



BRITISH BASEBALL FEDERATION INTEGRITY, COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE FRAMEWORK

Working draft for Board Review (v2)

Companion to the Code of Conduct and the BBF Governance Framework Review

Document control

Status	Working draft for Board review (v2)
Governance layer	Layer 5 — Behaviour, Integrity & Operational Governance
Sister documents (Layer 5)	Code of Conduct; Financial Governance Framework (to be drafted)
Documents this consolidates or incorporates	Enforcement Policy (2022); Complaints and Grievance Procedure (2025); Whistleblowing Policy; Anti-Doping Policy (referential); Conflicts of Interest Policy; Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy; safeguarding-related provisions referring to BSUK; Privacy Policy; IT Policy; Website Terms of Use; behavioural-process content removed from Sr. Leagues Handbook S.49; appeals consolidation
Documents this does not replace	BSUK Safeguarding Policy and Complaints Procedure (delegated); UK Anti-Doping Rules; Sr. Leagues Handbook competition discipline and Disciplinary Matrix; Constitution; Terms of Membership
Owner	BBF Secretary
Review	Reviewed periodically and on material change

1. Purpose, scope and status

1.1 Purpose

This Framework sets out how the British Baseball Federation (BBF) manages concerns, complaints, grievances and alleged breaches of its rules, regulations and standards of behaviour. It establishes a single, transparent and proportionate pathway for raising matters, triage, investigation, decision-making and appeal. For the avoidance of doubt, compliance with all BBF rules, regulations and policies is administered through this Framework, irrespective of the word 'Compliance' having been removed from the title. It is enforced through the BBF Constitution and applies to all participants and member organisations.

1.2 Scope

This Framework applies to:

- Members and participants registered or otherwise associated with the BBF or its affiliated clubs;
- Players, coaches, managers, national team staff, umpires, scorers, volunteers, club officials, BBF officials and Board members;
- Affiliated clubs and those acting on their behalf;
- Parents, guardians and spectators where engaged in BBF activity.

It applies whether conduct takes place in person, online, during games, at events, in training environments, in meetings, or in any context connected to, engaged in or related to BBF activity.

1.3 Status

This Framework is binding on all persons within scope and forms part of the BBF Governance Framework. It is read alongside the Constitution, Terms of Membership, Code of Conduct, Competition Rulebooks and the Financial Governance Framework.

2. Architecture — where this Framework fits

The BBF Governance Framework operates in five layers. This Framework sits in Layer 5 and works alongside the Code of Conduct and the Financial Governance Framework. The Code of Conduct sets behavioural standards; the Financial Governance Framework sets financial accountability, oversight and spending controls; this Framework operates the mechanism that responds when any of those standards or any other BBF rule are alleged to have been breached.

2.1 Documents incorporated

This Framework is the single operational source for how the BBF responds to concerns, complaints, grievances and alleged breaches. It consolidates or incorporates the following documents, which are read together as one Framework:

- Enforcement Policy (2022) — consolidated into Sections 8 to 13;
- Complaints and Grievance Procedure (2025) — consolidated into Section 6;
- Whistleblowing Policy — incorporated as the entry route for protected disclosures (Sections 5.4 and 7); the standalone Whistleblowing Policy is retained for the substantive disclosure framework;
- Anti-Doping Policy and UK Anti-Doping Rules — incorporated by reference; anti-doping matters are administered by UKAD, with the BBF acting under this Framework in support (Section 5.3);
- Conflicts of Interest Policy — incorporated for the substantive conflicts standard; the Framework operates the response where breach is alleged and applies its conflict-of-interest rule to panels (Section 12.2);
- Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy — incorporated for the substantive standard; breach engages this Framework;
- Safeguarding — incorporated by reference to the BSUK Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Complaints Procedure (Section 5.1);
- Privacy Policy, IT Policy and Website Terms of Use — incorporated by reference; alleged breaches engage this Framework (Section 5.7);

- Financial Governance Framework — when in force, its substantive financial standards are incorporated by reference; breaches engaging misconduct route through this Framework (Section 5.8).

Where any incorporated document is updated independently, the most recent version applies and this Framework continues to operate the response.

2.2 Boundary rule

Boundary rule. Competition discipline — sanctions for in-game or at-event incidents — sits in the Sr. Leagues Handbook and is enforced by umpires, the League Commissioner and the Senior Leagues Committee under the Handbook's Disciplinary Matrix. Formal complaints and grievances — including allegations of behavioural or rule breach raised outside the field of play, repeated patterns of behaviour, and matters of serious concern — are governed by this Framework. Where the same conduct triggers both pathways, both apply: the Handbook sanction takes effect immediately, and a referral to this Framework follows for review of broader sanctions.

