

# **KARATE** *& Dance* **FEDERATION**

**Karate & Dance Federation**

***Staff Disciplinary Policy***

# *Policy Overview Information*

<b>Policy Title</b>	Staff Disciplinary
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<b>Date Written</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
<b>Date Implemented</b>	January 2026
<b>Review Date</b>	January 2027
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# *Policy Logistics*

This policy is intended for the Karate & Dance Federation, which means that both companies within this umbrella organisation must adhere to the policies and procedures in place. These companies are: Central Karate Academy CIC and Midlands Dance Academy Ltd.

## *Umbrella organisation and governance structure*

The Karate & Dance Federation operates as an umbrella organisation responsible for the strategic governance, safeguarding oversight, and operational standards applied across its constituent entities. While Central Karate Academy CIC and Midlands Dance Academy Ltd are separate legal entities with distinct legal structures, they function collectively under the Federation for the purposes of policy implementation, safeguarding assurance, quality control, and risk management.

All policies issued under the name of The Karate & Dance Federation establish a single, consistent framework of expectations, procedures, and standards that apply across both organisations. This ensures that children, families, staff, volunteers, and external partners experience the same level of protection, professionalism, and accountability regardless of which legal entity is delivering a particular activity.

Where statutory, regulatory, or reporting obligations differ due to the legal status of each entity, those obligations are met within the relevant organisation. However, the highest standard of practice set out within Federation policy will always apply. No individual, department, or entity operating within the Federation may adopt a lower standard than that required by Federation policy.

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with Federation policies sits with the Federation's senior leadership, who retain oversight of safeguarding, health and safety, professional conduct, and quality assurance across all activities delivered under the Federation name.

# 1. Purpose of this Policy

The Karate & Dance Federation is committed to maintaining high standards of conduct, professionalism, integrity, and behaviour across all areas of its work. As an organisation working with children, young people, families, staff, and the wider community, it is essential that all individuals representing the Federation act in a safe, respectful, lawful, and professional manner at all times.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and fair framework for managing concerns relating to conduct, behaviour, performance-linked misconduct, attendance, professionalism, breaches of policy, or any actions which may negatively impact the organisation, its members, or its reputation.

This policy is designed to:

- ensure all staff are treated fairly, consistently, and respectfully
- set out the expected standards of behaviour and conduct
- support early resolution of issues where appropriate
- provide a structured process for addressing misconduct
- protect children, young people, families, staff, and the organisation
- uphold safeguarding, professionalism, and accountability
- ensure disciplinary matters are managed proportionately and confidentially

The Federation recognises that most issues can often be addressed constructively and informally. However, where conduct falls below expected standards, formal disciplinary action may be necessary.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals working for or on behalf of the Karate & Dance Federation, including but not limited to:

- employed staff
- directors where relevant to operational conduct
- karate coaches and instructors
- dance teachers and assistants
- administrative staff
- sessional workers
- apprentices and students on placement
- volunteers
- casual workers
- self-employed individuals and contractors acting on behalf of the Federation

All individuals covered by this policy are expected to comply with the Federation's standards, procedures, safeguarding expectations, and professional code of conduct. This policy should be read alongside all other relevant Federation policies, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Attendance and Timekeeping Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy

### **3. Management Authority and Professional Accountability**

The Karate & Dance Federation operates under a clear management structure to ensure the safe, lawful, and effective running of the organisation.

The Executive Director holds overall responsibility for the day-to-day operational leadership, management oversight, staff direction, service delivery, organisational standards, and the professional running of the Federation, unless otherwise delegated through the Federation's governance or management structure.

All staff, coaches, instructors, volunteers, assistants, and contractors are expected to:

- act professionally and respectfully towards senior leadership and management
- comply with lawful, reasonable, and professional instructions issued by the

Executive Director or authorised management representatives

- follow organisational procedures, systems, and operational expectations
- work within the Federation's management structure and lines of accountability
- support the safe, effective, and professional running of the organisation

Failure to follow lawful and reasonable management instructions, deliberate disregard for operational direction, repeated refusal to comply with organisational expectations, or conduct that undermines leadership, management decisions, or the professional operation of the Federation may be treated as misconduct and dealt with under this disciplinary policy.

Nothing within this section overrides any individual's legal right to raise concerns appropriately through the Federation's Grievance Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, or safeguarding procedures where relevant.

### **4. Policy Principles**

The Federation is committed to ensuring that disciplinary matters are handled:

- fairly
- consistently
- promptly
- confidentially
- in line with organisational policy and good practice
- with due regard to safeguarding and welfare

The following principles will apply:

#### **4.1 Fairness**

No disciplinary action will be taken without the matter first being reviewed and, where appropriate, investigated.

#### 4.2 Natural Justice

Individuals will be informed of the concern, given an opportunity to respond, and allowed to explain their version of events before any formal decision is made.

#### 4.3 Proportionality

Any action taken will be proportionate to the seriousness of the issue, taking into account previous conduct, mitigating circumstances, safeguarding implications, and the impact of the behaviour.

#### 4.4 Confidentiality

Disciplinary matters will be handled confidentially and only shared with those who need to know in order to manage the matter appropriately.

#### 4.5 Safeguarding Priority

Where a disciplinary matter raises concerns relating to child welfare, safeguarding, professional boundaries, or suitability to work with children, safeguarding procedures will take priority and may run alongside disciplinary action.

#### 4.6 Right to Support

Individuals invited to a formal disciplinary meeting may be accompanied by a work colleague, trade union representative, or another appropriate companion where applicable.

