



**SPORT INTEGRITY  
AUSTRALIA**



# COMPLAINTS, DISPUTES AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

## COMPLAINTS PROCESS: STEP BY STEP

January 2025

The complaints process is set up to keep Australian sport safe and fair. This document outlines how complaints about poor behaviour will be managed under the Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy.

### STEP 1 MAKING A COMPLAINT

People can lodge a complaint regarding discrimination or breaches of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy to Sport Integrity Australia using the [online form](#). Assistance is available by calling 1300 027 232 and selecting option 3.

Complaints about other prohibited conduct should be submitted to a person's sporting organisation. If a complaint is about bullying, Sport Integrity Australia has created a '[Bullying in Sport](#)' [PDF 565 kB] booklet that offers other pathways a person may choose to pursue.

### STEP 2 EVALUATION

When a complaint is received, it will be evaluated to work out if it is in scope and will be managed through the complaints process. To be in scope, a complaint needs to meet the following criteria:

- The person who submitted the complaint is the person directly affected by the alleged conduct (or their authorised representative), or the parent/guardian of a vulnerable person directly affected by the alleged conduct.
- The alleged conduct meets the definition of [prohibited conduct](#) [PDF 739 kB] under any of the National Integrity Framework policies, or under one of the [sport's relevant policies](#).
- The alleged prohibited conduct occurred after the sport's [commencement of the National Integrity Framework](#) or relevant policy.
- The person or organisation accused of wrongdoing was bound by the sport's policies at the time the alleged conduct occurred.

From this point on, the complaint may also be referred to another organisation, such as the police or a child protection agency.



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## Who manages complaints?

Complaints about alleged conduct under the **Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy** or **discrimination** based on protected characteristics including race, disability, sex, religion or age **can be submitted** to Sport Integrity Australia. All other integrity complaints will be managed by the person's sport.

## Case categorisation

Upon receipt of a complaint, Sport Integrity Australia considers the alleged conduct and other contextual information to determine the most appropriate way to manage the complaint.

In doing so, Sport Integrity Australia gives consideration to the [case categorisation model \[PDF 2.6 MB\]](#) and relevant aggravating and mitigating factors that may apply. An example of a mitigating factor may be the age of the parties or lack of prior complaint history.

Complaints may be managed through a range of measures, including education and other behavioural management strategies. In some cases, the alleged conduct will be investigated and lead to a finding about what may have happened.

## STEP 3 INVESTIGATION

An investigation is the process of determining what has happened based on the balance of probabilities. As part of an investigation, people involved with the complaint, including witnesses, may be contacted to provide information about the allegations that have been made. In more complex matters, the people involved in the complaint may be required to participate in formal recorded interviews.

It is important that enough information is received to make an informed decision, so depending on the complexity of the complaint, this can take time. Parties to the complaint will be kept updated at appropriate points during the process.

## STEP 4 FINDINGS

If a person's complaint is investigated, there are three possible findings that can be made.

**Substantiated:** If there is sufficient evidence to suggest the alleged conduct is more likely to have occurred than not, the allegation/s in the complaint will be found to be substantiated.

**Unsubstantiated:** If, based on the evidence, it is more likely than not that the respondent did NOT breach a policy, the allegations will be found to be unsubstantiated and the matter will be closed with no further action.

