

ROSES PLAYER ATHLETE WELFARE HANDBOOK

Purpose

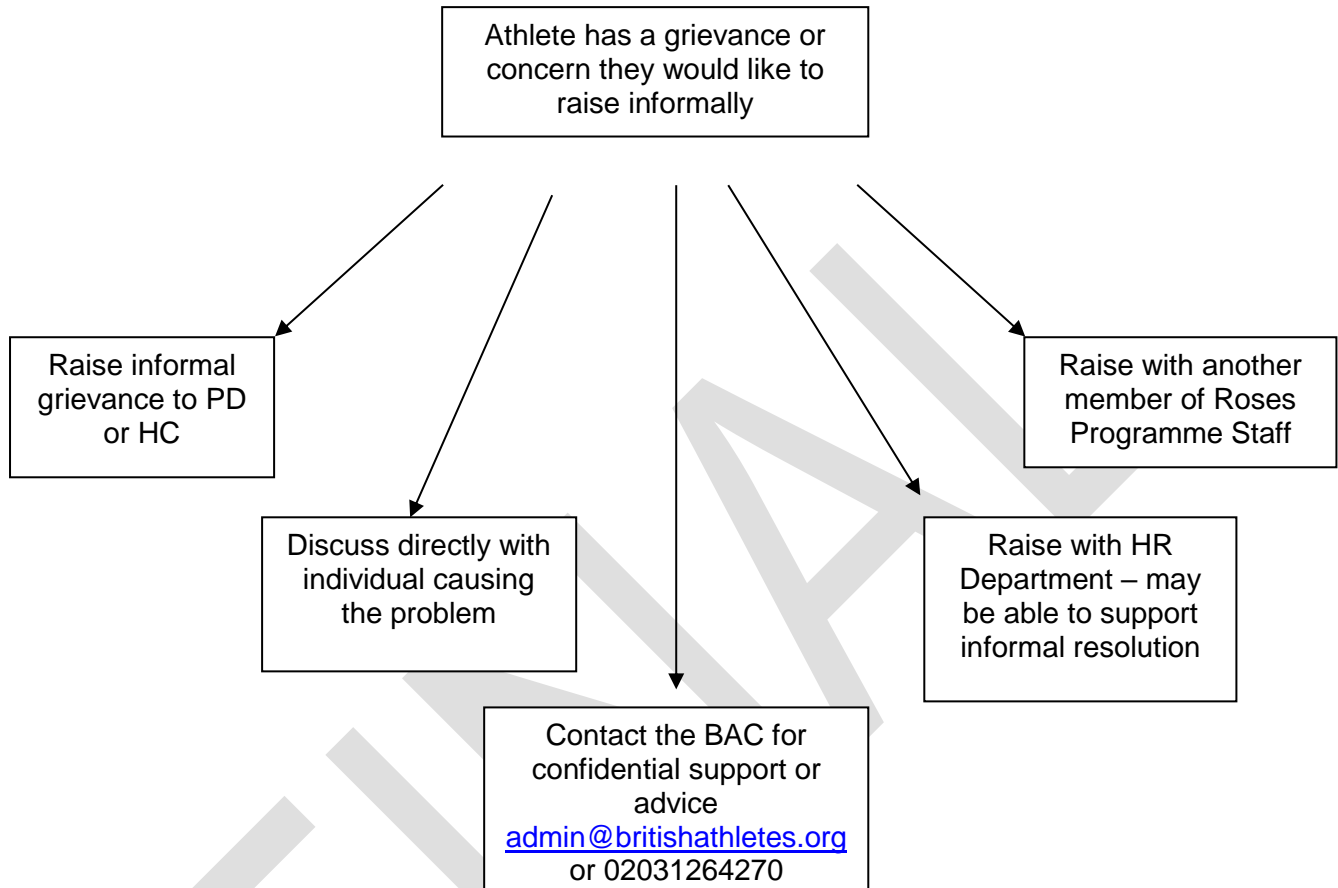
- **Offer an overview of the policies and procedures which relate to athletes in the programmes and their welfare.**
- **Full policies are available and should be read and referred to if action needs to be taken**