3. Principles

Every matter handled under this Framework will be approached in line with the following principles:

- Welfare first — the safety and welfare of children, adults at risk and other affected persons is the paramount consideration.
- Fairness and natural justice — anyone alleged to have breached BBF rules will be informed of the allegation, given the opportunity to respond, and the decision will be taken impartially.
- Proportionality — the response will be proportionate to the seriousness and context of the matter, including the use of education, advice or informal resolution where appropriate.
- Independence at appeal — appeals are heard by persons who have not been involved in the original decision and include at least one independent member.
- Confidentiality — information is handled on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with data protection law.
- Transparency — the BBF will publish outcomes where appropriate, including to protect participants, support deterrence, and uphold public confidence.
- Cooperation — those involved in BBF activity are expected to cooperate with this Framework; failure to cooperate may itself be treated as a breach.
- No retaliation — those who raise concerns in good faith will not be subject to retaliation; any retaliation is itself a breach.

4. Definitions

In this Framework:

Term	Meaning
Adult at risk	A person aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation.

Term	Meaning
Appeal Committee	A panel constituted to hear an appeal under Section 15, identified for the matter and including at least one member independent of the BBF.
Code	The BBF Code of Conduct.
Complaint	A formal written submission, made by any person, alleging that a BBF rule, regulation or policy (including the Code of Conduct) has been breached, or expressing dissatisfaction with a BBF decision, service or process. A Grievance is treated as a Complaint for the purposes of this Framework.
Grievance	A complaint raised by a person engaged in BBF activity (e.g. an official, volunteer or committee member) about their treatment by another person engaged in BBF activity, or about a BBF process affecting them. Treated as a Complaint under this Framework.
Incident	A matter occurring on the field of play, at a BBF event, or a general concern raised about conduct or circumstances. Incidents are handled in the first instance by the Senior Leagues Committee under the Sr. Leagues Handbook and may be referred to this Framework via triage where a formal complaint or grievance is warranted.
Disciplinary Committee	The body constituted under Section 12 to determine whether a breach has occurred and what sanction should apply.
Examiner	A person appointed under Section 11 to conduct an investigation.
BBF Secretary / Complaints Officer	The Board-appointed officer responsible for routing complaints and grievances, overseeing triage and appointing Examiners. The BBF Secretary acts as the Complaints Officer under this Framework.
Party under review	A person, club or other entity against whom a complaint or grievance is being processed under this Framework.
Sanction	Any outcome imposed under Section 13.
Working day	Monday to Friday other than a Bank Holiday in England and Wales.

5. Categories of matter and pathway triage

Matters are routed to the correct pathway based on subject matter. The BBF Secretary is responsible for routing; in case of doubt the matter is escalated to the Board.

5.1 Safeguarding (children and adults at risk)

All safeguarding concerns are referred to BaseballSoftballUK (BSUK) in accordance with the BSUK Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Complaints Procedure. BSUK handles concerns through its three-level model.

Where BSUK recommends BBF disciplinary action, the matter enters this Framework at Section 7 (triage) and is processed under Sections 10-15. The BBF may also impose interim measures under Section 10 in parallel with BSUK action where required.

Note. Nothing in this Framework displaces a referral to the police, children's social care, adult social care or other statutory authority. Where any person believes that a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger, they should call 999.

5.2 Anti-doping

Anti-doping matters are handled under the UK Anti-Doping Rules and administered by UK Anti-Doping (UKAD). The BBF may impose interim measures under Section 10 pending the outcome of a UKAD process, and may take parallel action under this Framework for any associated breach of the Code (e.g. obstruction).

5.3 In-game and at-event incidents

In-game and at-event conduct is dealt with under the Sr. Leagues Handbook, including its Disciplinary Matrix. The Senior Leagues Committee retains authority over competition sanctions.

Where an incident also engages the Code of Conduct in a way that calls for organisational review (in particular Disciplinary Matrix Type 3.1 discrimination and Type 3.7 threats or violence by gestures, words or actions, and any incident occurring off-event), the umpire, manager or recipient of the report shall additionally refer the matter to the BBF Secretary for handling under this Framework. The Handbook matrix sanction takes effect immediately; this Framework reviews the broader organisational response.

5.4 Whistleblowing

Where a concern or incident is raised about wrongdoing in the conduct of BBF affairs — including financial irregularity, fraud, abuse of position, or significant breach of policy — it is treated as a protected disclosure under the BBF Whistleblowing Policy. Whistleblowers will not be subject to retaliation; any retaliation is a breach of the Code.

