

**Littlehampton Players Operatic Society**  
**Disciplinary & Grievance Policy**  
**Reviewed 23 August 2023**

Littlehampton Players Operatic Society (LPOS) is a registered charity (276416) and stands for values of Equal Opportunities, Diversity, and Inclusion (see our ED&I Policy for further details). In the instance that any member of the society acts in a way that does not comply with our expected values, the individual(s) involved will be entered into our disciplinary and grievance process as described below.

For the avoidance of doubt:

**Misconduct**

This is conduct which is sufficiently serious that it requires disciplinary action. In order to warrant dismissal from the society, misconduct must be extremely serious, or repeated on more than one occasion.

Misconduct can include (and is not limited to) persistent lateness, unauthorised absence, failure to meet agreed expectations of working standards, smoking in non-smoking areas, and misuse of props, costumes, or scenery.

**Gross misconduct**

This is the term used for serious misconduct, which may lead to instant dismissal (that is, summary dismissal) from the society.

Acts that constitute gross misconduct are those resulting in a serious breach of terms of membership, and will be for LPOS' committee to review under each individual set of circumstances. They might include (and are not limited to) the following:

- Theft, fraud, or deliberate falsification of records.
- Physical violence.
- Serious bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- Sexual harassment or assault.
- Serious insubordination.
- Serious incapability brought about by alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Endangering others through deliberate breach of Health & Safety procedures.

In the case of gross misconduct, the committee of LPOS shall suspend the person(s) involved and carry out an investigation before following disciplinary processes as detailed below.

Should any member determine that they wish to make a complaint in regards to any member, creative, or person working with LPOS, they should raise a complaint with the Chair of LPOS.

The Chair may take the matter up with the person concerned if requested to do so by the complainant. Such informal discussions do not necessarily need to be officially recorded, and it will be made clear that they do not form part of the official grievance procedure.

## **Next Steps**

### **STAGE ONE:**

The grievance should be raised with the Chair. This should be done in writing. The Chair will convene meetings with relevant parties to look into the grievance (wherever possible) within ten working days of receiving the request. The Chair alone makes the decision about how to proceed, but may consult with the rest of the committee before any decision is made. If the situation is potentially a disciplinary one, the disciplinary procedure will be followed.

### **STAGE TWO:**

If the grievance is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant she/he/they must make a written request to the Chair for stage two (the appeal stage of the grievance procedure.) At this point the committee as a whole shall convene a meeting to investigate the complaint.

### **If the grievance is against the Chair**

The complainant should speak to the society's Secretary about how to propose a motion of censure or no confidence at a General Meeting of the society.

LPOS will offer support through any complaint and record any formal stages of these procedures including agreed corrective actions and notes of any warnings given, as well as the period after which this warning will be disregarded. Each party will be furnished with copies of these notes.

## **LPOS Disciplinary Actions**

### **First Oral Warning:**

In the case of a minor infringement the person(s) may be given a formal oral warning. They shall be told of the reason(s) for the warning, that it is the first step in the disciplinary process, and that they have the right of appeal.

### **First Written Warning:**

If the infringement is regarded as more serious, the person(s) may be given a formal written warning containing the details of the complaint, the improvement required, the timescale allowed for this, and the right of appeal. The warning should also state that a final written warning may be considered if the desired change doesn't occur within the allowed timescale.

### **Final Written Warning:**

Where there is failure to improve the behaviour outlined in the first written warning, or an infringement which is considered sufficiently serious, the person(s) may be given a final written warning. This shall include details of the offence and that failure to improve may result in dismissal, as well as detailing the right of appeal.

### **Dismissal or other sanction**

If the behaviour remains unchanged then the sanction imposed may include suspension, demotion, loss of seniority, or dismissal.

The decision to dismiss shall be taken by the Officers of the Society (the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, on a majority vote, with Chair casting any deciding vote), and the person(s) shall be informed as soon as is reasonably practicable and told how to make an appeal. The decision to dismiss will be confirmed in writing, and the person(s) have the right on request to have a written statement of the reasons for dismissal.

### **Recording**

The society shall ensure that a record is kept of all written warnings. However, any disciplinary action taken (other than dismissal) shall be disregarded after a set period of time as outlined below:

- Warnings for minor offences will be valid for up to six months.
- Final warnings will remain in force for 12 months.

Once the time limits have been passed, warnings shall be disregarded in any further disciplinary proceedings. These records shall be kept confidential and retained in accordance of the disciplinary procedure and the Data Protection Act 1998, which requires the release of certain data to individuals on their request.

### **Appeals**

The opportunity to appeal against a disciplinary decision is essential to natural justice. Appeals will be dealt with as promptly as possible (wherever possible) within 14 days of receipt of the warning or dismissal.

Individuals will be informed of arrangements for appeal hearings, including details of the appeal panel, and also of their right to be accompanied during this hearing. The individual will be informed of the result of the hearing as soon as possible, and this will be confirmed in writing.

Policy to be renewed annually.

**Last review: 23 August 2023**

**Next review: 22 August 2024**