



## FireSport UK – Code of Conduct

Taking part in activities that are linked to FireSport UK and its recognised sections comes with responsibilities for those involved. These activities should be seen as an extension of work and individuals should conduct themselves and behave in ways that uphold the reputation of FireSport UK and the many organisations who support it.

### **FireSport UK will adopt the following principles as set out in the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services:**

**Dignity and Respect**- All members of FireSport UK and its sections will treat people with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

**Integrity** - All members of FireSport UK and its sections will act with integrity by being open, honest and consistent in their behaviours.

**Leadership** - Members of FireSport UK and its sections act as role models and understand that they are representing Fire Sport UK, their specific section and where relevant, the Fire and Rescue Services they are employed in. Members recognise that they are accountable for their conduct and behaviours when taking part in activities linked to FireSport UK and members should feel empowered and confident to raise concerns about behaviours and conduct that fall short of these expectations.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** – Members of FireSport UK and its sections will embrace and promote the values of EDI across all of its activities. All sections will seek to remove any barriers to ensure that equal opportunity and equal access are given to all participants.

The final principle for FireSport UK is Fair Play.

**Fair Play** – When taking part in all activities linked to FireSport UK, the following must be observed:

- Respect the rules
- Respect others in the group/team
- Respect the officials and their decisions
- Respect for opponents
- Maintain self-control at all times.

Members who wish to raise concerns regarding individuals or teams relating to this code of conduct should follow the Code of Conduct Concern / Complaints Procedure ([link to webpage](#)).



## **FireSport UK – Code of Conduct Concern / Complaints Procedure**

### **Step 1:**

All complaints regarding the misconduct of FireSport UK members or individual section members should be submitted in writing to the relevant section secretary. Where the matter relates to the section Secretary, submit the complaint to the Fire Sport UK Secretary. The content of a complaint must include specific details and evidence in relation to the infringement of the FireSport UK Code of Conduct or any other offence or misconduct carried out during or in association with FireSport UK activities which might reasonably be considered as bringing or having the potential to bring FireSport UK or any of its sections into disrepute.

### **Step 2:**

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary shall, having taken, and subject to, such advice as he or she considers it prudent to take in the circumstances, write to the Member or Members concerned to inform them of the complaint and to invite them to comment on the relevant allegations. Responses should be requested in writing and within a reasonable time (no less than 14 days). Members concerned will include the complainant/s, any witnesses who should be invited to submit a witness statement and the individual/s subject to the complaint.

### **Step 3:**

On completion of step 2, the section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary will determine if the complaint has sufficient grounds and requires pursuing based on the evidence/statements provided. If the matter is sufficiently evidenced a Hearing process will be pursued.

The section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary will appoint 3 members to sit on the Disciplinary Hearing Panel, none of whom have had any direct interest or involvement in the matter.

### **Step 4:**

The Disciplinary Hearing Panel will formally consider the matter during a meeting (Hearing) that should be set up within a reasonable timeframe following the receipt of all relevant contributions from members concerned. All individuals required to attend should be given sufficient notice (no less than 14 days) and meetings can be in person, virtual or hybrid. The Disciplinary Hearing Panel will have the power to adjourn proceedings pending further investigations or enquiries if it feels further evidence needs to be obtained. The Disciplinary Hearing Panel will also have the power to temporarily suspend any Member accused of an offence or misconduct and during this suspension, the Member will not be permitted to engage in any activities linked to FireSport UK. This suspension shall be to facilitate the investigation and be without prejudice to the outcome of the investigation.

The Disciplinary Hearing Panel will offer a reasonable opportunity to any Member concerned to answer the allegations and offer an explanation and mitigation. The Disciplinary Hearing Panel may also request witnesses to present evidence or refer to witness statements obtained at step 2.

If the Disciplinary Panel/Hearing is satisfied that an offence of misconduct has been committed by a Member, then it may impose one or more of the following actions:



- i. note the offence or misconduct but take no further action;
- ii. formally warn the Member concerned and highlight the improvements required for future conduct;
- iii. suspend or disqualify the Member from FireSport UK activities for a fixed period (6 months or 12 months)
- iv. terminate membership and ban the Member from all future FireSport UK activities.

The Disciplinary Hearing Panel will make a decision based on a majority vote.

The Member/s concerned will be provided with the Disciplinary Hearing Panel's decision via a formal written outcome letter and this should be sent securely via email or posted within seven days of the decision. The relevant section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary shall also be informed of the outcome via secure email.

If the decision results in the requirement for a section or FireSport UK Executive to re-appoint to refill posts then this should be resolved at the earliest opportunity with confirmation taking place at the next AGM for the relevant section or the AGM for FireSport UK.

### **Step 5 – Appeal Process:**

The letter notifying the decision of the Disciplinary Hearing Panel shall also set out the right to Appeal. Any appeal against the decision of the Disciplinary Hearing Panel must be made in writing to the section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary within seven calendar days of receiving the written decision. The Notice of Appeal must state the grounds on which the decision and outcome of the Disciplinary Hearing Panel is challenged.

The section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary shall acknowledge a Notice of Appeal within seven calendar days of its receipt and will make a decision regarding 'the grounds on which the decision is challenged', if there are sufficient grounds/evidence provided to support the challenge, the Appeal Panel process will commence (Step 5.1.), if there are insufficient grounds, the appeal will be dismissed and the appellant will have this confirmed in writing.

#### **Step 5.1.**

The section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary shall seek to appoint an Appeal Panel of three members who have not been involved either in the events giving rise to the Hearing, or in the initial Disciplinary Hearing itself. In organising the Appeal Panel Hearing, the section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary shall clarify and communicate the following:

- the date and place at which the Appeal Panel will meet to determine the Appeal.
- whether the appeal will proceed by way of consideration of written submissions alone or a Formal Appeal Hearing; and
- whether the parties should be required to submit statements of their evidence and/or written submissions before the hearing and, if so, a timetable for doing so and the procedure for exchanging such statements and written submissions.



## **Powers of the Appeal Panel**

The Appeal Panel shall meet on the date fixed by the section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary.

The Appeal Panel shall have the power to decide on the facts as it thinks fit and may:

- i. Quash the original decision;
- ii. Confirm the original decision:
- iii. Increase or decrease the original sanction (for example turn a 12-month suspension into a 6-month suspension from activities).

The Appeal Panel will make a decision based on a majority vote.

The Appeal Panel shall inform all relevant parties of its decision within fourteen calendar days together with written reasons for its decision. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final.

The relevant section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary shall also be informed of the outcome via secure email.

## **Representative / Support**

Any Member placed under investigation through this procedure can take a representative/supporter to any meetings, interviews and hearings as required under this procedure. The section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary must be informed of the intention to take a representative/supporter along to any of the formal proceedings and the notes of meetings, interviews and hearings will reflect their role in such proceedings.

## **Records of Hearings and Appeals**

The decision of a Disciplinary Hearing Panel / Appeal Panel shall be recorded and retained in confidential records for 6 years by the section. Supporting documentation shall also be retained for the same period.

## **Notification to host services**

Where appropriate the relevant Panel Chair, once the Appeal notice has expired, will inform the individual's host Fire and Rescue Service if there has been a sanction higher than a formal warning. If the member is employed outside of the UK FRS then no notification shall be sent to their employer.

## **Co-operation of All Parties**

The procedures described above assume that all parties will cooperate in the interest of resolving the issue in question. In the absence of such co-operation, or if it is withdrawn at any stage, the section Secretary / FireSport UK Secretary reserves the right to proceed with a Hearing or an Appeal based on such evidence and information as it can obtain.