5.5 Organisational conduct and discipline (this Framework)

All other matters — including alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct outside the in-game context, complaints against BBF or club officials, alleged misuse of BBF property, data or systems, conflicts of interest, and serious or repeated misconduct — are handled under this Framework.

5.6 Complaints and grievances

All formal complaints and grievances, whether alleging a breach of rules or expressing dissatisfaction with a BBF decision or process, are handled under Section 6 of this Framework. Triage (Section 8) determines the appropriate pathway.

5.7 Privacy, IT and Website Terms of Use

Alleged breaches of the Privacy Policy, IT Policy or Website Terms of Use are processed under this Framework. The substantive standards are set out in those policies. Common examples include misuse of BBF systems or data, inappropriate handling of personal data, and misuse of the BBF website or digital platforms. Where the conduct also engages the Code of Conduct (for example, harassment via BBF systems), the matter is processed once under this Framework, the finding may cite both the operational policy and the relevant section(s) of the Code of Conduct, and the seriousness is assessed against the combined breach — not as a standalone of either.

5.8 Financial governance breach

The Financial Governance Framework (when in force) sets the BBF's substantive financial standards — delegation, expenses, donations, loans, reserves and related controls. Routine breach of the Financial Governance Framework is corrected within the finance function under the oversight of the Treasurer or Finance Committee. Where the breach involves alleged misconduct — including dishonesty, deliberate evasion of authority, misuse of BBF funds, undisclosed conflicts of interest, or retaliation against a person raising a financial concern — the matter is referred to and handled under this Framework. The Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy is engaged in respect of bribery, corruption and related misconduct.

6. Complaints and grievances

This Section sets out how complaints and grievances are raised, what they must include and how they are processed. Complaints and Grievances are treated together under a single intake and process; the triage at Section 8 routes each matter to either informal resolution (Section 9) or to investigation under Sections 10-13, depending on what the matter alleges.

6.1 Difference between an Incident, a Complaint and a Grievance

Matters arising in BBF activity fall into one of two categories. The route taken depends on the nature of the matter, not how the person raising it labels it.

Incident.

An incident is a matter occurring on the field of play, at a BBF event, or a general concern raised about conduct or circumstances. Incidents are handled in the first instance by the Senior Leagues Committee under the Sr. Leagues Handbook, including under the Disciplinary Matrix. An incident may be referred to this Framework as a complaint or grievance via triage where a formal response is warranted (for example, where the matter engages Matrix Type 3.1 or Type 3.7, or where the incident relates to conduct beyond the immediate game).

Complaint and Grievance.

A complaint is a formal written submission alleging that a BBF rule, regulation or policy (including the Code of Conduct) has been breached, or expressing dissatisfaction with a BBF decision, service or process. A grievance is a complaint raised by a person engaged in BBF activity about their treatment by another person engaged in BBF activity, or about a BBF process affecting them. Grievances are treated as complaints for the purposes of this Framework. Complaints and grievances follow the same intake and the same process.

Where the route is wrong. Where the same matter contains both elements — for example, dissatisfaction with a BBF decision combined with an allegation of misconduct — the BBF Secretary separates the elements and routes each appropriately. The complainant is informed of how the matter has been routed.

6.2 What must be included when filing a complaint or grievance

A complaint or grievance must be made in writing to the BBF Secretary, who acts as the BBF's Complaints Officer. Complaints may be sent to complaints@britishbaseball.org.uk or, where the complaint concerns the BBF Secretary, to the Chair. The submission should include:

- The complainant's name and contact details, and the capacity in which they are raising the complaint (e.g. participant, parent, club official, member of the public);
- The identity of any person, club or BBF body whose decision, conduct or process is complained about;

- The date, time and location of the matter complained about (or, where the complaint concerns a course of dealings, the period in question);
- A clear factual description of what happened or what decision or conduct is in issue;
- The relevant section(s) of the Code of Conduct, or which BBF rule, regulation or policy is alleged to have been breached, citing section numbers where possible;
- Why the matter is a complaint, and how the complainant has been affected;
- Any supporting documents, correspondence, witness details or other evidence;
- Whether the complainant has already attempted informal resolution and, if so, when and with whom, and what response was received; or, if not, the reason informal resolution was not possible or appropriate;
- The outcome the complainant is seeking;
- Any safeguarding concern or urgency that requires immediate attention.

Timeline. Complaints and grievances should normally be raised within 28 days of the matter complained about. The BBF may accept a late complaint at its discretion, particularly where there is good reason for the delay.

Anonymous complaints. Complaints and grievances must identify the complainant. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted as formal complaints under this Section. The BBF may, however, act on anonymous information that raises a safeguarding concern or serious integrity risk, and may take such information into account when considering whether to investigate a matter on its own initiative.

