



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FSA MEMBERS

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour that individual members and supporter groups (through their appointed representatives) in membership of the Football Supporters' Association ('the Association') are expected to adhere as a condition of that membership. Failure to observe its stipulations shall be regarded as a breach of this code and may incur disciplinary action up to and including removal from their position under the provisions set out in the Association's Disciplinary Policy, a copy of which is appended to this Code.

Duties and Responsibilities Specific to Supporter Groups

1. Where a supporter group holds membership of the Association its officials are responsible for ensuring that the group's administration, actions and conduct remain consistent with the Association's values, objects and rules as set out in the Association's Articles and other policies and procedures. Responsible officials are members of the group's board or controlling committee and any other appointed official representative or employee. Responsibilities include:
 - 1.1 continuing to meet all qualifying criteria for their Affiliate or Associate membership status;
 - 1.2 ensuring that all actions taken by their organisation are within the law of the land;
 - 1.3 ensuring that their organisation's business is conducted in accordance with its Constitution and policies;
 - 1.4 adopting and maintaining a diversity policy and a complaints policy and procedure that addresses diversity and behaviour breaches;
 - 1.5 ensuring that officials of the organisation do not bring the Association into disrepute by a breach of any of the Association standards set out in the rest of this Code.



Obeying the Law

2. Members must ensure that any campaigns, demonstrations and other activities upon which they may embark do not bring the Association into disrepute or amount to breach of the law.

Standards of Behaviour

3. In all of their activities, members are expected to show appropriate standards of behaviour in order that the Association's good name and reputation is maintained.
4. Members will observe the following standards:
 - 4.1 in all dealings with each other and when representing the Association, refraining from discriminatory language and behaviour, including upholding at all times the protected equality characteristics of others as set out in current Equalities legislation. As a minimum these include age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity;
 - 4.2 on public occasions and on all Association business, behaving in a way that is appropriate for a representative of the Association. This includes not bringing the Association into disrepute in any context:
5. These standards apply to all forms of verbal and written communication including social media.

Behaviour in Meetings

6. Members will treat meetings of the Association that they may attend as formal occasions, and will observe the following:
 - 6.1 accepting the authority of the chair of any meeting, expressing all questions and points of view through the chair;
 - 6.2 listening to the views of colleagues, seeking advice or clarification where needed, expressing their own views, and coming to their own decision on individual matters in good faith in what they believe to be in the best interests of the Association;
 - 6.3 not resorting to behaviour that could be considered to be discriminatory, offensive, aggressive or intimidating



- 6.4 keeping to the agenda, raising other issues under “any other business” according to agreed procedures, and not engaging in discussions during the meeting which are not relevant to the issues of the meeting;

Breaches of Code and Disciplinary Procedure

7. Members accept that they must comply with this Code if the Association is to be able to function properly and efficiently and do its job.
8. Where a Member is alleged to be in breach of any element of this Code or any other adopted policy of The Association, the process laid out in the Disciplinary Policy should be followed.

Status of this Code

This Code of Conduct was approved by the Board of The Association at its meeting on 25th September 2020. Accession to the Council and Board shall be contingent upon receipt by the Secretary of a signed acceptance of its stipulations.



APPENDIX DISCIPLINARY POLICY

All members of the Football Supporters Association ('the Association') agree to be bound by the constitution and policies of the Association, which require that the conduct of all members is not prejudicial to the Association.

This policy sets out the process by which the Association should investigate complaints or charges that a member may, directly or indirectly, have breached the terms of any code of conduct that they have signed up to as a condition of their membership and/or any elected office. It does not apply to employees of the organisation whose conduct will be governed by a policy more specific to contractually employed staff.

Raising a Potential Policy Breach

- 1 A potential policy breach may come to light through a number of sources including, but not limited to:
 - 1.1 Issue arising during the course of a meeting that cannot be resolved by immediate intervention of the Meeting Chair to the satisfaction of all parties;
 - 1.2 Complaint from an individual (who may or may not be a fellow Association member)
 - 1.3 An anonymous whistle-blower;
 - 1.4 Identified by employees of the Association;

Investigation Process

2. Reported breaches should be addressed through the escalating stages detailed below until resolved in accordance with this policy.

