



**Dance
Promoters'
Association** ®

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

We are committed to ensuring the compliance of all our Association with the Rules contained on your website. The Rules govern all of the Associations work undertaken with events, competitions and work associated with therefore.

In particular, we seek to foster a culture of commitment and adherence to our Equity Rule, which prohibits unlawful discrimination on the grounds of a range of protected characteristics, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex or sexual orientation.

In order to do this, we need you to tell us when any of our members get things wrong.

We want to help resolve your complaint as quickly as possible. We listen to your complaints, treat them seriously, and learn from them so that we can continuously improve our service.

Making a Complaint

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction in relation to a breach of the Associations Rules, whether justified or not.

Who may make a complaint?

Any member of an organisation or of the public may make complaints.

Who may a complaint be made against?

Complaints may be made against the Committee or any of its members.

How should complaints be made?

If you wish to make a complaint, you may do so by e-mail or letter using the Associations Complaints Procedure Form at Appendix 1.

In order to be considered, the complaint must:

- be in writing – hand or electronically

- be signed by each of the complainants
- have a postal address provided in the appropriate field.

Our contact details are in the “Contacting us” section below. Please address all correspondence to the Secretary.

If you are disabled, and need a reasonable adjustment to ensure you can register your complaint, you can contact us alternatively by telephone (one of our officers will help you by writing out your complaint.)

If you require different adjustments, let us know and we will try and put those arrangements in place where we can.

Is there a time limit for making a complaint?

Yes. If you wish to make a complaint, you must do so within 6 months of the date of the act, giving rise to the complaint. Once this final date has passed, you will be too late to complain.

Complaints may be considered after 6 months only in exceptional circumstances, where there is good reason for the delay and where the EC considers it would be just and equitable to extend time.

Confidentiality

Your complaint will be dealt with confidentially. Its contents will be disclosed only where necessary.

Our Response Overview

We have a three-stage complaints procedure.

At each stage, it will help us to resolve your complaint quickly if you can give us as much clarity and detail as possible, including providing any documents and correspondence. If we do not have all the details required to deal with the complaint, we may contact you and ask you for further information.

Our Secretary, is responsible for managing the handling of complaints, including notifying you of the outcome.

Stage one

This is the first opportunity for us to resolve your dissatisfaction. We expect the majority of complaints to be resolved at this stage.

What happens when the Council receives my complaint?

Within 7 working days of receipt of your complaint, the EC (or the person to whom this role is delegated) will appoint an individual investigating officer and ask him or her to investigate your complaint.

Who may be appointed as an investigating officer?

The investigating officer may be any member of the EC or Member of the Association, save that the investigating officer:

- must not to be a complainant, or be any person named in the complaint;
- must not have had any involvement in the matters forming part of the complaint; and
- if the complaint relates to a breach of the Association's Equity Rule, must have received appropriate equality and diversity training, which included training in the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, within the 24 months prior to the date on which the investigating officer was appointed to investigate the complaint.

What steps will the investigating officer take? Once appointed, the investigating officer will take the following steps:

1. The investigating officer will acknowledge your complaint by letter within 7 working days of being appointed. The letter will set out the timescale for the determination of the complaint and invite you to submit any further documentary evidence on which you wish to rely.
2. The investigating officer will offer to meet you and allow you to make oral representations.
3. The investigating officer will notify any person complained about of the fact and the content of the complaint. He or she will invite representations and / or any relevant documentary material to be produced and will further offer to hold a meeting with the person complained about.
4. The investigating officer may also contact any other person whom he or she considers may have relevant evidence in respect of the complaint.
5. The investigating officer will consider all of the material and set out his or her findings in a written report. The report will clearly set out whether the complaint, or any part of it, is upheld, and will provide summary reasons for that conclusion.
6. If the investigating officer considers that the complaint, or any part of it, should be upheld, he or she will make recommendations as to what steps (including, where appropriate, what sanctions) the EC ought to impose.
7. The investigating officer will send copies of the report to the complainant, the person complained about and the Chairman of the Executive Committee. The procedure outlined above should take place within 6 weeks of the investigating officer being appointed.

What happens next?

Either the complainant, or any person complained about, has the right to ask for the complaint to be considered by the EC at stage two. If neither the complainant nor any person complained about makes such a request, the investigating officer's decision is binding on the parties and on the EC.

Do I have the right to bring someone with me to any meeting held with the investigating officer?

Yes. You, or any person mentioned in the complaint, may be accompanied at any meetings held with the investigating officer. However, it is at the discretion of the investigating officer whether the person accompanying you or the person mentioned in the complaint can include a legal representative.

Stage two

If, having followed the first stage of our Complaints Procedure, you remain dissatisfied, you can ask to have your complaint reviewed by the EC. The same right is accorded to any person complained about. Either party must submit their request within 14 days of being notified of the investigating officer's decision.

Who will carry out the review at stage two?

The complaint will be considered by the EC, or by a committee of members of the EC (comprising no fewer than three members) to whom this function has been delegated.

Any Board member participating in the decision-making process at stage two:

- must not have been the investigating officer at stage one;
- must not have been the complainant, or be any person named in the complaint;
- must not have had any involvement in the matters forming part of the complaint; and
- if the complaint relates to a breach of the Council's Equity Rule, must have received appropriate equality and diversity training, which included training in the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, within the 24 months prior to the date on which the EC being notified of the request for review at stage two.