6.3 Matters that cannot be raised as a complaint or grievance

The following matters cannot be raised under this Section. The appropriate alternative is shown:

- BBF rules, regulations or published policies themselves — these are matters for the relevant Board or Committee;
- The terms or operation of BBF insurance arrangements — raise with the insurer or, for cover questions, with the BBF Secretary;
- In-game protests — addressed under the Sr. Leagues Handbook protest mechanism;
- Dissatisfaction with the outcome of a disciplinary process — a party found to have breached a rule has an appeal route under Section 15;
- Contractual disputes between the BBF and a third party.

6.4 Informal resolution (Stage 1)

Where appropriate, individuals are encouraged to raise concerns directly with the person involved or through a club or team official. Many matters are resolved quickly through dialogue. If a formal complaint is later submitted, the complainant should briefly explain why informal resolution was not possible.

Equality Act 2010 carve-out. A complainant is not required to attempt informal resolution where the matter concerns conduct alleged to relate to a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation). In those cases the complainant may proceed directly to formal submission.

6.5 Conversion to formal disciplinary process

Where, at any stage, a complaint or grievance reveals an allegation of a rule breach that warrants formal investigation, the BBF Secretary refers the matter into the disciplinary pathway under Sections 10 to 13. The complainant is informed of the transfer.

6.6 Vexatious complaints

Complaints found to be intentionally false, misleading, malicious, vexatious or frivolous, or part of a pattern of unreasonable repetition, may themselves be treated as a breach of the Code of Conduct.

6.7 Support for parties

Parties to a complaint, grievance or disciplinary process under this Framework may bring a support person to any meeting or interview.

6.8 Referral to a third party by agreement

The BBF reserves the right to refer a matter to the Sport Integrity Service under the Rules of Procedure of that service. This may involve the commission of an independent investigation or disciplinary procedure in relation to alleged grievances, or allegations of misconduct involving athletes, athlete support personnel or BBF office holders engaged in the GB Seniors programme or otherwise funded through the UK Sport grant. Where an individual is deemed a 'Relevant Person' under the Independent Disclosure and Complaints Service Pilot Regulations and is a respondent to a 'Relevant Matter' under those regulations, the individual is required to cooperate with any investigation conducted by Sport Integrity where the investigation is covered by terms of reference agreed by the BBF.

A complaint, grievance or appeal may, by written agreement between the BBF and the subject of the allegation (or, in the case of an appeal, the appellant), be referred to Sport Resolutions UK (a trading name of The Sports Dispute Resolution Panel Ltd, Company No. 3351039). An appeal so referred may be referred for final and binding arbitration.

Before the BBF agrees to any such reference, a suitable agreement must be in place to deal with the costs of the reference. The BBF will normally expect the costs to be shared equally between the BBF and the subject of the allegation or the appellant, and may require a deposit on account of costs to be paid in advance. The BBF reserves the right to opt out of sharing costs.

6.9 Records

All complaints and grievances received, and the outcome of each, are recorded by the BBF Secretary. Records of complaints and grievances are retained in accordance with Section 16.

7. Routing of incidents and information from third parties

This Section covers matters that enter the Framework other than through Section 6, including referrals from the Senior Leagues Committee following an incident, referrals from BSUK following safeguarding action, and reports received from UKAD, the police or other authorities.

7.1 Sources of referral

- Senior Leagues Committee referrals following an incident report or a Disciplinary Matrix Type 3.1 or Type 3.7 outcome;
- BSUK referrals following safeguarding consideration;
- UKAD notifications relating to anti-doping matters;
- Statutory authority notifications (police, social care);
- Information arising in the course of governance, including audit, finance review or BBF Board consideration.

7.2 What to include in a referral or report

Whether a matter enters this Framework as a complaint, a grievance, an incident referral, or other report, the information needed is the same. The referring body or reporting person should provide, where known:

- The reporter's name and contact details, and the capacity in which they are reporting;
- The identity of any person, club or BBF body involved;
- The date, time and location of the matter (or, where it concerns a course of conduct, the period);
- A clear factual description of what happened, including the names of any witnesses;
- The relevant section(s) of the Code of Conduct, or which BBF rule, regulation or policy is alleged to have been breached;
- Any documentary or other evidence (e.g. screenshots, recordings, correspondence);
- Whether interim measures are sought;
- Any safeguarding concern or urgency that requires immediate attention.

8. Triage and initial assessment

On receipt of a complaint, grievance, referral or report, the BBF Secretary carries out an initial assessment, normally within five (5) working days. The BBF Secretary will:

1. Acknowledge receipt;
2. Decide which pathway in Section 5 applies and route the matter accordingly;
3. Decide whether interim measures under Section 10 should be considered;
4. Decide whether the matter is suitable for informal resolution under Section 9;
5. Decide whether the matter should proceed to investigation under Section 11;
6. Decide whether the matter should be closed with no further action.

