



SPEAK UP POLICY

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Policy

The RFU is committed to developing a culture where it is safe and acceptable for everyone involved in rugby union to raise concerns about any unacceptable practice, behaviour, wrongdoing or misconduct.

Recognising that, through loyalty or fear of repercussion, people may be reluctant to voice worries, this policy has been created to encourage members of the game to speak up, knowing that they will be supported and their concerns will be handled sensitively.

Speaking up will enable concerns to be investigated and dealt with for the benefit of all involved and for that of the wider game. Anyone making a disclosure can be confident that the matter will be handled appropriately and with an appropriate level of confidentiality.

Scope of this Policy

This is a game-wide policy open to everyone in the professional and community game in England.

It enables anyone to raise concerns through channels that they are comfortable with and gives all parties the opportunity to resolve a concern and for any necessary action to be taken.

This policy should NOT be used for any matters presenting an immediate threat to life or property. For emergency assistance, please contact your local authorities or call the relevant emergency phone number.

Neither should it be used for:

- Grievances or whistleblowing relating to your employment ordinarily dealt with under your employer's grievance or whistleblowing policies. The RFU's policies are available to its employees on the RFU intranet. If you are not an RFU employee, please refer to your employer's policies.
- Contractual or personal disputes, including contractual disputes with agents and clubs.
- Issues relating to club memberships or other internal club disputes, which should be raised with and managed by the club.

SECTION 2: HOW TO SPEAK UP

Hopefully, you can raise concerns with your coach, line manager or someone in your club. However, where a matter is more serious, you feel that your concerns have not been addressed, or you prefer not to raise it with your coach, line manager, or club then different alternatives exist, depending on your involvement and role within the game. Below are existing channels:

- **Speak Up Hotline**

Call 020 8831 7883 or email: speakup@rfu.com.

- **Contact the appropriate RFU Director**

All RFU Directors encourage a speaking up culture and treat concerns respectfully and professionally. The contact details of directors you may want to approach, depending on the nature of your concern, are:

Director of Professional Rugby Director	Nigel Melville	E: NigelMelville@rfu.com T: 0208 831 6614
Rugby Development Director	Steve Grainger	E: SteveGrainger@rfu.com T: 0208 831 6710
Legal & Governance Director	Angus Bujalski	E: AngusBujalski@rfu.com T: 0208 831 7790
HR Director	Lucinda Pullinger	E: LucindaPullinger@rfu.com T: 0203 118 3191

- **Contact a Player Advocate**

For male and female England Elite Player Squad members, international Sevens players and England pathway players, an independent Player Advocate is appointed to speak to players who feel they have an issue to discuss with someone outside the England camp and the RFU. With an understanding of elite rugby, they can help you to deal with your concern.

The current Player Advocate is Martin Corry. He can be contacted on playeradvocate@rfu.com.

- **Betting, Corruption or Integrity concerns**

Contact the RFU Anti-Corruption Officer at:

E: AlysLewis@rfu.com

T: 0208 831 7696

A dedicated webpage for anti-corruption/betting is also available here: <http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/anti-corruption/>

- **Safeguarding**

For concerns relating to the safety of children or vulnerable adults, a specific reporting process is available here:

<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding/reporting-an-incident>

A dedicated webpage for safeguarding is available here:

<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding/>

- **Anti-Doping**

For concerns relating to the use of illicit or performance enhancing drugs, you can either contact the RFU anti-doping officers or the UK Anti-Doping Reporting in Sport Line.

RFU Anti-Doping Programme Manager	Stephen Watkins	E: StephenWatkins@rfu.com T: 0208 831 7603
UK Anti-Doping Reporting in Sport Line	www.reportdoping.com	T: 08000 322332

A dedicated webpage for anti-doping is also available here:

<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/anti-doping/>

- **Rugby Players Association (RPA)**

RPA members can also contact the RPA directly or their club's RPA Personal Development Manager who can provide guidance on player welfare related concerns. The RPA website is available here: <https://www.therpa.co.uk/> and key contacts are set out below:

RPA Rugby Director	Richard Bryan	E: rbryan@therpa.co.uk T: 020 3053 6670
RPA Player Services Manager	Natalie Beckett	E: nbeckett@therpa.co.uk T: 020 3053 6670

SECTION 3: HOW WILL MY CONCERN BE HANDLED?

This section of the policy sets out the key principles underpinning how the concern you have reported will be dealt with.

- All disclosures will be dealt with appropriately, fairly and professionally.
- All disclosures will be handled sensitively, securely and with an appropriate level of confidentiality, being shared only on a strictly need-to-know basis. Disclosure outside this small group may be necessary if required by law or an important public interest is at stake, or for the purposes of a full investigation. The aim will be to discuss this with you in advance.
- Concerns can be shared anonymously but you are encouraged to give your identity as it will be difficult, or even impossible, to investigate anonymous reports.
- Your concern will be passed to the person best equipped to deal with it. This may be an RFU employee (such as the Professional Rugby Director, Legal and Governance

Director or Anti-doping and Illicit Drugs Programme Manager). It could also be someone outside and independent of the RFU.

- It may be more appropriate for your concern to be referred to an appropriate person at your club or the RPA (for example if the concern involves your employment) or a statutory agency and if so your disclosure may be passed on, unless you say otherwise.
- We will seek to keep you informed and updated on any investigation and outcome, including next steps and time frames.
- If your disclosure relates to a breach of RFU or World Rugby Regulations, there may need to be additional regulatory investigation.
- Any instances of victimisation, discrimination or negative repercussions experienced as a result of your disclosure are wholly unacceptable.
- In line with the Duty of Care in Sport Report, the RFU Board of Directors has a designated Board Director appointed to oversee and champion the interests and welfare of those involved in the game.
- Data provided to us will be processed and handled securely and fairly, in accordance with data protection legislation.

SECTION 4: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The process for dealing with a concern will vary depending on its nature, complexity and seriousness. It may not always be possible or appropriate to investigate. However, as far as practicably possible, we will seek to deal with your concern as below:

- We will acknowledge receipt of your disclosure as soon as possible.
- It will then be directed to the person best placed to deal with it and we will provide you with their name.
- The nominated person may then contact you to:
 - Introduce themselves and provide their contact details
 - Provide you with an estimate of how long it will take to handle and assess your concern
 - Ask for further information
 - Advise you of the process for dealing with your concern
- Your disclosure may then undergo an initial review and may be investigated, which could include contacting the individuals relevant to the concern. It is also possible that the matter may not be investigated further. The RFU is not obliged to investigate if it believes there is no merit in doing so, or if an investigation is not appropriate or proportionate.
- As far as practicable, we will keep you informed of developments and of the overall finding, although we may not be able to disclose full details of the outcome for reasons of confidentiality, privacy and the legal rights of others involved.