

CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

RULES ON CONDUCT

1. These Rules, issued by the then Executive Committee under Section 8[g] of the Constitution of the Contract Bridge Association of Ireland, came into force on 1st October 1996 and are binding on Affiliated Clubs and members of the Association so long as they shall be in force.
2. The Governing Council shall, at its first meeting following the Annual General Meeting, nominate or cause to be nominated a panel of seven persons, such panel to be known as the Conduct Panel. Where an allegation under paragraph 3 below is properly submitted to the Association, the Management Committee shall constitute a Committee of Inquiry [hereinafter in these Rules called "the Committee"] comprising not less than three nor more than five persons drawn from the Conduct Panel. Three members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for all purposes under these Rules. The duty of the Committee shall be to inquire into and to adjudicate on the allegation in question in accordance with these Rules.
3. Any member of the Association who, whether in Ireland or in any place within the jurisdiction of the World Bridge Federation,
 - [i] when playing in an open duplicate contract bridge competition [as defined in paragraph 10 below] deliberately plays unfairly or violates the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge or fails to comply with the Proprieties contained in said Laws, **or**
 - [ii] when attending for any purpose whatsoever at the site of an open duplicate contract bridge competition [as defined in paragraph 10 below] where Contract Bridge or any variation thereof is played or at any meeting in connection with the administration of Contract Bridge or any variation thereof behaves in such a manner as to cause offence or annoyance to another person [whether or not such person is a member of the Association] or as might bring the Association or any of its members or Officers into disrepute, may at the absolute discretion of the Committee be expelled from the Association, or be suspended from membership of the Association or suspended from participation in one or more competitions of the Association for such periods as the Committee shall consider fit, or be admonished.
4. Each allegation under paragraph 3 above shall be made in writing and signed by the complainant and lodged with either the Honorary Secretary of the Association or the General Secretary of the Association.
5. Each allegation properly received shall be the subject of an initial assessment by the Committee and it shall be in the discretion of the Committee, on the basis of this assessment, either to take no further action other than appropriate notifications arising from this decision or to institute an inquiry under paragraph 7 below.
6. Any decision of the Committee to expel, suspend or admonish a member shall not take effect until the time allowed for appeal provided for in paragraph 12 below has elapsed, or in the event of an appeal, until such appeal has been determined.
7. Where a member admits in writing an offence under paragraph 3 above and the Committee decides the matter may be disposed of with an admonishment of the member, it shall be empowered so to proceed by notice to the member without further inquiry and the only grounds for appeal against such decision shall be that no such admission has been made. Otherwise the Committee shall:
 - [i] inquire in any manner which seems to the Committee to be appropriate into any matter which is alleged against the member under the provisions of paragraph 3 above;
 - [ii] make findings of fact consequent upon such inquiry;
 - [iii] make decisions consequent on such findings;
 - [iv] publish such findings and decisions or parts thereof as it thinks fit and no action in law shall lie in respect of the said publication;
 - [iv] provide the Management Committee with such reports of its proceedings as the Management Committee shall from time to time require.

8. In every case in which an inquiry is made the Committee shall:
 - [i] give 14 days notice in writing of the inquiry and of the substance of each and every allegation to each member against whom such allegation is made, such notice to be sent by registered post or certified post to the member's address last notified to the Association or, where no such address has been notified, to the Secretary of the member's Affiliated Club;
 - [ii] at the inquiry allow such member to defend himself against each allegation which is made against him and allow him to make a statement of his own case and to call witnesses, but not to allow him to be represented save at the Committee's discretion;
 - [iii] suspend from the Committee, for the purpose of the inquiry, any member thereof who is in any manner personally involved in any allegation which is the subject of the inquiry.
9. The Committee shall notify the member in writing of its findings, of the action taken by it thereon and of his right of appeal as defined in paragraph 12 below, and such notification shall be sent by registered post or certified post to the member's address last notified to the Association or, where no such address has been notified, to the Secretary of the member's Affiliated Club.
10. Any member suspended or expelled from the Association may not during such period of suspension or expulsion play in any open duplicate contract bridge competition. An open duplicate contract bridge competition shall mean any bridge competition controlled by, or held in association with, the Association or any Region thereof or any affiliated Club thereof, other than a competition held for members and their bona-fide guests at the premises of an Affiliated Club in which such member holds membership.
11. Where the Committee expels, suspends or admonishes a member the findings of the Committee and the action taken by it thereon shall be notified to the appropriate officer of all Affiliated Clubs in which the member concerned holds membership, and no action in law shall lie in respect of said notification.
12. No appeal shall lie against the Committee's findings of fact, but in respect of all other matters the member concerned shall have a right of appeal to an Appeals Committee as provided for in paragraph 13 below. Notice of appeal must be given in writing to the Honorary Secretary of the Association or to the General Secretary of the Association within twenty-one days of the posting of the notification referred to in paragraph 9 above.
13. The Appeals Committee shall consist of five people selected by the Management Committee for the purpose of the appeal in question from a panel comprising the members of the Governing Council, but excluding all members of the Committee who shall have adjudicated on the case in question and excluding all members of the Management Committee. If for any reason there shall not be five such persons available on the panel the Management Committee shall appoint further members to the panel from the general membership of the Association. Three members of the Appeals Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of hearing the appeal. The proceedings of the Appeals Committee shall *mutatis mutandis* be the same as those of the Committee.
14. The Appeals Committee shall have power to uphold or vary decisions of the Committee and shall have like powers and duties as the Committee in relation to publication and reporting of its findings.
15. Any person who has been expelled or suspended from membership of the Association and any person who resigned as a member of the Association after a complaint had been made against him which had been or might properly have been the subject of an inquiry under paragraph 3 above shall be entitled at the expiration of one year from the date of expulsion or suspension to apply to the Association in writing for reinstatement. It shall be within the power of the Governing Council to reinstate such person either before or after receipt of such application, or to postpone such reinstatement for so long a period as it may at its absolute discretion think fit, but not beyond the date of any then suspension.
16. The Rules on Conduct were established by the Executive Committee in 1996. The Governing Council replaced the Executive Committee in 2008. The term "Governing Council" has replaced "Executive Committee" in the document above from paragraph 1 onwards.