The BBF Secretary's triage decision is recorded and is communicated to the complainant (or referring body) and, where appropriate at that stage, to the party under review. Triage decisions are not appealable; they may be revisited if new information emerges.

9. Informal resolution

Many matters can and should be resolved informally, including through guidance, dialogue, mediation, education or written undertakings. The BBF Secretary may attempt informal resolution where:

- The conduct is at the lower end of seriousness;
- There is no risk to a child, adult at risk or other person;
- The parties are willing to engage; and
- It is proportionate and in the interests of the sport to do so.

Informal resolution is recorded; the record may be referenced in any subsequent matter involving the same party. Informal resolution does not preclude formal action if a subsequent matter or pattern emerges.

10. Interim (precautionary) measures

Where the safety, welfare or integrity of participants, the sport or a process requires it, the BBF may impose interim measures pending the outcome of a process under this Framework. Interim

measures are precautionary; they are not findings of misconduct and they do not pre-judge the outcome.

10.1 Measures available

- Suspension from any or all BBF activity (playing, coaching, officiating, volunteering, attending events);
- Restriction or supervision of contact with specified persons or environments (in particular children and adults at risk);
- Removal from a position of responsibility for the duration of the process;
- Restriction on access to BBF systems, data or property;
- Other proportionate restrictions appropriate to the matter.

10.2 When interim measures may be imposed

Interim measures may be imposed where the BBF Secretary (or, in the BBF Secretary's absence, the Chair or a designated Board member) considers it necessary to protect a person, preserve evidence, prevent further breach, or maintain public confidence in the sport. Wherever practicable, the party affected is informed in advance and given an opportunity to make brief representations; otherwise the party is informed as soon as practicable afterwards.

10.3 Conditions for a person under interim measures

A person subject to interim measures under this Section, or under a Handbook matrix sanction, may not without specific written authority from the BBF:

- Take part in any BBF training, warm-up, match or event;
- Be on the field of play, in a dugout, in a team area or at the bench during BBF activity;
- Coach, manage or officiate in BBF activity;
- Take any role for which they have been suspended;
- Incite or direct activity from the sidelines;
- Be subject to any other interim measure deemed appropriate to meet the purpose of this Section 10.

Compliance is the personal responsibility of the affected individual and the responsibility of the relevant club. Non-compliance is a separate breach. These interim measures are not sanctions under Section 13; they are precautionary measures imposed to protect persons, preserve evidence, prevent further breach, or maintain confidence in the process.

10.4 Review

Interim measures are reviewed every 28 days, or sooner on request of the affected party where new information is provided. Interim measures lapse on conclusion of the process unless converted into a sanction.

11. Investigation

11.1 Appointment of Examiner

Where the BBF Secretary determines that a matter requires investigation, an Examiner is appointed. The Examiner may be an officer of the BBF (other than one who has previously been involved in the matter), an independent investigator, or, in serious or complex matters, an external party with relevant expertise. The appointment of the Examiner is at the sole discretion

of the BBF Secretary and is not appealable. The Examiner shall satisfy themselves that they have no conflict of interest in the matter and shall recuse if a conflict arises.

11.2 Notice of appointment

A Notice of Appointment of Examiner is sent to the party under review and to the complainant (subject to confidentiality where appropriate). The notice sets out: the matter being investigated; the Examiner's identity; an outline of the process; and an indicative timetable.

11.3 Conduct of the investigation

The Examiner conducts the investigation in a fair, impartial and proportionate manner. The Examiner may:

- Request documents, images, recordings or other information;
- Interview witnesses and the party under review (in person, by video or in writing);
- Receive voluntary submissions and internal investigation outputs from clubs;
- Engage subject-matter experts (e.g. safeguarding, digital forensics).

The party under review must be given a fair opportunity to respond to the matters under review before any preliminary finding is made.

11.4 Cooperation

All persons within the scope of this Framework are required to cooperate with an investigation. Failure or refusal to cooperate — including providing misleading information, withholding relevant information, or failing to engage without reasonable justification — may itself be treated as a breach of the Code and may be taken into account when determining seriousness and any outcome.

11.5 Public-statement restraint

While a process is open under this Framework, the party under review and the complainant are required to refrain from public statements (direct or indirect, including on social media) about the matter. This protects the integrity of the process and the privacy of those involved. Breach of this restraint may be taken into account in the determination of the matter.

11.6 Preliminary findings

Where appropriate, the Examiner produces preliminary findings and shares them with the party under review, who may provide a written response within a period set by the Examiner (normally five (5) working days; extensions may be granted).

