



## COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY

### CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS OF A SAFEGUARDING NATURE

If you believe matter is serious and to contact the club would cause a delay which might endanger a child then you should take immediate action and contact the Police or Children's Social Services. All concerns regarding possible abuse or poor practice involving a member under the age of 18 should be handled using Tenchi Ryu's Safeguarding procedures.

See "Responding to Concerns" or contact your Club Welfare Officer.

### COMPLAINT HANDLING GUIDELINES

As a club administrator it can be confusing to know what to do when problems arise.

Complaints can emerge from many sources: coaches, parents, members and even the public. They could be about behaviour of individuals or they could be about decisions made by the club committee.

Complaints can vary from minor to major and may escalate rapidly from one to the other unless they are well managed.

### COMPLAINT HANDLING PRINCIPLES

Tenchi Ryu is committed to handling complaints in a fair, just and transparent way in all its Clubs and will follow clear processes and procedures at all times.

In particular we are committed to adherence to the following principles and will:

- ✓ Treat complaints seriously
- ✓ Act promptly
- ✓ Treat people fairly and listen to both sides of the story
- ✓ Stay neutral
- ✓ Keep parties to the complaint informed
- ✓ Try to maintain confidentiality if possible
- ✓ Protect against victimisation

- ✓ Keep accurate records
- ✓ Make decisions based only on information gathered not personal views
- ✓ Ensure disciplinary action is relative to the breach
- ✓ Complaint handling options

We will deal with complaints in a number of ways:

- ✓ Informally for less serious complaints
- ✓ Formally where complaints may breach policy guidance
- ✓ By referral to an external agencies for very serious issues

## IS IT A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN?

If you have a concern or complaint then you need to act. Initially we advise you to contact the club concerned. 'Concerns' can often be dealt with informally within the club and hopefully after a discussion with the relevant people they can be resolved to everyone's satisfaction.

'Complaints' differ to 'concerns' in as much as they are subject to a more formal procedure i.e. cannot be easily resolved by a general chat within the club. It might be, for example, that the concern is about someone 'in charge' – or you have tried to resolve it locally without any success

## COMPLAINTS WHICH CANNOT BE RESOLVED INFORMALLY AT CLUB LEVEL

The procedure is staged and our hope is that issues will be resolved quickly and informally.

There are three possible stages:

---

### STAGE 1 – INITIAL RESOLUTION PROCESS

Contact the Chief Instructor/Head of Association not later than four days following the incident that has led to the complaint. This timeframe may be extended where complaints come from people outside of the club.

If a resolution is not found within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint then you may wish to proceed to stage 2.

---

### STAGE 2 – FORMAL PROCEDURE

If the issue cannot be resolved using Stage 1, complaints should be put in writing and sent to the Chief Instructor/Head of Association (please include an email address and telephone number). Upon receipt of a written complaint we will endeavour to contact the Complainant within 7 working days to acknowledge receipt of the letter.

The Tenchi Ryu Complaints Committee will need to discuss the matter with relevant people and/or students to carry out necessary investigations and give the matter full and detailed consideration with the input of senior colleagues. The outcome of this will be communicated in writing within 28 working days and will offer reasoning alongside proposed or taken actions. Written records will be kept of all aspects of the investigation/complaint and will be held in accordance with the Tenchi Ryu's data handling policy.

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the decision arising from Stage 2, they should proceed to stage 3

---

### STAGE 3 – INDEPENDENT PANEL HEARING

Complainants who are not satisfied by the Stage 2 of the Complaint Handling procedure must write to the Chief Instructor within 10 working days and request that the complaint be further considered by an independent panel.

On receipt of this letter the Chief Instructor will be responsible for the appointment of a panel to consider the matter further. The panel will consist of 3 people not directly involved in the matter (e.g. Executive Committee members). Complainants may be asked to contribute further to this meeting (by phone or Skype or in person).

Minutes will be taken by the Chair of the panel and parents/ carers will be notified within 21 working days of the result of this meeting.

### CHILDREN: “WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT OR CONCERN?”

We suggest that you talk to your parents or carers so that they can support you.

You can follow the same procedure as outlined above – however if you don't have the support of your parents/carers then Tenchi Ryu will appoint someone to support you and represent your interests.

*Review Date: March 2017*