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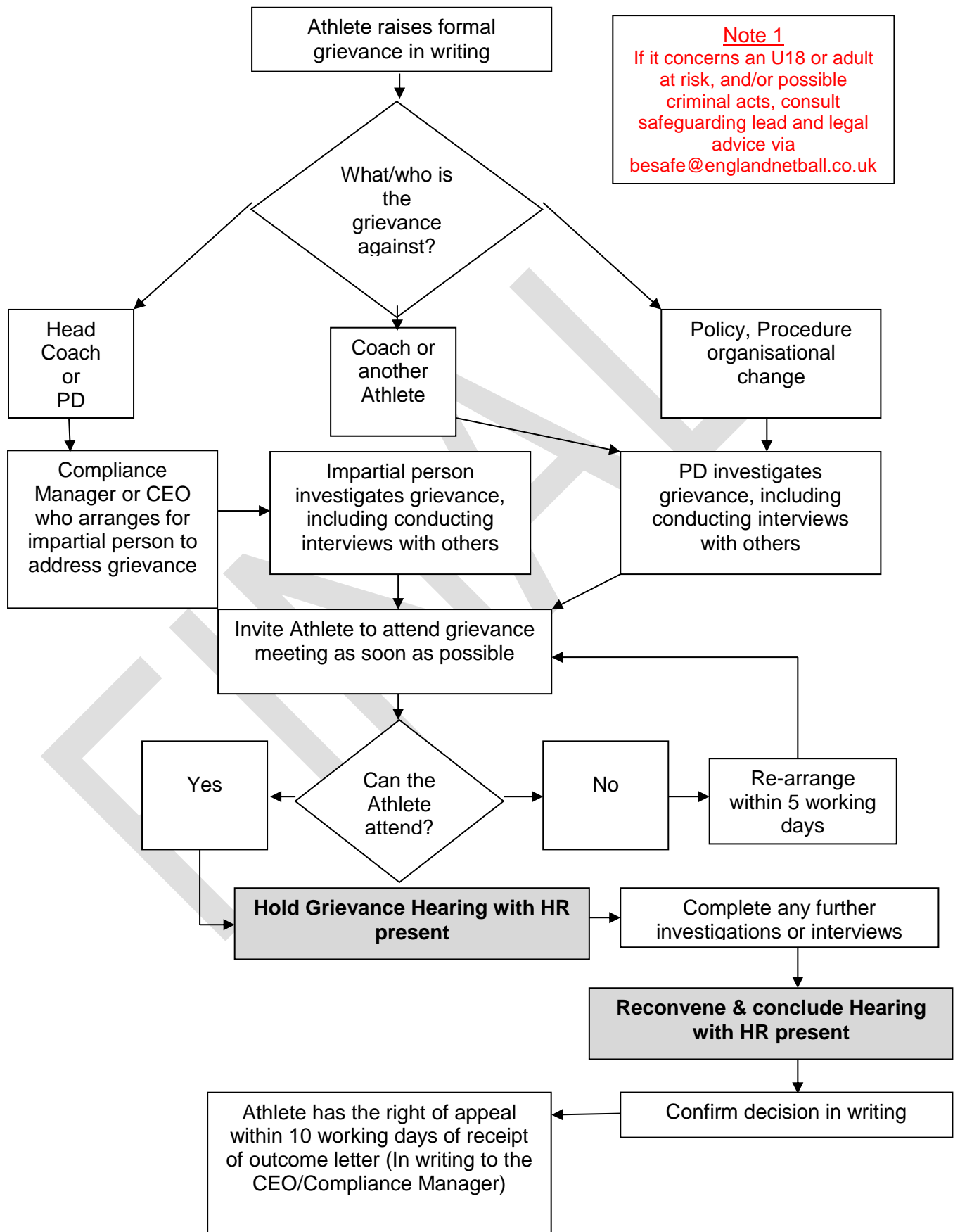
1. Process Flow Chart – Grievances – Informal Resolution
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1. Process Flow Chart – Grievances – Informal Resolution

Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion

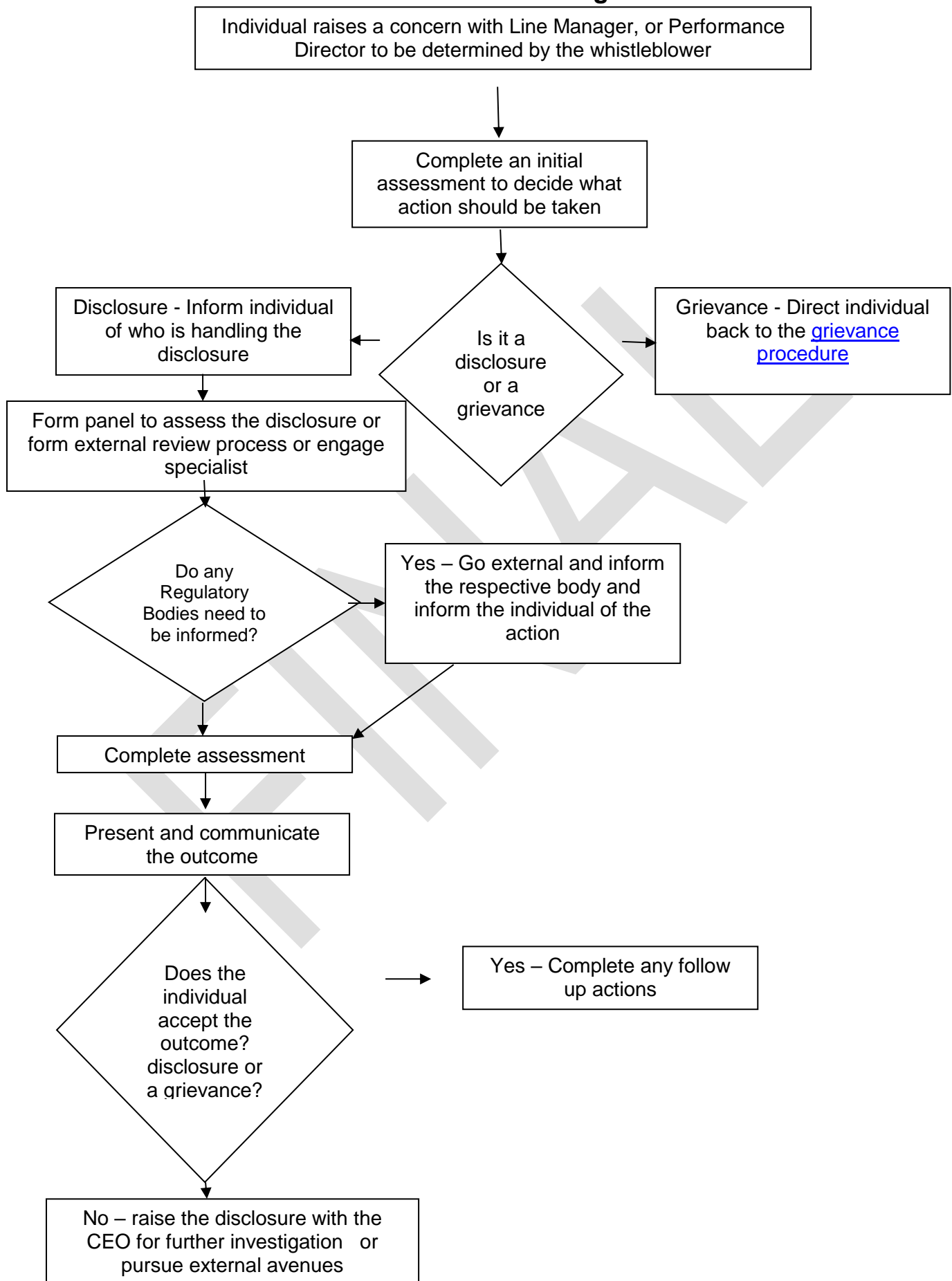


2. Process Flow Chart - Grievances

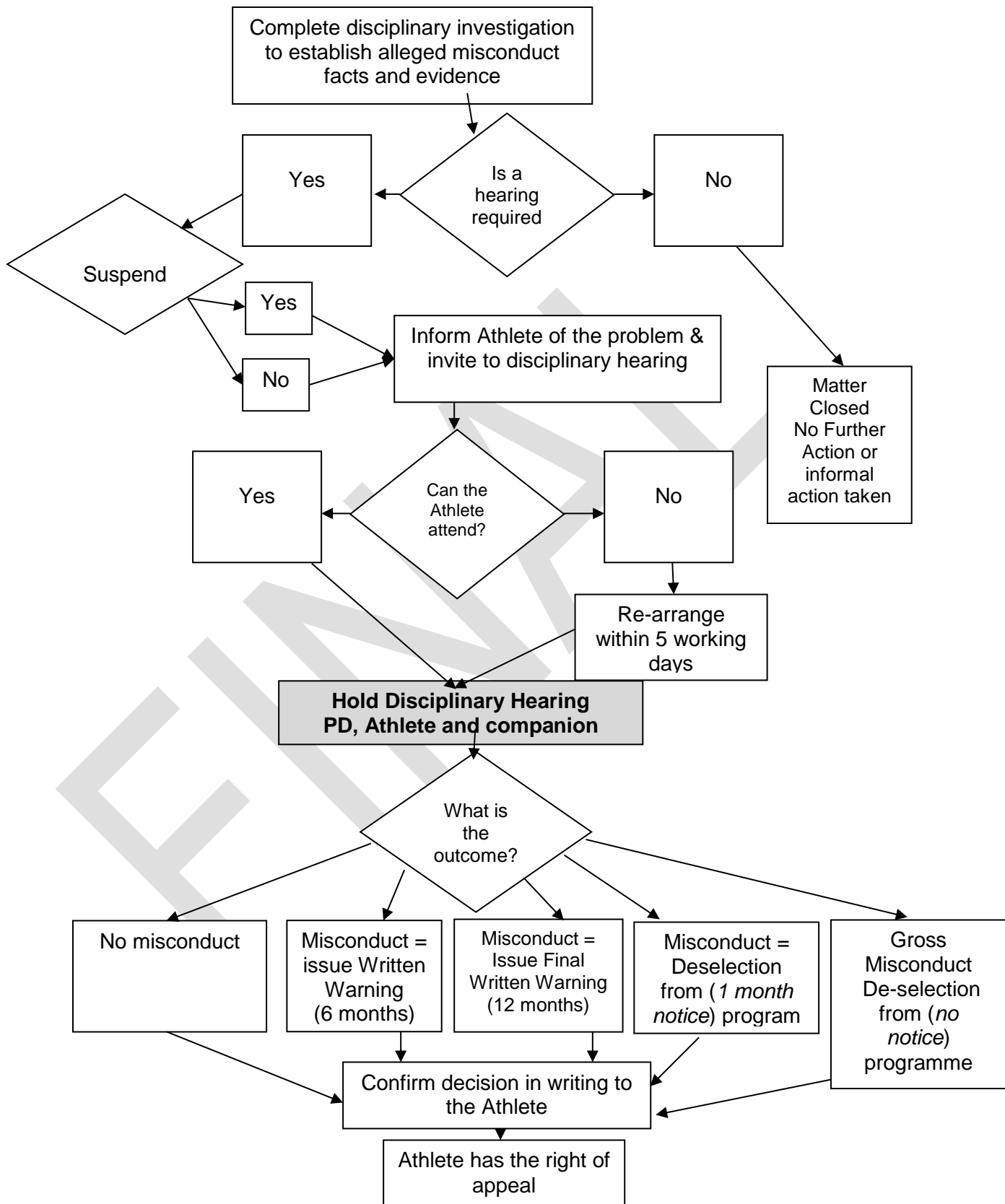


See Important Contact Details Information on Page 4

3. Process Flow Chart – Whistleblowing



4. Process Flow Chart – Athlete Disciplinary



5. Important Contact Details – Athlete Welfare & Wellbeing

Position	Name	Email	Phone
Performance Director	Sara Symington	Sara.symington@englandnetball.co.uk	07584 212227
CEO	Jo Adams	Joanna.Adams@englandnetball.co.uk	07834500268
Compliance Manager	Lyndon Roberts	Lyndon.Roberts@englandnetball.co.uk	07384 214 726
HR Business Partner	Jamie Forward	Jamie.Forward@englandnetball.co.uk	07872400761
Safeguarding		besafe@englandnetball.co.uk	07384 214 726
BAC		admin@britishathletes.org	02031264270
Performance Lifestyle	Helen Alfano	Helen.alfano@eis2win.co.uk	07714 954913

6. Glossary for Main Terms in the Policies & Processes

Grievances

Any Athlete may, at some time, experience problems or wish to raise concerns about their training, training or competition conditions or relationships with colleagues or athlete support personnel: ‘a grievance, meaning you believe that you have been ‘wronged’ by being treated ‘unreasonably’.