How do I request a review at stage two?

If you wish to ask the EC to carry out a review, you may do so by e-mail or letter.

Our contact details are in the "Contacting us" section below.

What steps will the EC take?

Once notified, the Executive Committee will take the following steps:

1. The EC will acknowledge the request for review within 7 working days of receipt.

2. The EC will invite written representations by the involved parties on the independent officer's report.
3. The EC may hold a hearing where it considers it necessary to determine the matters raised in the complaint, but is under no obligation to do so. If the person complained about is invited to a hearing, the complainant will be afforded an equivalent right to make representations in person to the EC.
4. The EC will then make a report in writing, indicating whether the findings of the independent officer at stage one are to be upheld, outlining any steps to be taken and / or sanctions to be imposed and providing summary reasons for its decision.

The procedure outlined above should take place within 6 weeks of the EC being notified of the request for review at stage two.

What happens next?

Either the complainant, or any person complained about, has the right to ask for the complaint to be considered at stage three. If neither the complainant nor any person complained about makes such a request, the EC's decision is binding on the parties

Stage three

If, having followed the first two stages of our Complaints Procedure, you remain dissatisfied, you can ask to have your complaint reviewed by an independent person appointed by the Board. The same right is accorded to any person complained about. Either party must submit their request within 14 days of being notified of the EC's decision.

How do I request a review at stage three?

If you wish to have your complaint considered at stage three, you may do so by e-mail or letter. Our contact details are in the "Contacting us" section below.

Who may be appointed as an independent person?

The independent person who will carry out the review of the complaint at stage three:

- must not have been a member of the EC and must not have participated in or been an organiser of a competition or championship under the The British dance Council's Rules;
- must not be a complainant, the person named in the complaint, or have had any involvement in the matters forming part of the complaint; and
- if the complaint relates to a breach of the Council's Equity Rule, must have received appropriate equality and diversity training, which included training in the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, within the 24 months prior to the date on which he or she was appointed to determine the complaint.

What steps will the independent person take?

Once appointed, the independent person will take the following steps:

1. The independent person will acknowledge the request for review within 7 working days of receipt.
2. The independent person will review the complaint and the outcome of stages one and two. The procedure by which the independent person will do so is entirely a matter for him or her. Ordinarily, stage three will be completed on the existing papers.
3. The independent person will then complete a report in writing, indicating whether the findings of the EC at stage two are to be upheld, outlining any steps to be taken and / or sanctions to be imposed and providing summary reasons for his or her decision.

The procedure outlined above should take place within 4 weeks of the EC being notified of the request for review at stage three.

What happens next?

The decision of the independent person is final and binding on all parties to the complaint, including the EC.

Extending time limits

We aim to complete our investigation into all complaints received within the timescales set out above. However, in a limited number of cases - for example, if a complaint is very complex or requires further breakdown – it may be necessary to extend the time limit to ensure we have all the information necessary to deal with it. If this is the case, we will keep you informed of progress with the investigation, the reasons for the delay, and notify you of next steps.

Sanctions / Remedies

When we get things wrong, we will act to:

- accept responsibility and apologise;
- explain what went wrong and why;
- put things right by making any changes required; and
- learn lessons from mistakes and change policies and practices where proportionate and sensible to do so.

Equally, where one of our Members are found to have got things wrong, we will not hesitate to apply appropriate sanctions. The sanction applied needs to be proportionate and appropriate to the breach of the Rule that occurred, and take into account what

redress people seek when they complain. An apology is generally the most appropriate action, but other measures may also be necessary in some circumstances. Sanctions may include a reprimand, a fine, the temporary or permanent withdrawal of a licence or any combination thereof.

Vexatious Complaints

We sometimes receive complaints that can be deemed “vexatious” or “frivolous”. These complaints can be costly to handle; or responding to them may be a disproportionate use of our staff’s time. Accordingly, where a complaint can fairly be seen as obsessive, obnoxious or harassing in nature, designed to cause disruption or annoyance or lacking any serious purpose or value, the Board may decline to determine it.

Contacting Us

All complaints and requests for review under our Complaints Procedure should be sent as follows:

The Secretary

Mr Kris Turner

dpasecretary@gmail.com

Appendix A Complaints Form

Complaints Form

Personal details

Full name

Address (including postcode):

E-mail address:

Telephone number:

Dance school (if applicable):

Status (e.g., professional, teacher, competitor, organiser, adjudicator / scrutineer, parent, guardian, spectator):

Are you disabled? (please circle as appropriate) YES/NO

If you have indicated that you are disabled, do you require any adjustments to be made to engage with the Complaints Procedure?

Complaint details

What is the Rule you say has been breached?

Name of person(s) complained about:

When and where did the event(s) complained of take place?

Please provide a description of the event(s) complained of. (You may expand on a separate sheet if necessary.)

What would you like done about your complaint?

If the breach complained of relates to the Associations' Equity Rule, please answer the following, additional questions: What are the grounds on which you say you have been discriminated against?

Signature Complainant (please print name):

Signature:

Date:

*EC = Executive Committee