**Welsh Chess Union (WCU) Complaints Procedure**

**1. Purpose**

The Welsh Chess Union (WCU) is committed to maintaining high standards of fairness, integrity, and respect in all its activities. This procedure provides members with a clear framework for raising and resolving complaints relating to the WCU, its officers, or activities conducted under its authority.

**2. Scope**

This procedure applies to:

* Complaints made by WCU members regarding the conduct of other members, WCU officers, or affiliated zones/clubs acting on behalf of the WCU.
* Complaints relating to the application of WCU rules, regulations, or policies.

This procedure does not cover:

* General disagreements over chess rules in play (which are governed by FIDE Laws of Chess).
* Matters relating to external organisations (e.g. clubs or zones) unless the WCU’s constitution or policies have been breached.
* Complaints about events organised independently by clubs or zones (unless WCU rules are explicitly in force).

**3. Informal Resolution**

Where possible, members are encouraged to resolve concerns informally by raising them directly with the individual(s) or committee concerned. Many issues can be resolved quickly at this stage.

**4. Submitting a Formal Complaint**

If informal resolution is not possible, a formal complaint may be submitted in writing to the WCU Executive Director. The complaint should include:

* The complainant’s full name and membership details.
* A clear description of the issue, including relevant dates and parties involved.
* Any supporting evidence (e.g. emails, documents, witness statements).
* The outcome the complainant is seeking.

Complaints should normally be submitted within **30 days** of the matter arising.

**5. Acknowledgement**

The Secretary (or a designated officer) will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within **10 working days**.

**6. Investigation and Decision**

* Complaints will be considered by the WCU Management Board (or a subcommittee appointed for this purpose).
* The person(s) subject to the complaint will be given the opportunity to respond.
* The Board/subcommittee will review the evidence and may seek further information if necessary.
* A written decision will be provided to the complainant within **30 working days** of acknowledgement, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

The decision will set out:

* Whether the complaint is upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld.
* Any actions to be taken (e.g. apology, change of procedure, disciplinary measures).

**7. Right of Appeal**

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal in writing within **14 days** of receiving the decision. Grounds for appeal must be based on one or more of the following:

* A procedural error occurred in handling the complaint.
* New evidence has become available that could materially affect the outcome.
* The decision was unreasonable in light of the evidence provided.

Appeals should be submitted to the WCU Executive Director (or, if the Executive Director was involved in the original decision, to a designated senior officer not previously involved).

The appeal will be reviewed by an Appeal Panel consisting of three WCU officers or independent persons not involved in the original decision. The Appeal Panel may uphold the original decision, overturn it, or vary it.

The outcome of the appeal is final within the WCU.

**8. Confidentiality**

All complaints will be handled sensitively. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the matter.

**9. Record Keeping**

The WCU Executive Director will keep a confidential record of all formal complaints, investigations, and outcomes, including appeals.