

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

LAWS & ETHICS COMMITTEE

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1 Disciplinary procedures

1.1 Any member of the Union who, whether in Northern Ireland or in any place within the jurisdiction of the World Bridge Federation

1.1.1 when playing duplicate contract bridge plays unfairly or violates the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge or fails to comply with the conduct and etiquette contained in said Laws; or

1.1.2 who attending for any purpose whatsoever at the site of a match, tournament or congress where duplicate bridge is played or at any meeting in connection with the administration of bridge behaves in such a manner as to cause offence or annoyance to another person [whether or not such person is a member of the Union] or behaves reprehensibly; or

1.1.3 withdraws from a competition organised by or under the auspices of the Union after commencement thereof without adequate reason;

may, at the absolute discretion of the Committee, be expelled from the Union, or be suspended from membership of the Union or from participation in one or more competitions of the Union for such period as the Committee shall consider fit, or be admonished

1.2 Reprehensible behaviour is defined in Appendix One

1.2.1 Any allegation to be entertained by the Committee shall be made in writing and lodged with the Secretary of the Union or a member of the Council of the Union

1.2.2 The member against whom such allegation has been made shall be notified in writing by the Committee of the allegation made and requested to respond to the Committee in writing within 14 days or such longer period as the Committee deems reasonable

1.3 Where a member admits in writing an offence under clause 1.1 and the Committee decides the matter may be disposed of without the presence of the member, the Committee shall be empowered so to proceed by written notice to the member without further enquiry

1.4 Where a member does not admit in writing an offence under clause 1 the Committee shall:-

1.4.1 Enquire in any manner which seems to the Committee to be appropriate into any matter which has been alleged against any member under clause 3.1;

1.4.2 Make findings of fact consequent upon such enquiry;

1.4.3 Make decisions consequent upon such findings

1.4.4 Publish such findings and decisions or parts thereof as it thinks fit;

1.4.5 Provide the Council with such reports of its proceedings as the Council may from time to time require

1.5 In every case in which an enquiry is made the Committee shall:

1.5.1 Give notice in writing of the enquiry and of the substance of each and every allegation to each member against whom such allegation is made;

1.5.2 at the enquiry allow such member to defend himself against each allegation made against him and allow him to make a statement of his own case and to call witnesses, but not allow him to be represented save at the discretion of the Committee

1.5.3 Suspend from the Committee, for the purpose of the enquiry, any member of the Committee who is in any manner personally involved in any allegation which is the subject of the enquiry.

1.6 The Committee shall notify the member who is the subject of the enquiry of its findings, of the action taken by it thereon and of his right of appeal as defined in clause 1.8 and such notification shall be sent by e-mail and registered post to the address of the member last notified to the Secretary of the Union

1.7 A member expelled or suspended from membership of the Union shall not during the period of such expulsion or suspension play in any competition promoted organised or managed by the Union

1.8 Notice of expulsion, suspension or admonishment shall be published on the Union website after the expiry of the time allowed for appeal against such expulsion, suspension, admonishment or fine

2 Appeals against recommendation of expulsion, suspension or admonishment

2.1 No appeal shall lie against a finding of fact by the Committee but in respect of all other matters a member shall have the right of appeal to the Appeals Committee

2.2 Notice of appeal must be given to the Secretary of the Union within 14 days of the posting of notification referred to in clause 1.6 and must contain the grounds on which the appellant bases his appeal and the arguments he puts forward to support those grounds

2.3 The Appeals Committee shall consist of a chairman and three other persons selected by the Council for the purpose of the appeal in question from a panel comprising the members of the Council but excluding all members of the Committee who shall have adjudicated on the case in question. Three members of the Appeals Committee shall constitute a quorum

2.4 The proceedings of the Appeals Committee shall consist of up to four stages as follows:

2.4.1 a preliminary consideration of the Notice of Appeal submitted by the appellant by the chairman of the Appeals Committee and, if in his absolute discretion he considers it necessary or desirable, the appellant will be requested to expand and augment the grounds and arguments he has put forward to support his appeal;

2.4.2 A consideration by the Appeals Committee as to whether or not having considered the Notice of Appeal [as expanded and augmented if appropriate] the Appeals Committee wishes to hear the appellant in person;

2.4.3 in the event that the Appeals Committee, in its absolute discretion, decides that it does not need to hear the appellant in person in order fairly and properly to deal with the appeal, it will move on to consider and reach a decision on the appeal;

2.4.4 In the event that the Appeals Committee decides that it is necessary to hear the appellant in person in order fairly and properly to deal with the appeal, the Appeals Committee shall adjourn and the appellant shall be requested to attend a reconvened meeting

of the Appeals Committee. At such reconvened meeting the appellant will [if he represents himself] be heard and [at the discretion of the Appeals Committee] the chairman or his designate may be requested to comment on the representations of the appellant

2.5 The Appeals Committee shall have the power to uphold or vary the decision of the Committee if satisfied that such penalty is excessively harsh or excessively lenient or inappropriate

2.6 The Appeals Committee shall have the like powers and duties as the Committee in relation to publication and reporting its findings

2.7 Save for the selected members of an Appeals Committee no other member or ex-officio member shall attend a meeting of an Appeals Committee unless specifically requested or authorised in writing by the chairman of the Appeals Committee

2.8.1 Any person who has been expelled or suspended from the Union and any person who resigned from the Union after a complaint was made against him shall be entitled at the expiration of one year from the date of expulsion or suspension to apply to the Council for reinstatement.

2.8.2 The Council may reinstate such person either before or after receipt of such application or postpone such reinstatement for so long a period as it may in its absolute discretion think fit, but not beyond the date of any then suspension

Appendix One

1 Reprehensible behaviour shall include, but shall not be limited to -

1.1 improper conduct towards any Officer or body of the Union;

1.2 defamatory e-mails against an Officer or body of the Union;

1.3 acts of harassment and criminal actions;

1.4 failure to appear before the Laws & Ethics Committee or an Appeals Committee constituted by the Laws & Ethics Committee;

1.5 attempting to influence a decision of any appeal or disciplinary committee outside of the hearing process;

1.6 partnering or playing on a team with a person who is serving a suspension from the Union or who is presently expelled from the Union;

1.7 failure of a member participating in a Union event or representing the Union to pay a valid hotel bill;

1.8 failure to pay any sums due to the Union;

1.9 misappropriation of Union funds; or

1.10 unauthorised use of Union member data for either personal use or financial gain or harassment

1.11 as a member of Laws & Ethics Committee or Selection Committee disclosing confidential information to a person who is not a member of that committee

1.12 As a member of Council disclosing confidential information to a person who is not a member of Council