

Owner	Chief Executive Officer
Approval	British Orienteering Board
Effective date	30.09.2026
Review cycle	Annual check; full review every three years and sooner after material changes

1. Purpose and scope

British Orienteering is committed to an open, accountable and safe culture. We encourage people to speak up promptly about wrongdoing affecting others, the integrity of sport or the wider public. A concern does not need to be proved before it is raised.

This policy may be used by employees, workers, agency workers, contractors, consultants, office-holders, trainees and secondees. British Orienteering also invites athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, members and others involved in its programmes or activities to use it. Statutory protection depends on a person's legal status and the circumstances; offering this reporting route does not itself confer legal protection.

2. What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which the person reasonably believes tends to show wrongdoing and is in the public interest. Relevant wrongdoing includes:

- a criminal offence, including fraud, theft, bribery or corruption;
- failure to comply with a legal obligation;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- danger to health or safety;
- actual or likely environmental damage;
- sexual harassment; or
- deliberate concealment of any of the above.

Sporting examples may include serious safeguarding failures, unsafe or coercive training, manipulation of competition, betting corruption, serious misuse of public funds, significant data-security failings, anti-doping wrongdoing or concealment of serious rule breaches.

3. Other concerns

A complaint about the individual's own employment, selection, treatment or contractual position will normally be handled under the relevant grievance, dignity at work, selection appeal, disciplinary, complaints or safeguarding process. It may still be whistleblowing where it also raises a reasonable public-interest concern. British Orienteering will consider the substance, not the label used, and explain any proposed alternative route.

4. Our commitments

No retaliation: no one will be disadvantaged for raising or supporting a concern they reasonably believe to be true. Retaliation may result in disciplinary or other action.

Mistaken concerns: no action will be taken merely because a concern is not upheld. Knowingly false or deliberately misleading allegations may be addressed under the appropriate conduct process.

Confidentiality: information will be shared only where needed. Every reasonable effort will be made to protect identity, but absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where disclosure is required by law, safeguarding duties or a fair investigation.

Anonymous reporting: anonymous reports are accepted, although anonymity may restrict enquiries, feedback and protection.

Support: reasonable measures will be considered to protect wellbeing and prevent disadvantage. Workers may also seek help from a trade union, ACAS, Protect or a legal adviser.

5. How to raise a concern

A concern may be raised orally or in writing. Use a route that is safe and free from conflict; no special form or legal terminology is required. Mark written reports PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - WHISTLEBLOWING.

Route	Contact / when to use
Usual route	Line manager, relevant director or programme lead.
Central route	Chief Executive Officer (Peter Brooke) pbrooke@britishorienteering.org.uk / 01629 818553.
Independent route	Chair (Rob Woods) : Rob.woods@britishorienteering.org.uk Use where senior management is involved or management cannot safely be approached.
Concern about Chair	Deputy Chair (Alison Howe) alison.howe@britishorienteering.org.uk .
Safeguarding	safeguarding@britishorienteering.org.uk / 07891 091662. Call 999 where someone is in immediate danger.

Give the facts known, relevant dates and people, why others or the public may be affected, where evidence can be found, any immediate risk or conflict, previous reporting, and whether confidentiality is requested. Do not investigate personally, confront anyone or access records without authority.

6. What happens next

1. The concern will normally be acknowledged within five working days and urgent safety, safeguarding, conflict and evidence risks considered.
2. An impartial person will assess the appropriate route and whether an investigation or external referral is required.
3. Where investigation is appropriate, a suitably independent and skilled investigator will be appointed. The reporter will normally receive a process update within 10 working days and reasonable further updates.
4. Subject to legal duties and others' rights, the reporter will be told the broad outcome and whether appropriate action has been or will be taken.
5. If the concern was not properly considered or wrongdoing continues, the reporter may request review by the Chair or independent board lead within 15 working days of the outcome.

7. Safeguarding and urgent concerns

A safeguarding concern must be passed promptly through the safeguarding arrangements and must not be delayed by this policy. Whistleblowing and safeguarding processes may run together. The same principle applies to suspected crime, immediate health and safety risks, anti-doping, competition manipulation, serious data breaches and professional regulatory concerns.

8. External reporting and advice

Internal reporting is not always required. A worker may seek confidential advice from a legal adviser, trade union, ACAS or Protect, or disclose to an appropriate prescribed person or body. Stricter legal tests may apply to wider disclosure, including to the media, so independent advice should be obtained.

[GOV.UK whistleblowing guidance](#)

[Government Guidance - Prescribed people and bodies](#)

[Protect](#)

[ACAS](#)

Nothing prevents an urgent report to the police or emergency services, or a referral required by safeguarding, professional, anti-doping or regulatory duties. Different whistleblowing law applies in Northern Ireland.

9. Governance

The Chief Executive Officer is accountable for implementation unless conflicted, when responsibility passes to the Chair or independent board lead. The Board will receive at least annual anonymised information on concerns, timeliness, outcomes, retaliation, learning and actions. Records will be secure, access restricted and retention proportionate. Recipients will be trained. This policy will be reviewed at least every two years and sooner following material change or learning.