11.7 Investigation report

The Examiner produces a report setting out: the matter; the evidence; the analysis; and the Examiner's findings on the facts. The report is provided to the BBF Secretary, the party under review, and (in summary form, subject to confidentiality) the complainant.

12. Disciplinary Committee

12.1 Constitution and role

Where the Examiner's report supports a finding of breach, the BBF Secretary refers the matter to a Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee determines whether, on the balance of probabilities, a breach has occurred, and if so, what sanction should apply.

12.2 Composition

A Disciplinary Committee may consist of up to three persons, identified as suitable for the matter:

- A Chair, nominated by the Board for this purpose. A Chair is only required where more than one person is appointed to the Committee;
- Up to two additional Committee members. For more serious allegations, a member with relevant subject-matter expertise (e.g. safeguarding, anti-discrimination, governance) will be sought.

No member of the Disciplinary Committee may have been involved in the matter or have any conflict of interest. Members must satisfy themselves of independence and recuse themselves where appropriate.

12.3 Procedure

The Committee may proceed on the papers, or convene a hearing (in person or by video). The party under review may be accompanied. The Committee may receive further evidence and may ask questions. The Committee's decision is reached by majority, where three Committee members appointed.

12.4 Standard of proof

The standard of proof is the balance of probabilities. The seriousness of the allegation is taken into account in assessing the evidence.

12.5 Decision and notification

The Committee issues a written decision setting out the finding, the reasoning, and any sanction. The decision is notified to the party under review, the complainant (in appropriate form), the BBF Secretary and the Board.

13. Sanctions

Where a breach is found, the Disciplinary Committee may impose one or more sanctions. Sanctions must be proportionate to the seriousness of the breach, the context, the conduct of the party under review during the process, any pattern of behaviour, and the interests of the sport.

13.1 Sanctions available

- Advice, written warning or final warning;
- Required training, mentoring or other educative measure;
- Conditions on continued participation (e.g. supervised return, no contact with a named person);
- Suspension from a specific role (player, coach, manager, official, volunteer, Board) for a specified period or until specified conditions are met;
- Suspension from all BBF activity for a specified period or until specified conditions are met;
- Removal from a position of responsibility within the BBF or its member clubs;
- Withdrawal of a club's or team's authorisation or membership;
- Censure through public statement;
- Permanent prohibition from BBF activity (in serious cases);
- Any combination of the above.

Note on financial penalties. No fines are imposed under the Code of Conduct or this Framework, save for the £50 non-refundable appeal fee in Section 15.2. Financial penalties applicable to in-game or at-event matters sit within the Sr. Leagues Handbook fines schedule under the Disciplinary Matrix.

13.2 Aggravating and mitigating factors

In setting sanctions, the Committee takes into account aggravating factors (including but not limited to: targeting a protected characteristic; abuse of position of trust; impact on a child or adult at risk; previous breaches; non-cooperation; retaliation) and mitigating factors (including but not limited to: acknowledgement of conduct; genuine remorse; remedial steps already taken; cooperation; first occurrence).

13.3 Coordination with Handbook sanctions

Where a Handbook matrix sanction has already been applied for the same conduct, the Committee takes that sanction into account in setting any further sanction under this Framework so as to avoid disproportionate cumulative sanction. The Committee may, however, impose additional sanctions where the broader organisational interest requires it (e.g. required training, longer suspension, conditions on return).

14. Notification, recording and publication

14.1 Notification

The decision is communicated to the party under review and to the complainant in appropriate form. Where another body has an interest (e.g. BSUK, UKAD, DBS, a Club Safeguarding Officer, an employer or another sport), the BBF may share information where it is lawful and necessary to do so.

14.2 Recording

The BBF Secretary maintains a confidential register of matters and outcomes. The register is used to track patterns, support consistency and inform future decisions.

14.3 Publication

The BBF may publish a summary of an enforcement outcome where one or more of the following apply:

- The matter is in the public interest;
- Publication is necessary to protect participants or the integrity of the sport;
- Publication supports deterrence and education.

Publication will be proportionate; will respect the privacy of children, adults at risk and other affected persons; and will not be effected before any appeal has been decided unless an interim publication is required for safety.

15. Appeals

15.1 Right of appeal

Only the party found to have breached a BBF rule has a right of appeal. A person who reported an incident or alleged breach has no right of appeal against the outcome of a disciplinary process. The Board is under no obligation to review the conduct of the process at the request of

a reporter and is under no obligation to provide an explanation or feedback to a reporter. Nothing in this Section limits a complainant's right to escalate a complaint under Section 6.

