



# Disciplinary Procedure

Part of the policy Framework

## Our Mission

To promote high standards of Western Equitation  
and stimulate the growth of these riding disciplines



## Document Metadata

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## 1. Purpose

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This procedure outlines how the Western Equestrian Society (WES) manages concerns about the conduct of individuals involved in the Society. It ensures that behavioural concerns are handled fairly, proportionately, and transparently, protecting the integrity of WES and the wellbeing of its members.

This procedure applies to **non-show environments**, including governance settings, online behaviour, correspondence, professional boundaries, and interpersonal conduct.

## 2. Scope

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This procedure applies to:

- Members of the Full and Extended Council
- Officers of the Society
- WES Professionals
- Area Representatives
- General WES members

It covers:

- Conduct inconsistent with the Society's values
- Breaches of the WES Constitution, Code of Conduct, or approved policies
- Disrespectful, abusive, dishonest, or harmful behaviour
- Inappropriate use of digital platforms or official communications
- Misuse of role or misrepresentation of authority

**Note:** Conduct in show environments is governed by the WES Rule Book and falls outside this procedure unless escalated to Council.

## 3. Definitions

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- **Respondent:** The individual whose behaviour is under review
- **Complainant:** The person raising the concern (may be internal or external)
- **Investigating Officer (IO):** A Council-appointed person responsible for gathering facts
- **Panel:** A group of three impartial Council members tasked with decision-making
- **Sanction:** A formal outcome of the procedure (e.g. warning, suspension, removal from role)

## 4. Policy Statement

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WES expects all those involved in its activities to behave respectfully, ethically, and in alignment with the Society's mission. Misconduct will be addressed in a timely, consistent, and fair manner, with clear stages and right of response.

This procedure is **not** intended for informal disagreements, feedback, or personality clashes unless they escalate into serious misconduct.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

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<b>Role</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Chairperson	Oversees the procedure; ensures fairness and confidentiality
Secretary	Supports process administration, records, and policy compliance
Investigating Officer	Gathers relevant facts and evidence impartially
Panel Members	Reach decisions based on evidence and proportionality
Respondent	Has the right to be informed, respond, and appeal
Complainant	Has the right to raise a concern and receive an outcome summary

## 6. Policy Detail / Procedures

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### 6.1 Stage 1: Concern Raised

- Concerns must be submitted **in writing** to the **Chairperson** or **Secretary**
- Anonymous concerns will not be pursued unless accompanied by compelling evidence
- Concerns must be specific, factual, and submitted within a reasonable timeframe (normally within 3 months of incident)

If the concern relates to:

- **The Chairperson** → send to the Secretary or a nominated Officer
- **A safeguarding matter** → see the Safeguarding Policy

### 6.2 Stage 2: Initial Review

The Chair (or delegate) will:

- Acknowledge receipt within 7 days
- Determine whether the concern meets the threshold for formal investigation
- Where appropriate, resolve the matter **informally** with mutual agreement (e.g. mediated conversation, clarification)

If the matter proceeds formally:

- An Investigating Officer (IO) will be appointed from outside the direct relationship or structure of the concern

### 6.3 Stage 3: Investigation

The IO will:

- Inform the respondent of the concern in writing
- Gather evidence (documents, correspondence, witness statements, relevant policy references)
- Offer the respondent the opportunity to respond in writing
- Submit a written **Investigation Report** to the Chair

The IO must complete the investigation within **21 days**, unless extended with written justification.

### 6.4 Stage 4: Disciplinary Panel

The Chair will convene a Panel of **3 impartial Council members**. The Panel will:

- Review the Investigation Report
- Consider the respondent's written response
- Invite the respondent to attend a hearing (optional, not mandatory)
- Make a decision based on evidence provided

The Panel may:

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Description</b>
No Action	Concern unsubstantiated or outside scope
Informal Resolution	Advice or guidance issued
Formal Warning	Conduct was below standard but remediable
Suspension	Temporary removal from role or activity for a fixed period
Removal from Role	Immediate and permanent removal from official role or representative status
Termination of Membership	In serious cases, the Panel may recommend expulsion from WES

All decisions will be confirmed in writing within **7 days** of the Panel meeting.

### **6.5 Stage 5: Appeal**

- Appeals must be submitted in writing within **14 days** of the outcome being issued
- Grounds must be:
  - Procedural error
  - New evidence not previously available
  - Disproportionate outcome

An **Appeals Panel**, made up of 3 different Council members, will be convened. Their decision will be final and issued in writing within 14 days.

### **6.6. Record-Keeping and Confidentiality**

- All disciplinary records will be stored securely by the Secretary for **6 years**
- Records will include the original complaint, investigation report, decision, and correspondence
- Information will be shared strictly on a **need-to-know basis**
- Summary anonymised outcomes may be reported to Council for governance purposes

## 7. Related Policies and References

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- WES Code of Conduct
- WES Constitution
- Safeguarding Policy
- Confidential Records Protocol
- Data Protection (GDPR) Policy
- WES Rule Book (for show-related procedures)

## 8. Compliance and Breach Handling

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Any attempt to interfere with the process (e.g. retaliation, suppression, or manipulation) may itself constitute a disciplinary matter.

Officers or Panel members who fail to maintain impartiality or confidentiality may be removed from the process or referred for separate review.

## 9. Review and Version Control

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Version	Date	Author	Changes Made
0.1	18/07/2025	DG	Initial policy draft
0.5	08/10/2025	DG	Changes following chairmans review
1.0	04/11/2025	DG	Published

## 10. Approval Record

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Approved By	Date	Notes
Full Council	04/11/2025	Approved for immediate use