It is in everybody’s interests to resolve problems at an early stage before they escalate into more significant issues. For this reason, it is our responsibility to ensure that we deal with all Athlete grievances fairly and without unreasonable delay, and provide appropriate support.

Issues that may cause concern include the following:

- Health and safety.
- Training relationships.
- Bullying, harassment or discrimination; or any unacceptable behaviour.

Grievances should be brought within a reasonable time (no more than three months after the event complained of) in order to ensure that can carry out an investigation.

Please refer to England Netball’s Athlete Grievances Policy *in the appendix or online*

Whistleblowing

All athletes within any capacity, at one time or another may have concerns about what is happening. It is the duty of everyone to speak up about genuine concerns. These concerns are usually best resolved by having a conversation the Performance Director. England Netball takes any form of misconduct seriously and wants to enable athletes to raise concerns early and in the right way. We encourage all individuals, where appropriate, to raise the matter as a concern rather than wait for proof.

When disclosing a concern you must reasonably believe two things:

a) That they are acting in the public interest; and
b) that the disclosure may fall under one or more of the following headings of malpractice (the list is not exclusive):

- a criminal offence e.g. fraud;
- betting, corrupt conduct, inside-information and match fixing;
- someone's health and safety is in danger e.g. coercion of an athlete to train against medical advice or conducting an unsafe-practice;
- risk or actual damage to the environment;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- an organisation is breaking the law e.g. incorrect or inadequate insurance cover; or
- covering up wrong-doing, such as fabricating test results or supporting cheating (sport rule violation, anti-doping rule violation).

Actions taken may involve: an internal investigation; or an external review/investigation completed by independent experts who are not involved in the operation of England Netball.

Unacceptable behaviour

England Netball aims to ensure an environment which is free from any unacceptable behaviour including intimidation, hostility, humiliation, victimisation or any other form of harassment, and unlawful and unfair discrimination whether intended or not. This covers bullying or harassment which occurs in training or in the training environment, such as on trips, at events or social functions or training camps.

Bullying and harassment whether on the ground of a person's Protected Characteristic or otherwise, is unacceptable behaviour which England Netball will not tolerate. Every individual has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Appropriate disciplinary action, which may include dismissal, will be taken against any person who contravenes this policy.

Raising a concern on unacceptable behaviour may lead to a formal grievance.

Please refer to England Netball's full Whistleblowing and unacceptable behaviour policy *in the appendix or online*

What is Bullying?

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority, but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Bullying can take many forms. Examples prohibited by this policy, although the list is not exhaustive, include:

- verbal abuse, such as shouting or swearing at others;
- threatening or insulting others;
- abusing power or using unfair penal sanctions;
- practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or birthday rituals;
- physical abuse such as hitting, pushing or jostling;

- rifling through, hiding or damaging personal property; or
- ostracising or excluding people from events or social activities.

Bullying does **not** include justifiable, legitimate, reasonable and constructive criticism of an individual's performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions given to individuals where appropriate.

It is important to recognise that what one individual may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable and that the essence of harassment and bullying is that the words or behaviour are unwelcome to the particular person who is the target of the words or behaviour. All individuals must treat others with respect and appropriate sensitivity.

What is Harassment?

Harassment means any physical, verbal or non-verbal behaviour which:

- may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories;
- is unwanted and has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment;
- treats someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past.

NB. It is not the intention of the perpetrator that determines whether an act of harassment takes place it is the feelings of the victim.