15.2 Time and fee

An appeal must be filed in writing within ten (10) working days of receipt of the Disciplinary Committee decision. A non-refundable appeal fee of £50 applies; the fee may be waived by the BBF Secretary on hardship or other grounds.

15.3 Grounds

Appeals lie on one or more of the following grounds:

- Procedural unfairness in the process;
- A material error in the Committee's findings of fact;
- A material error in the application of the Code or other rules;
- Disproportionate sanction;
- New evidence not reasonably available at the time of the Committee's decision.

15.4 Appeal Committee

Appeals are heard by an Appeal Committee of up to three persons, identified as suitable for the matter, none of whom served on the Disciplinary Committee. The Appeal Committee must include at least one member independent of the BBF (i.e. not a Director, club official or current participant).

15.5 Procedure and outcome

The Appeal Committee may proceed on the papers or convene a hearing. It may confirm the decision, vary the sanction, substitute its own decision, or remit the matter for re-determination. The Appeal Committee's decision is final, subject to any statutory right of recourse.

16. Records, confidentiality and data protection

All information received under this Framework is treated as confidential and shared only on a need-to-know basis. The BBF processes personal data in accordance with applicable data protection law and its Privacy Policy. Records are retained in accordance with the retention schedule set out in the Privacy Policy, with longer retention where safeguarding considerations require it.

17. Roles and bodies

Role / body	Purpose
BBF Secretary / Complaints Officer	Routes complaints, grievances and referrals to the correct pathway; oversees triage; appoints Examiners; maintains the register of matters; reviews interim measures.
Examiner	Conducts an investigation; produces a report; may be internal or external; appointed at the sole discretion of the BBF Secretary.
Disciplinary Committee	Up to three members, identified for the matter; determines whether a breach has occurred and what sanction should apply.

Role / body	Purpose
Appeal Committee	Up to three members, identified for the matter; hears appeals; includes at least one independent member.
Board	Approves this Framework and any amendments; oversees the overall governance architecture; receives an annual report on matters handled.
BSUK	Lead body for safeguarding concerns in baseball and softball; operates the Safeguarding Complaints Procedure; may refer matters to the BBF for action under this Framework.

18. Relationship to other BBF documents

- Constitution — establishes authority for the Framework and for the Disciplinary and Appeal Committees;
- Terms of Membership — establishes the underlying obligation of members and clubs to comply with BBF rules and the right to refuse membership or participation;
- Code of Conduct — sets behavioural standards; this Framework operates the response when those standards are alleged to have been breached;
- Sr. Leagues Handbook — competition discipline and the Disciplinary Matrix continue under the Handbook; in-game / at-event sanctions take effect immediately, with mandatory referral to this Framework for certain matters (see Section 5.3);
- BSUK Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Complaints Procedure — lead for safeguarding; this Framework engages where BSUK recommends BBF disciplinary action or where interim measures are required;
- Whistleblowing Policy — entry route for protected disclosures;
- Conflicts of Interest Policy — governs conflicts of Board, panel and officer roles;
- Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy — substantive bribery and corruption standard; breach engages this Framework;
- Anti-Doping Policy / UK Anti-Doping Rules — anti-doping is handled by UKAD; this Framework supports;
- Privacy Policy, IT Policy, Website Terms of Use — operational policies; breaches engage this Framework;
- Financial Governance Framework — financial governance is separate; financial misconduct routes through this Framework (see Section 5.8).

19. Review and ownership

This Framework is owned by the BBF Secretary.

Annex A — Pathway map

Matters are routed at triage. The table below sets out which pathway each matter type follows.

Matter type	Pathway
Safeguarding (child or adult at risk)	BSUK Safeguarding Complaints Procedure. BBF may impose interim measures under this Framework. BBF disciplinary action under this Framework where BSUK recommends or where independent BBF rule breach is engaged.
Anti-doping	UKAD. BBF interim measures available under Section 10. Parallel BBF action for obstruction or breach of Code.
Competition discipline (in-game / at-event incident)	Sr. Leagues Handbook + Disciplinary Matrix. Mandatory referral to this Framework for Type 3.1 and Type 3.7, and for any off-event element.
Whistleblowing (protected disclosure)	Whistleblowing Policy entry route. Investigation under this Framework where rule breach is alleged.
Conflicts of interest	Conflicts of Interest Policy + this Framework.
Discrimination / harassment / bullying (off-event)	This Framework. Cross-reference Code s.5 and s.6.
Online / social media misconduct	This Framework. Cross-reference Code s.10.
IT, data, privacy	This Framework, supported by IT Policy and Privacy Policy.
Financial misconduct	This Framework, supported by Financial Governance Framework and the Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy.
Complaint against a Board member or officer	This Framework. Chair recuses where conflicted; if Chair conflicted, Deputy Chair / Secretary as appropriate.

