Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure 26/27

The Cecilian Society committee of 2026/27 have discussed and decided upon the following procedures as necessary for the duration of the upcoming academic year. These procedures are in accordance with the SRC Clubs and Societies Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.

If anyone has any questions about these procedures, please direct them to the President of the society by email (president@ceciliansociety.co.uk).

1. Complaints Procedure:

1.1 This procedure applies to formal complaints concerning the activities, governance, or conduct of the Society, or the conduct of a member where there is a clear and direct connection to the Society. It is not intended to resolve minor disagreements or personal disputes that have no connection to the Society.

1.2 Wherever appropriate, concerns should first be addressed informally with a view to achieving an early resolution. A complainant will not be required to approach the person who they complained about directly where they do not feel safe or comfortable doing so, or where the matter is serious. Where a complaint cannot be resolved informally, or is of a more serious nature, it should be submitted in writing to the Society's designated complaints email.

1.3 In the instance that a complaint is being made against either the President or Vice President, a written complaint should be submitted in writing to the Society's secondary designated complaints email, accessed only by the Membership and Welfare Officer.

Therefore, if a member of the society wishes to file a complaint, they may take any of these actions:

a. Submit a written complaint to complaints@ceciliansociety.com. This will then be reviewed by the President and Vice President.
b. Submit a written complaint to membership@ceciliansociety.com. This will then be reviewed by the Membership and Welfare Officer.

1.4 Complaints will be handled promptly, fairly, and impartially. Information will be shared only with those who require it to consider the complaint or protect the safety and wellbeing of those involved. Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

1.5 A complaint may be submitted by a member or by another person directly affected by the activities or conduct of the Club/Society or one of its members.

1.6 The Society will not accept anonymous complaints. Information provided anonymously may nevertheless be considered where it raises credible concerns regarding safety, safeguarding or serious misconduct. Where an anonymous complaint of this nature has been received, the Society should contact the SRC Clubs and Societies Team at clubsandsocs-complaints@src.gla.ac.uk for guidance before taking any further action.

1.7 The Society will not accept complaints submitted through social media or messaging platforms, including Instagram or WhatsApp. The person submitting the complaint should be directed to the Society's designated complaints email.

1.8 The Society will acknowledge a formal complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement will explain who will consider the complaint, the next steps, and the expected timescale.

1.9 The Society will operate a two-stage complaints procedure.

1.10 The Society will aim to conclude Stage One within 20 working days. Where this is not possible, the complainant and respondent will be informed of the reason for the delay and provided with an updated timescale.

2. Stage One: Investigation and Outcome

2.1 At Stage One, the complaint shall normally be investigated by no more than two committee members who are, as far as reasonably practicable, impartial and not directly involved in the matters complained of. A committee member should not investigate the complaint where there is a significant conflict of interest that could reasonably call their impartiality into question. Where no suitably impartial committee members can be identified, the Club/Society should seek procedural guidance from the SRC Clubs and Societies Team at clubsandsocs-complaints@src.gla.ac.uk.

The person or persons investigating will:
▪ Establish the matters in dispute and gather relevant evidence;
▪ Inform the respondent in writing by email of the details of the complaint;
▪ Give the respondent copies of any relevant evidence that may be used when considering the complaint, removing any information that must be kept confidential;
▪ Give both the complainant and the respondent a reasonable opportunity to provide information, respond to the issues raised, and identify relevant witnesses;
▪ Consider whether either party requires reasonable adjustments or other support to participate in the process; and
▪ Maintain an appropriate written record of the investigation.

2.2 Information that has not been fairly put to the respondent should not be relied upon when making findings against them.

2.3 Following the investigation, the person or persons investigating shall determine the outcome of the complaint and provide the respondent with a written decision, including the reasons for the decision and any actions to be taken.

2.4 A complaint may be upheld where those considering the complaint believe it is more likely than not that the conduct occurred.

2.5 The complainant will be informed whether the complaint has been upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld, the reasons for that decision and any action directly relevant to them. The complainant will not be provided with confidential details of disciplinary action taken against the respondent.

3. Stage 2: Appeal

3.1 If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the outcome, they may submit a written appeal within ten working days of receiving the Stage One decision. An appeal must identify one or more of the following:

a. There was a failure to follow the complaints procedure;
b. The findings were not reasonably supported by the evidence considered;
c. Significant new evidence has become available that could not reasonably have been provided in Stage One; or
d. The action taken or sanction was disproportionate to the findings.