Stage 1: Informal Investigation

3. Informal consideration of evidence, and discussion with directly affected persons, by a designated member of the Association's staff. At this stage the matter can be resolved by;
 - 3.1 determining that there is no case to answer, or
 - 3.2 amicable resolution to the satisfaction of all parties



Stage 2: Formal Investigation

4. If the matter has not been resolved at Stage 1 and following a decision by the Chair or Vice Chair that there may be a case to answer, the Board will constitute a Disciplinary Committee to conduct a formal investigation and determine the facts of the case.
5. If the Board decides to constitute a Disciplinary Committee a majority of the Board may rule that the Member(s) concerned be suspended until the Disciplinary Committee process has concluded.
6. Should the member be suspended, they shall not be entitled to vote nor attend formal meetings of the Association for the period of suspension.
7. The Disciplinary Committee will consist of one of the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Board unless they are the subject of the disciplinary action, in which case another member of the Board will be selected by the Board as Chair of the Committee. The Chair of the Committee will have a second or casting vote in the event of a tie. In addition, the Committee will comprise up to 4 but no less than 2 National Council members (who shall not be the subject of the disciplinary action.)
8. The Disciplinary Committee shall meet as soon as is practicable after it is constituted and shall invite the member concerned to attend or submit their version of events and/or mitigating circumstances.
9. The Disciplinary Committee shall act honestly and equitably in assessing the facts of the disciplinary case before it.
10. If the member concerned fails to either attend or submit their version of events and/or mitigating circumstances as envisaged above the Disciplinary Committee can proceed and make such inferences as it sees fit from such non-attendance or non-submission.
11. If the case is upheld the Disciplinary Committee will determine an appropriate sanction to be applied as detailed below in clause 26.
12. The Disciplinary Committee shall formally notify all parties and the Board of their conclusions alongside any sanctions to be imposed in writing.

Stage 3: Appeal

13. Accused members have a right to appeal a Stage 2 decision.



14. Accused members will have 10 working days from formal written notification of the conclusion of Stage 2 process to indicate their wish to initiate the appeal process, in writing to the Association's Secretary.
15. The case will then be considered by a new panel drawn from the Association's National Council, that should include either the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Association, whichever was not involved on the panel at Stage 2. The Chair of the panel will have a second or casting vote in the event of a tie.
16. The panel will formally notify all parties and the Board of their conclusions upon review of the case presented in Stage 2.
17. There is no further appeal or challenge process beyond Stage 3, notwithstanding the right of any member to seek redress through judicial process.

Conduct of Investigations

18. At each stage the following rules and protocols will apply:
 - 18.1 All relevant documents and materials should be made available in advance to all parties.
 - 18.2 Cases may be conducted through written exchange of communication, but the respondent has the right to request face to face proceedings (including through remote audio or visual channels)
 - 18.3 Either party may present the evidence of witnesses to material facts of the case.
 - 18.4 Confidentiality should be maintained until final resolution. At the conclusion of proceedings, the panel will attempt to agree a joint statement if appropriate.
 - 18.5 No person with a direct connection to the accused or who is connected to material facts of the case can participate as part of a Disciplinary Committee.
 - 18.6 Any person who is a panel member at Stage 2 cannot participate in Stage 3.
 - 18.7 The accused may request a person to attend proceedings alongside them as an observer.

Potential Sanctions

19. Where a case is proven, sanctions should be applied that reflect the seriousness of the breach and any previous proven breaches of the relevant code by the accused person. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to one of more of the following:



- No action necessary
 - Mutually agreed resolution such as an acknowledgement or apology
 - Written warning/reprimand
 - Agreed corrective action by the accused member
 - Suspension from elected position on National Council and/or Board for a defined period
 - Early termination of elected position on National Council and/or Board
 - Suspension of FSA membership for a defined period
 - Expulsion from the FSA
20. No member expelled from membership as a result of disciplinary action shall be re-admitted except by majority ruling of the Board.