



Recommendations to address a suspect bowling action

in non first class cricket, Premier League
and ECB cup competition cricket

The following is the recommended process to be followed in the event that an Umpire suspects that, in his/her opinion, an individual player's bowling action may not conform to the Laws of Cricket.

*** NOTE: This process does not apply to a clear and obvious contravention of Law 24.2, which shall be applied at all times.**

1) On the Field of play:

- a. On the first occurrence of what the umpire suspects is an illegal action the umpire should make a note, to be used as a formal record if required in future, containing the name of the player, over and ball.
- b. Upon a second occurrence (recorded as above) the umpire concerned should first establish if his / her colleague has similar concerns / recordings.

At this point and whether the other umpire has any specific input or not, the Captain of the fielding side must be alerted in the presence of both umpires as to the nature and recorded facts of the observations and informed that a report will be made in writing to the League immediately following the completion of the game.

It is the responsibility of the Captain to inform the player concerned and the game should continue without undue delay.

The calling of subsequent "No Balls" should be discouraged as finite assessment would not have been made at that time.

If in the opinion of BOTH Umpires their concern regarding the player's bowling action is of such a nature that it could affect the game itself, then TOGETHER they may agree to:

- i. Advise the Fielding Captain of their concerns and recommend that he / she takes appropriate action, which could mean amending delivery action or remove from bowling attack.
- ii. Inform the Captain, who will inform the bowler, that each subsequent delivery, suspected to be illegal, WILL be called "No Ball."

2) Post Match Report:

A concise report must be written by the observing Umpire(s) and signed by both Officials to be sent within 48 hours of the game to the Governing Body responsible for the match which could mean the Chair/General Secretary or the League/Cup Organiser.

3. Report Management:

Upon receipt of the report the Governing Body responsible for the match will investigate whether there are any similar reports on file and in any event write to the Chair of the Club affected recording that a report has been received and an investigation commenced.

If:

i. The report is the first received regarding the player and his bowling action, the League will notify the Club. There will be no further action taken by the Governing Body responsible for the match.

or

ii. If the report is the second regarding the player and his/her bowling action, within any 36 month period, the League will notify the Club, ECB Competitions Manager, ECB ACO Senior Executive Officer and the League Officials Appointments Officer **for information only**, that the player must not bowl until an assessment of the bowling action has taken place. Subsequent reports from the same umpire will not count as a second report.

The responsibility, enforcement and any costs incurred will reside with the Club and / or the player.

4. Assessment:

Assessment will take place at Loughborough University or at a site agreed by the League.

The procedure that needs to be followed prior to any assessment is as follows:-

a. The club needs to gain permission from the player and then submit high speed video** footage from a practice or match of a minimum of 2 and maximum 4 deliveries of each ball from the four angles described below. The bowler must wear a short sleeved top ensuring the elbow is clearly visible in the video footage. This footage would contain the stock delivery plus either faster or slower ball and action variation.

1. From behind the bowler
2. From side-on
3. From mid-on
4. From mid-off

If using independent assessment the footage should be sent to Aaron Campbell, ECB Competitions Department, Lord's Ground, London, NW8 8QZ, or by email to aaron.campbell@ecb.co.uk with a signed cheque for £300.00 (includes VAT). If the Independent Assessment takes place outside of Loughborough University any additional costs for travel and set up may be levied. If a League wishes to commission their own assessment using a local County Cricket club then local costs or charges may occur.

** 200 Hz high speed video recordings from a rear camera view If using independent assessment as described above, ECB will forward the footage to an independent observer or his nominated deputy currently, Mark King, Reader in Sports

Biomechanics, Sports Biomechanics Laboratory, Loughborough University, Ashby Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU for initial observation and the booking of an appointment for assessment of the footage.

Suspect Bowling Action

Following the assessment and 'Opinion Report*' the player, club and Governing Body responsible for the match will be informed by a member of ECB Competitions Department by email simultaneously.

In response to the 'Opinion Report' the League has one of the following options:

- i. To allow the player to resume bowling immediately as the action was considered to be within acceptable limits.
- ii. To allow the player to bowl within a defined limitation such as only 'stock' ball or 'off-spin'.
- iii. To recommend that the player completes a course of remedial action under the supervision of a professional bowling coach, at own/club cost before bowling again.
- iv. Upon completion of the remedial action work the player shall be referred to the ECB for further assessment and 'Opinion Report'.

*Opinion Report - Analysis is carried out by viewing frame by frame (ideally) high speed video recordings of a bowler from multiple video recording positions and identifying two configurations of the bowling arm between upper arm horizontal and ball release. In the first instance, the analysis will consider the most flexed bowling arm configuration followed by the bowling arm configuration at ball release. Once concluded, the elbow extension angle is estimated visually in both selected images and the level of extension determined as the difference in elbow extension angle between the two images.

Upon receipt of the 'Opinion Report' the League/Cup Organiser shall act as follows:

If the player is referred to ECB for a further assessment the new footage and a cheque for £250.00 (including VAT) shall be sent to Aaron Campbell, ECB Competitions Department, Lord's Ground, London, NW8 8QZ. Once received ECB will forward the footage to an independent observer or his nominated deputy currently, at Loughborough University, for initial observation and the booking of an appointment for assessment of the footage.

In any instance where a player, who has been identified as having an action outside of acceptable limits, plays or has been playing at a higher level than an ECB Premier Division, that player must play in the higher level environment for a minimum of one match, if selected. E.g. in County 2nd XI, Minor Counties' side before playing again in the Premier League. If exceptional circumstances exist then the situation will be managed in consultation between ECB and the relevant Premier League Chairman, If the player is not selected in the higher level environment then it is expected that having been assessed and if the latest 'Opinion report' (i or ii) allows the player to bowl then they may play in the Premier League.

5. Primary Notification

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body responsible for the match to communicate with the affected parties on the course of action to be followed.

This will include the degree of acceptance of the 'Opinion Report', the remedial work to be completed; any bowling limitations to be applied in the intervening period; or the referral process to be followed:

- a. Both the Club and the player will be advised within 7 days following receipt of the Report.
- b. The Chair and the League Officials Appointments Officer will be copied into the communication for completeness.

Any subsequent updates to this Primary Notification shall be at the discretion of the League and be driven by the needs of cricket and the status of the issue. At all times the aim of all parties must be to address any issues with sympathy and understanding for the player concerned but not to the exclusion of the Laws of Cricket.

6. Appeals

Any player or Club may appeal the decision of the League on any substantive matter relating to the suspect action, or their findings, or conclusions. Such an appeal should be made in the first instance to the League/Cup Organiser or Chairman of the County Cricket Board. The process to be adopted is laid out in the Non First Class Regulations under Guidelines on the Conduct of Hearings and Appeals.

7. Removal of suspension to bowl

It should be understood that irrespective of any previous assessment taken, all bowlers are subject to this protocol and having satisfied the testing criteria of a fair action under analysis does not prevent future application of this process.