Annex B — Organisational sanctions reference

This annex provides an indicative reference for sanctions imposed under this Framework. The Disciplinary Committee applies the sanctions in Section 13.1 and the principles in Section 13.2 to the matter before it. The Handbook Disciplinary Matrix continues to apply for in-game and at-event matters.

Indicative range	Sanctions the Disciplinary Committee may consider
Lower-end breach (e.g. minor breach of Code, isolated, no harm)	Advice; written warning; required reading; brief education; informal resolution closure.
Mid-range breach (e.g. repeated minor breach; single more serious instance of disrespect or online misconduct; non-cooperation; or a second minor breach)	Final warning; required training; conditions on continued participation; suspension up to 4 weeks from a role.
Serious breach (e.g. bullying or harassment with limited impact; misuse of position; serious online misconduct; financial irregularity not engaging fraud)	Suspension 1-6 months; conditions on return; required training.
Very serious breach (e.g. discrimination — Code s.5; safeguarding failure short of statutory referral; serious bullying or harassment; substantial financial irregularity; abuse of position of trust; or a second mid-range breach)	Suspension 6-24 months; removal from position of responsibility; censure; conditions on return; required training.
Most serious breach (e.g. violence; threats; safeguarding offence; gross discrimination; fraud; conduct fundamentally incompatible with continued participation; or a third minor breach, third mid-range breach, second very serious breach, or retaliation)	Permanent prohibition from BBF activity; removal of club authorisation or membership; censure.

Annex C — What this Framework consolidates

Existing document	How it is treated
Enforcement Policy (2022)	Five-step process (Examiner → Scoping → Review → Preliminary Findings → Final Notice) modernised in Sections 8-13. Public-statement restraint and cooperation duty restated in Sections 11.4-11.5. £50 appeal fee retained at Section 15.2. Conditions for persons under interim measures restated and broadened in Section 10.3.
Complaints and Grievance Procedure (2025)	Consolidated into Section 6. Three-stage informal resolution retained; Equality Act 2010 carve-out preserved; 28-day timeline preserved; cannot-be-complained-about list preserved; Sport Integrity / Sport Resolutions UK referral preserved (Section 6.8).

Existing document	How it is treated
Sr. Leagues Handbook S.49 (Enforcement Process)	Substantive content moved to this Framework. Handbook S.49 replaced by a brief signpost.
BSUK Safeguarding Complaints Procedure	Retained as the lead procedure for safeguarding. Handover point to this Framework defined at Section 5.1.
Whistleblowing Policy	Substantive policy retained as a standalone; entry route mapped at Section 5.4.
Conflicts of Interest Policy	Substantive policy retained as a standalone; Committee composition rule in Section 12.2 applies the COI standard.
Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy	Substantive policy retained as a standalone; breach engages this Framework.
Privacy Policy, IT Policy, Website Terms of Use	Retained as substantive operational policies; breach is processed under this Framework (Section 5.7); retention schedule sits in the Privacy Policy.
Anti-Doping Policy	Substantive anti-doping rules are the UK Anti-Doping Rules, administered by UKAD. Retained as the BBF-side reference.
Constitution — Disciplinary Committee / Appeal Committee	Operationalised in Sections 12 and 15. To be reconciled in the next Constitutional review so that 'Disciplinary Committee' and 'Appeal Committee' map to 'Disciplinary Committee' and 'Appeal Committee' in this Framework.

Drafting notes for the Board

(These notes accompany the v2 draft and would normally be removed before Board approval.)

1. Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy

Drafted from scratch as part of the supporting policies pack. Breach engages this Framework. The new Code of Conduct also incorporates the anti-bribery standard.

2. Transgender and Non-Binary Policy

The behavioural content is fully subsumed into the Code of Conduct (Sections 3, 5 and 6). Eligibility provisions, if any, would sit in the Sr. Leagues Handbook eligibility framework (Layer 4). The Transgender Policy itself has not been reviewed as part of this work — recommend the Board review the policy and confirm where the eligibility provisions sit.

3. Constitutional alignment

Two changes to consider at the next Constitutional review: (a) use a single appeals body — 'Appeal Committee' — to replace the current twin reference to 'Appeal Committee' (Constitution) and 'independent Appeal Committee' (Complaints and Grievance Procedure); (b) confirm that the Board has authority to identify Committee members and delegate triage to the BBF Secretary.

4. Timelines

The timelines in Sections 8, 10, 11, 12 and 15 are first-cut and proportionate to a volunteer-led NGB. They may be tightened in serious safeguarding matters and extended where complexity requires.