3.2 An appeal is not a complete rehearing of the complaint merely because a party disagrees with the decision.

3.3 The appeal will be considered by committee members not involved in the original investigation or decision and who have no conflict of interest. They may uphold the decision, overturn it, amend the outcome or return the matter for further consideration.

3.4 Where the Society cannot establish an impartial appeal panel, it must contact the SRC Clubs and Societies Team at clubsandsocs-complaints@src.gla.ac.uk to seek guidance on appropriate alternative arrangements.

3.5 The appeal outcome and reasons will be provided in writing. The decision will be final.

4. Disciplinary Process

4.1 Depending on the severity of the outcome of the investigation, the following sanctions may be applied:

a. Verbal or written warning given;
b. Requirement to issue an apology or cease certain behaviour;
c. Temporary suspension from Club/Society activities and events
d. Removal from a committee position; or
e. Expulsion from Club/Society for serious or repeated breaches.

4.2 If either the complainant or the respondent is dissatisfied with the sanctions imposed following the outcome of the investigation, they may submit an appeal in accordance with the appeals process outlined in Stage Two above.

5. Records

5.1 The Society will keep complaint records secure and confidential for three years after the complaint has been completed. After that, records will be securely deleted, unless there is a documented reason to keep them for longer. If information from complaints is used to improve Society practices, it should be anonymised.

5.2 Records should not be stored in personal accounts, personal devices, or informal messaging platforms. Access will be limited to those who require it to administer the procedure.

6. Conduct and Protection from Retaliation

6.1 No person should be disadvantaged, intimidated or subjected to retaliation because they have made a complaint, responded to a complaint, provided evidence, or supported another person to participate in the procedure.

6.2 A complaint that is not upheld does not automatically mean it was false or made with bad intentions. Action should only be taken if there is clear evidence that someone knowingly gave false information or deliberately misused the complaints process.

7. Serious Incidents

7.1 The Society is not responsible for determining whether a criminal offence has occurred or whether a student has breached the University's Code of Student Conduct.

7.2 Where a complaint involves alleged criminal behaviour, safeguarding concerns, harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination, violence, or any other serious incident, the Society should seek guidance from the SRC Clubs and Societies Team at clubsandsocs-complaints@src.gla.ac.uk to determine whether the matter should be referred or signposted to the SRC Advice Centre, relevant University services, Police Scotland, or another appropriate external process.

7.3 Where there is an immediate risk of harm, the safety of those involved must take priority and the emergency services should be contacted.

7.4 The Society should not attempt to provide authoritative advice about the likely outcome of a University, police or other external investigation.

7.5 A serious incident may still raise issues concerning membership, participation in activities or compliance with the Society's own Code of Conduct. The Society may consider those matters but should avoid attempting to duplicate a criminal or University investigation.

7.6 Where the University, Police Scotland or another appropriate authority is investigating the matter, the Society may pause all or part of its process where continuing would risk prejudicing or unnecessarily duplicating that investigation. The Society should not delay urgent action that is reasonably necessary to protect the safety or wellbeing of its members.

7.7 The Society may implement temporary precautionary measures where these are reasonably necessary to manage an identified risk. Measures may include temporary restrictions on attendance, participation, contact or membership, in accordance with the disciplinary procedure. Any precautionary measure must:

a. Be proportionate to the identified risk;
b. Be no more restrictive than reasonably necessary;
c. Be communicated in writing, with reasons, where it is safe and appropriate to do so;
d. Be regularly reviewed; and
e. Not be described or treated as a finding that the allegations have been proven.

8. Previous Convictions and Criminal History

8.1 A previous criminal conviction does not automatically make a person unsuitable for membership of a Society and is not, by itself, evidence of current misconduct.

8.2 The Society should not make a decision solely because a conviction, allegation, or criminal investigation exists. Any decision must be based on current conduct, a known restriction, or a specific and credible risk that has a clear and direct connection to the activities of the Society.

8.3 Committee members should not seek, share, or retain information about a person's criminal history unless there is a clearly identified and lawful reason for doing so. Such information must not be discussed through social media, informal messaging groups, or with members who have no proper role in considering the matter.

8.4 Where a concern is raised about a previous conviction, an alleged restriction or a potential safeguarding risk, the committee must seek guidance from the SRC Clubs and Societies Team at clubsandsocs-complaints@src.gla.ac.uk before making a decision.

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