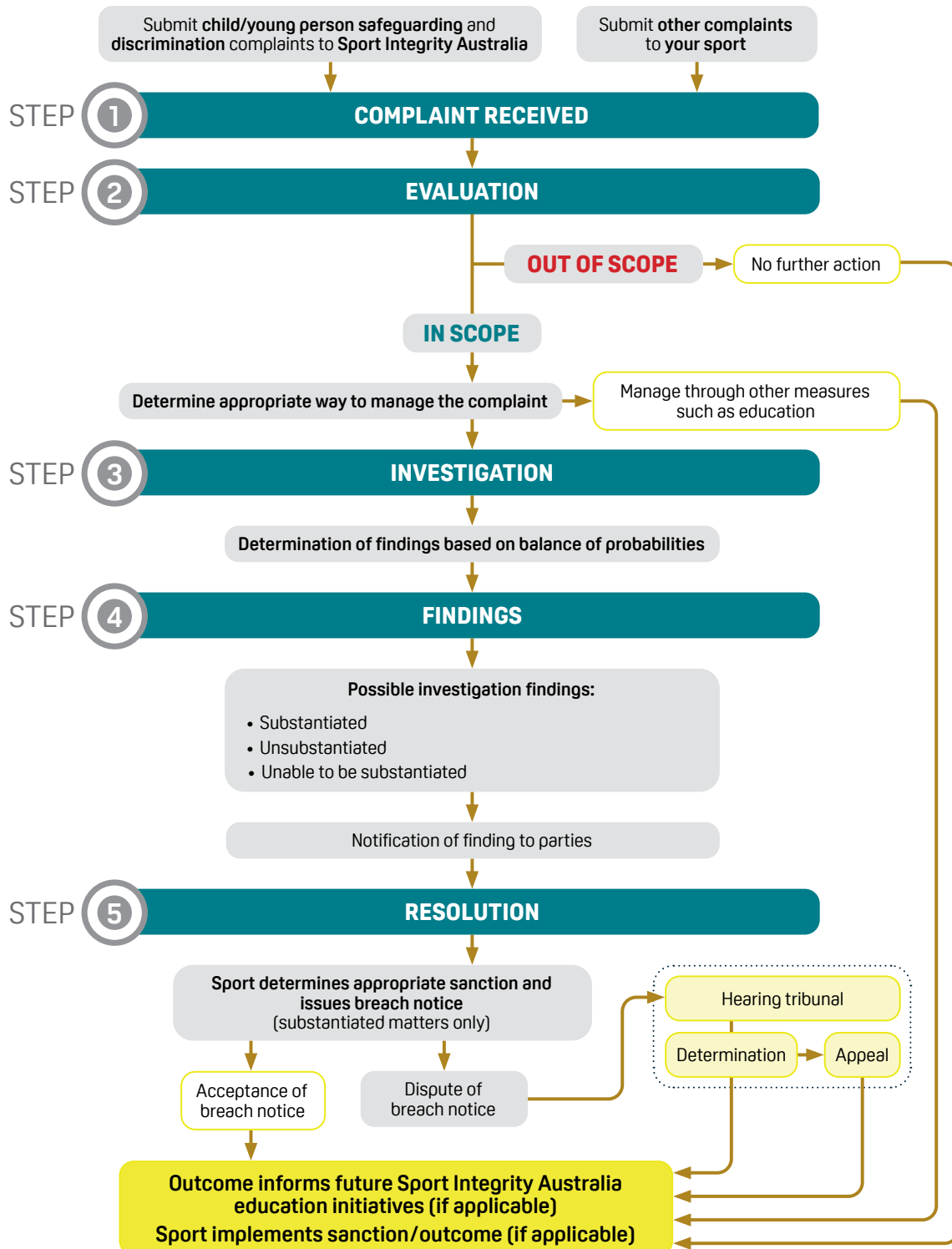
**Unable to be substantiated:** If there are two equally plausible versions of events, or not enough evidence to make a finding either way, the matter will be unable to be substantiated.

When a matter is managed by Sport Integrity Australia, they will notify the parties to the complaint of the findings and refer the matter to the sport to manage the resolution process, including guidance on sanctioning if applicable.

## STEP 5 RESOLUTION

If a complaint is found to be **substantiated**, the sport is responsible for issuing a breach notice to the respondent and may also determine an appropriate sanction. A sanction can include a range of measures ranging from a reprimand to a suspension or expulsion from the sport, depending on the category of the breach. The respondent can either accept the breach notice and proposed sanction, at which point the matter will be finalised, or they can choose to dispute the findings against them and/or the proposed sanction at a hearing tribunal.

The sport will enforce any sanctions that result from the complaints process.



[Click here for a text alternative for the Sport Integrity Australia complaints process flowchart.](#)

## An alternate text description of the Sport Integrity Australia complaints process flowchart

Prior to Step 1: Complaint received, a person will submit a child/young person safeguarding and/or discrimination complaint to Sport Integrity Australia or submit other complaints to your sport.

Step 1: Complaint received.

Step 2: Evaluation. A complaint is deemed either in scope or out of scope.

If out of scope, there is no further action and this outcome informs future Sport Integrity Australia education initiatives (if applicable) and/or the sport implements the sanction/outcome (if applicable).

If in scope, Sport Integrity Australia determines the appropriate way to manage the complaint. If the most appropriate way to manage the complaint is through other measures such as education, this outcome informs future Sport Integrity Australia education initiatives (if applicable) and/or the sport implements the sanction/outcome (if applicable).

Step 3: Investigation. Determination of findings based on balance of probabilities.

Step 4: Findings. Possible investigation findings: substantiated, unsubstantiated, unable to be substantiated. Notification of finding is given to parties.

Step 5: Resolution. Sport determines appropriate sanction and issues breach notice for substantiated matters only.

The breach notice can either be accepted or disputed. If accepted, this outcome informs future Sport Integrity Australia education initiatives (if applicable) and/or the sport implements the sanction/outcome (if applicable).

If disputed, the complaint is referred to a hearing tribunal, which will deliver their own determination. Regardless of the outcome from the hearing tribunal, this outcome informs future Sport Integrity Australia education initiatives (if applicable) and/or the sport implements the sanction/outcome (if applicable).

**[Click here to return to Sport Integrity Australia complaints process flowchart graphic.](#)**