Harassment can take many forms. Examples of harassment prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal abuse or offensive jokes or pranks (which may or may not be related to an individual's Protected Characteristic); lewd or suggestive comments; requests for sexual favours.
- Unwelcomed physical contact; threatened or actual assault or violence.
- Leering or threatening looks.
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations or activities whether on the basis of a Protected Characteristic or otherwise.
- Display of 'pin-ups', pornography, inflammatory or abusive literature or graffiti.
- Using e-mail, text, social media or the internet for the purpose of bullying or making abusive or offensive remarks whether on the basis of a Protected Characteristic or otherwise or to send pornography or inflammatory literature.
- Threatened or actual sexual or any other kind of physical or verbal assaults.
- Suggestions or threats that sexual favours, racial origins or any other Protected Characteristic could affect someone's job security or prospects.
- Repeated and unsubstantiated accusations of intentional mis-representation or abuse of classification.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list however such conduct will almost certainly amount to a disciplinary offence, the expected penalty for which is dismissal for gross misconduct for employees. For athletes, it could mean removal from the programme.

Robust Coaching

It is axiomatic that success in world class performance programme requires demanding training regimes, and coaches able to push athletes to the very limit of their ability. However, robust coaching is not the same as bullying:

Robust Coaching is:

- consensual (discussed and agreed between athlete and ASP);
- planned;
- has agreed performance objectives and outcomes;
- planned and evidence based; and
- is ethical from a medical perspective.

Bullying is:

- not consensual; and
- lacks any performance objectives and outcomes.

There may be circumstances the boundary between robust coaching and bullying may not be readily apparent, especially for less experienced coaches and ASPs. In these situations, Performance Directors and Head Coaches are required to exercise leadership and guidance through the supervision of their coaches and ASPs.

Athlete Disciplinary

This is related to disciplinary situations that occur due to misconduct by the athlete. Minor discipline issues should be resolved informally by discussion from the PD and or Head Coach directly to the athlete. Where matters are more serious or where an informal approach has been taken and not achieved the required results, or the misconduct is considered too serious to be classed as minor, then PD will consider taking formal action.

The wellbeing of the athlete during this process is paramount and they must be supported by a member of the coaching staff and/or Performance Lifestyle Advisors.

The policy is to ensure consistent and fair treatment of disciplinary situations and to encourage Athletes to maintain appropriate standards of conduct.

Athletes are responsible for representing England Netball – this includes maintaining high standards of behaviour and presentation of appropriate branded clothing where applicable. Breach of these may result in informal or formal disciplinary.

The following are examples of Gross Misconduct which may result in immediate de-selection from the Roses Performance programme:

- Actual or attempted theft, fraud or dishonesty.
- Sports betting, corrupt conduct, disclosure of confidential information pertaining to England Netball and match fixing.
- Fighting, physical or sexual assault, violence, threatening behaviour or deliberate and serious damage to people or property.
- Anti-Doping Regulation Violations.
- Gross insubordination, including failure to comply with reasonable requests/instructions.
- Incapacity for training owing to the use of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Serious breaches of England Netball Values.

- Deliberate actions or omissions that bring England Netball's name into serious disrepute.
- Gross negligence or incompetence which causes serious loss, damage or injury.
- Serious breaches of England Netball's rules relating to Health & Safety (and hygiene).
- Serious breaches of England Netball's Mobile Phones and Driving Policies (Can be found online).
- Bullying or harassment on the grounds of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief or any other protected characteristic of another Athlete, employee of England Netball visitor or any other third party to whom England Netball has a duty to prevent such discrimination.
- Indecent, offensive or immoral behaviour.
- Offensive use of social media, including unauthorised use or hacking of another person's account.
- Disclosure of confidential information pertaining to England Netball.
- Deliberate telephone, computer and e-mail misuse, including hacking and/or the access, downloading or transmission of any pornographic or otherwise offensive material.
- Violation of the rules outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Please refer to England Netball's full Athlete Disciplinary policy *in the appendix or online*

Safeguarding

England Netball is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for all Young People and Adults at Risk involved in the Sport.

