



# Policy Framework – Introduction & Overview

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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## Contents

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Document Metadata .....	1
1. Purpose of this Document .....	3
2. Why We Have a Policy Framework .....	3
3. What Makes It Work.....	3
4. How Policies Relate to Each Other .....	4
5. What’s Included.....	4
6. Code of Conduct and Policy Attestation .....	5
7. Roles and Responsibilities.....	6
8. How to Use the Framework .....	6
9. Access and Storage .....	6
10. Future Development.....	7

## 1. Purpose of this Document

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This document introduces the **WES Policy Framework**: a structured set of policies that define how the Society operates, protects its members and horses, and ensures high standards of governance, safety, and integrity.

It provides a shared understanding for all those acting on behalf of WES and should be read by:

- All Council and Extended Council members
- Area Representatives and WES Professionals
- Event officials, volunteers, and officers
- Newcomers to WES seeking to understand how we operate

## 2. Why We Have a Policy Framework

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WES is a national membership organisation. Our policy framework provides the foundation for:

- Transparent, fair decision-making
- Clear responsibilities and standards
- Protection of people, animals, and data
- Confidence in how we lead, deliver, and resolve issues

This is not bureaucracy for its own sake. It's about **clarity, confidence, and care** in everything we do.

## 3. What Makes It Work

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We've deliberately designed our policies to be:

- **Compact**: Each policy is as short as it can be — clarity over complexity
- **Practical**: Grounded in real-world operations and volunteer delivery
- **Interlinked**: Many policies reference each other and work as a suite
- **Active**: Reviewed every three years or as needed after significant events

Importantly, **scale does not reflect importance**. Some of our most critical policies are also the shortest.

## 4. How Policies Relate to Each Other

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No policy stands alone. For example:

- The **Disciplinary Procedure** links directly to the **Code of Conduct, Safeguarding, and Complaints Procedure**
- The **Event Management Policy** draws on **Health & Safety, Risk Management, Incident Reporting, and Animal Welfare**
- The **Professional Standards Policy** connects to **Safeguarding, Volunteer Management, Communications, and Data Protection**

The framework is designed as a **coherent ecosystem**, not a series of isolated rules.

## 5. What's Included

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There are currently **32 policies**, grouped into the following thematic areas:

### A. Governance & Conduct

- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Inclusion (EDI)
- Policy Review & Maintenance
- Constitutional Review Policy

### B. Operations & Finance

- Financial Controls
- Reserves Policy
- Expenses and Subsistence
- Volunteer Reimbursement
- Event Management
- Professional Standards & Approval
- Membership Communications
- Social Media Policy

### C. People & Participation

- Volunteer Management

- Safeguarding
- Area Rep guidance (supporting material)
- Expectations of WES Professionals

#### **D. Risk, Data & Digital**

- Risk Management
- Health & Safety
- Incident Reporting
- Data Protection (GDPR)
- Subject Access Requests
- Data Breach Procedure
- Data Retention and Archiving
- Confidential Records Protocol
- Digital Asset Management
- IT & Email Access Policy

#### **E. Welfare & External Trust**

- Animal Welfare Policy
- Gifting and Donations
- Fundraising and Sponsorship

Each policy is version-controlled, stored in the WES Dataroom, and mapped to a named owner.

## **6. Code of Conduct and Policy Attestation**

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The **WES Code of Conduct** and the **WES Professionals code of conduct** are binding on anyone who holds a formal role within the Society. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Council and Extended Council members
- Area Reps and WES Professionals
- Event officials, trainers, and officers

You do **not** need to sign a separate form — the Code of Conduct applies automatically upon accepting a role.

In addition, WES conducts an **Annual Policy Attestation**, where all role holders confirm:

“I have read and understood the WES Code of Conduct and the policies relevant to my role, and I agree to uphold them.”

This approach ensures accountability while avoiding unnecessary paperwork. Breaches of the Code or associated policies may result in action under the **Disciplinary Procedure**.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

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Each policy has a named **owner** (usually a Council Officer), who is responsible for:

- Reviewing the policy at least every three years
- Flagging updates or risks
- Supporting interpretation and questions
- Reporting concerns or breaches

Ownership does not mean control - it means stewardship.

For avoidance of doubt the following is considered to be true

- The WES Chair – “ensures” (leadership and accountability)
- The Secretary – “facilitates” (administration, record keeping)
- The WES Council – “owns” each policy

## 8. How to Use the Framework

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- Read the policies relevant to your role
- Refer to them when making decisions or planning events
- Ask the Secretary if you're unsure which policies apply
- Use the framework as a source of clarity and consistency

This framework is a **tool**, not a barrier — use it to empower, not restrict.

## 9. Access and Storage

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All policies are stored in the **WES Governance & Compliance Dataroom**, organised by:

- Reference code (e.g. WES-POL-0014)
- Owner
- Thematic group
- Version history

The Dataroom is a shared, read-only resource for Council members and Officers. Sensitive or restricted documents are access-limited where appropriate.

## 10. Future Development

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This is version 1 of the WES Policy Framework. We will continue to:

- Refine policies based on member feedback and real-world use
- Expand guidance for specific roles or functions
- Ensure alignment with our Constitution, Rule Book, and best practice
- Streamline communication and training over time