnesses, etc.

2. If you have exhausted fully the local complaints process and you feel that a satisfactory resolution has not been achieved, you can then consider approaching the committee. At this stage, you should think very carefully in order to clarify precisely what your complaint is about. A simple, clear statement is going to carry more weight than a series of vague generalised grumbles. Indeed, if the latter make up the body of the complaint then it is unlikely they would be considered.
3. You will need to think carefully about the basis of your appeal to the Standards' Committee. Remember, simply disagreeing with the local decision is not a valid basis for an appeal. You should consult the Standards Code and Operating Procedures documents to be clear about what would be valid grounds for complaint.
4. To submit a complaint to the committee you need to complete a Cover Sheet, it can be downloaded from the Chess Scotland website [Standards page](#) The Cover Sheet is to be submitted alongside your cheque (which is non refundable if your complaint is not upheld).
5. No matter how upset you are, try to remain as objective as possible; emotion does not strengthen your case.
6. Be scrupulously honest in your submission to the extent of admitting facts which you might consider will weaken your case. The committee will be encouraged by an honest submission and, equally, will be discouraged if any aspect is proved to be either erroneous or misleading.
7. Report on only what you know happened. Passing on rumours is unhelpful.
8. The committee take their responsibilities very seriously and will look at your case as objectively as possible. If any member has any personal involvement, role or interest in your case they will withdraw and allow their colleagues to process the matter. To assist the committee, producing corroborative information is vital to lift your complaint from hearsay into evidence. Your corroboration could be in a variety of forms such as witness statements or documents.
9. All relevant information relating to your complaint should be included at the time of your original complaint being submitted to the committee. Remember they will probably not know about your case before reading your submission so it will help them to reach a correct assessment if you have reported fully. It will be for the committee to decide whether they ask you or other parties for clarification of any aspect of your complaint. The committee may decide to request clarification to be submitted to them in either documentary or oral form. The point is not to rely on any later clarification process to communicate information missing from your initial complaint document; that later step might never happen.