Report a concern via besafe@englandnetball.co.uk or 07384 214 726. Urgent cases should be referred to the Police and emergency services by calling 999. NSPCC are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on 0808 800 5000

Please refer to England Netball's Safeguarding Policies for further support or info [link to online](#)

If the issue relates to:

- **An Athlete who is under 18 or an adult at risk¹, the designated safeguarding lead must be informed at the start.**
- **Matters that might be criminal, legal/safeguarding advice must be taken and the matter referred to the statutory authorities before proceeding further.**

¹ An adult who: has needs for care and support; and is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

7. Additional information

Assurances & Confidences

The England Netball board members are committed to the policies. If a genuine concern is disclosed under it, England Netball will use all reasonable endeavours to protect the position of the individual concerned, provided they are acting in good faith. This assurance does not apply to someone who maliciously, raises a concern or grievance that they know is untrue.

The daily environment for an England Netball athlete may be challenging following a whistleblowing disclosure, both whilst the disclosure is being investigated and following the conclusion of the process. If the individual feels that her environment is not tolerable, discussions should take place with the Performance Director England Netball will seek to either redeploy that individual, suitably change their environment, or ensure that they are not disadvantaged as a result of making the disclosure.

Standards & Principles

The principles governing the policy and application of this are as follows:

- our approach will be consistent and non-discriminatory;
- all Athletes will be treated with dignity and respect; and
- our approach will be open and transparent and will, if necessary, involve investigations to establish the facts of each case
- treating each other professionally and courteously
- a culture that is fair and inclusive and where people feel able to raise complaints without fear of reprisal.

England Netball will endeavour to work in a timely fashion, and works on the basis that where possible resolutions should be sought through informal means. Where this is not possible formal processes will be undertaken and engage independent support or investigations where required.

England Netball has clear standards of conduct, which are reflected in England Netball's Values. They are explained to Athletes when they join and are reinforced through regular updates and detailed in the athlete handbooks. These cover such areas as:

- The requirement for being responsible and accountable for your conduct.
- Behaviour towards staff and fellow athletes, including respecting professional boundaries and the use of social media.
- Health and Safety regulations.
- The inappropriate use of facilities (vehicles, property, email and communication equipment).
- Claiming expenses.
- Personal appearance.

Athletes are responsible for representing England Netball – this includes maintaining high standards of behaviour and presentation of appropriate branded clothing where applicable.

Companions

Athletes may be accompanied at any grievance meeting by: another Athlete; a member of the coaching staff; a practitioner; or a representative from the British Athletes' Commission (BAC) or by a member of the National Players Association (NPA). Athletes under the age of 18, or classified as vulnerable adults/persons at risk should be accompanied by their parents or legal guardians.

Athletes may also be accompanied by a companion at any formal disciplinary, investigative or appeal hearing or meeting, such as: another athlete; a member of the coaching/support staff of their choice; a parent or guardian; or a member of the BAC or NPA. Athletes may not choose a companion whose presence would prejudice the outcome of any hearing.

The companion may address the hearing to present and/or sum up the Athlete's case, respond on their behalf to any views expressed at the hearing and confer privately with them at any stage during the hearing. The companion does not have the right to answer questions on the Athlete's behalf, address the hearing if the Athlete does not want them to or prevent anyone, including the Athlete, from explaining their case.

Any companion who attends a hearing with an Athlete in connection with this disciplinary policy shall not be penalised in any way. No one shall be obliged to act as a companion if they do not wish to so.

Confidentiality

Athletes should not discuss any disciplinary matter with NGB staff other than those they are reporting to (PD/CEO/Compliance Manager), the member of HR involved in the case, managers involved in the process and their own companion.

Record keeping and note taking for all processes

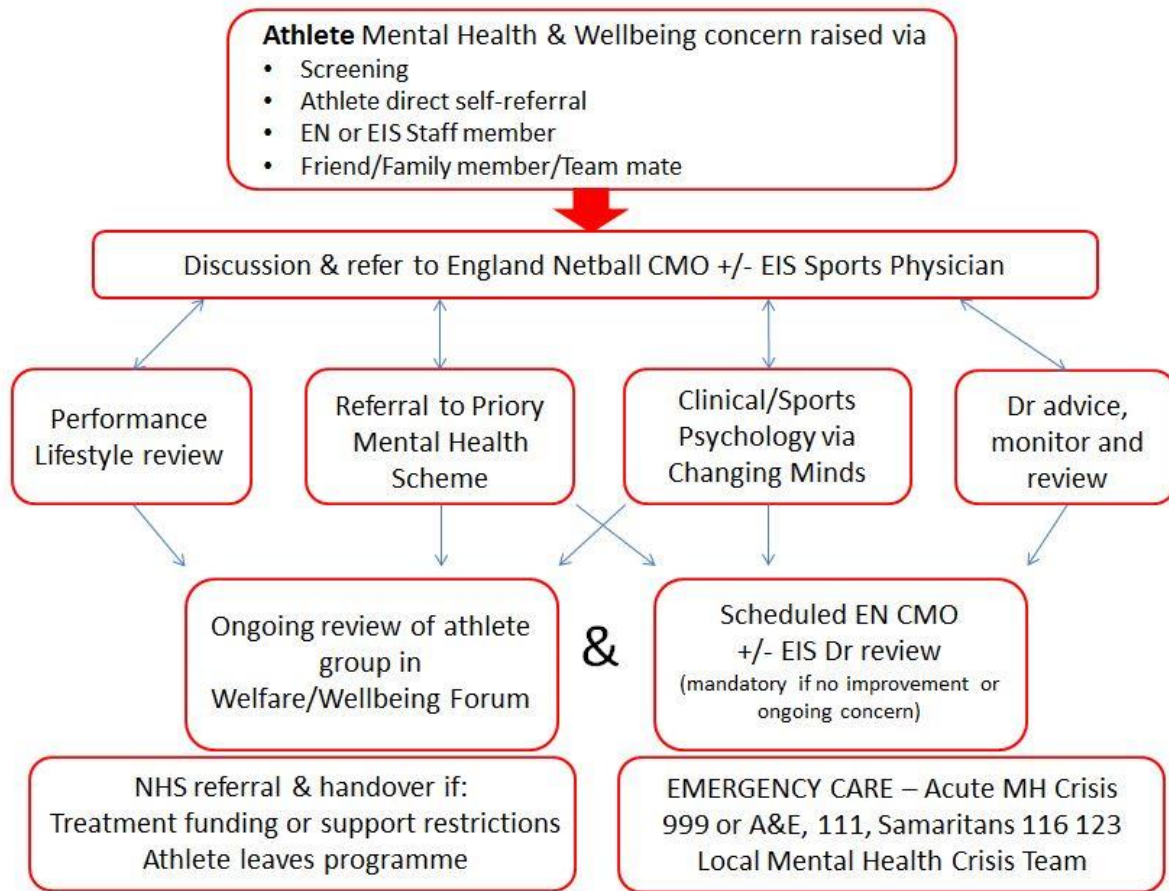
England Netball requires 'meeting notes' to be taken at all meetings to record decisions and outcomes. All formal interviews must have a verbatim written record, signed by the interviewer and the subject of the interview. The interview must contain first party evidence and not include hearsay or speculation. (First party evidence is evidence that the individual saw or heard. Hearsay is evidence that the individual was told by another party or overheard.)

If an investigation leads to a criminal prosecution, all material obtained in the investigation must be handed over to the relevant authorities.

It is not the policy for England Netball to make an audio recording of any investigations or meetings. Neither England Netball nor the Athlete is permitted to record meetings, interviews or hearings without the other party's prior written consent.

The Athlete will be sent a copy of the interview or meeting notes produced, which will constitute the employer's record of proceedings. All records from the process, both formal and informal resolution, will be held fairly, lawfully and securely in accordance with data protection laws.

Mental Health & Wellbeing Support



External Support Services

Mind

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/>

Samaritans

https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/contact-us/about-the-call?qclid=CjwKCAjw7cDaBRBtEiwAsxprXS-tlRM6g75x43XeIBF2D1E5Rrc4tNgY3jHho2QHkMFsNW8DVqSKnhoCWHEQAvD_BwE

https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help-you/contact-us/about-the-call?qclid=CjwKCAjw7cDaBRBtEiwAsxprXS-tlRM6g75x43XeIBF2D1E5Rrc4tNgY3jHho2QHkMFsNW8DVqSKnhoCWHEQAvD_BwE