## 5. Expected Standards of Conduct

All staff and representatives of the Federation are expected to:

- behave professionally and respectfully at all times
- act in the best interests of children and young people
- uphold safeguarding responsibilities and report concerns appropriately
- follow Federation policies, procedures, and lawful and reasonable management instructions
- maintain appropriate boundaries with students, families, and colleagues
- demonstrate reliability, punctuality, and accountability
- communicate appropriately with staff, parents, and members
- protect confidential and sensitive information
- represent the Federation positively in person, online, and in the wider community
- act honestly, responsibly, and lawfully at all times
- respect the Federation's management structure and operational decision-making

Failure to meet these standards may result in informal management action or formal disciplinary action depending on the seriousness of the concern.

## 6. Informal Resolution

The Federation recognises that not every concern requires formal disciplinary action. In many cases, concerns can be resolved quickly and effectively through supportive management and informal discussion.

Informal action may include:

- a verbal conversation
- clarification of expectations
- coaching or supervision
- additional training
- a reminder of policy or conduct expectations
- an informal note placed on file where appropriate

Examples of concerns that may be dealt with informally include:

- isolated lateness
- minor communication issues
- occasional failure to follow internal process
- low-level unprofessional behaviour
- first-time minor conduct concerns

Informal action is intended to support improvement and should not be viewed as punitive. However, repeated concerns or failure to improve may lead to the formal disciplinary process.

## **7. Disciplinary Matters That May Lead to Formal Action**

Formal disciplinary action may be considered where conduct is more serious, repeated, inappropriate, unsafe, or damaging to the Federation.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

### **7.1 Conduct and Behaviour**

- repeated lateness or poor attendance
- inappropriate or unprofessional behaviour
- use of inappropriate language
- disrespectful behaviour towards colleagues, parents, children, or visitors
- insubordination or refusal to follow lawful and reasonable instructions
- behaviour that undermines management, staff, or the organisation
- deliberate disregard for the Federation's operational direction or leadership

### **7.2 Professional Practice**

- failure to carry out duties properly
- repeated poor adherence to procedures
- failure to maintain expected standards of supervision or class management
- breach of professional boundaries
- poor judgment affecting students, staff, or families

### **7.3 Safeguarding and Welfare**

- failure to report safeguarding concerns
- unsafe practice around children or young people
- inappropriate physical, verbal, or emotional conduct
- conduct that places a child or vulnerable person at risk
- failure to comply with safeguarding procedures

### **7.4 Attendance and Reliability**

- repeated unauthorised absence
- persistent lateness
- failure to attend agreed sessions without proper notice
- poor reliability impacting service delivery

### **7.5 Communication and Relationships**

- inappropriate messages or communications

- disrespectful or hostile conduct
- spreading malicious or harmful information
- bullying, intimidation, or harassment

#### 7.6 Policies and Procedures

- breach of internal Federation policies
- misuse of confidential information
- breach of social media expectations
- failure to follow health and safety procedures
- unauthorised use of Federation property, systems, or resources

#### 7.7 Reputation and Public Conduct

- behaviour that brings the Federation into disrepute
- inappropriate public comments or online activity
- conduct outside of work that affects suitability or professional standing

## 8. Gross Misconduct

Some matters are so serious that they may constitute gross misconduct. Gross misconduct is conduct that fundamentally breaches trust and confidence and may result in summary dismissal or immediate termination of engagement, subject to investigation and due process.

Examples of gross misconduct may include, but are not limited to:

- theft, fraud, or deliberate dishonesty
- physical violence, threatening behaviour, or aggression
- bullying, harassment, discrimination, or victimisation
- serious insubordination
- deliberate refusal to comply with lawful management instruction where this causes serious disruption, risk, or operational concern
- serious breach of safeguarding procedures
- inappropriate conduct towards a child or vulnerable person
- deliberate or reckless behaviour placing a child at risk
- serious breach of confidentiality
- being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs whilst working
- possession or use of illegal substances on Federation premises or during Federation activity
- serious misuse of social media or communications
- serious reputational damage caused to the Federation
- falsification of records or documents
- deliberate damage to property
- serious breach of health and safety
- unauthorised photography, recording, or sharing of children or staff
- conduct which makes the individual unsuitable to continue working with children or within the organisation

This list is not exhaustive.

## 9. Suspension

In some circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend an individual from duties on a temporary basis while an investigation takes place. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction and does not imply guilt.

Suspension may be considered where:

- there is a safeguarding concern
- there is a risk to children, staff, or members
- the matter is potentially serious or gross misconduct
- the individual's presence may interfere with the investigation
- relationships have broken down to the extent that temporary removal is necessary

Where possible, alternatives to suspension may be considered, such as:

- temporary redeployment
- amended duties
- supervised working arrangements
- restricted access to certain activities or settings

Any suspension will be confirmed in writing and reviewed regularly.

## **10. Investigation Process**

Before formal disciplinary action is taken, the Federation will normally carry out an investigation to establish the facts.

The purpose of an investigation is to:

- gather relevant information
- establish what happened
- speak to relevant witnesses
- review records, messages, CCTV, reports, or other evidence where appropriate
- determine whether there is a case to answer under the disciplinary procedure

An investigation may include:

- written statements
- interviews with relevant individuals
- review of attendance, communication, or incident records
- safeguarding records where relevant
- review of policies and expected standards

The individual concerned may be invited to an investigatory meeting to provide their account.

An investigation meeting is not a disciplinary hearing and no disciplinary decision will usually be made at that stage.

At the conclusion of the investigation, a decision will be made as to whether:

- no further action is required
- informal action is appropriate
- the matter should proceed to a formal disciplinary hearing
- alternative procedures should apply (e.g. safeguarding referral, capability, grievance, or external reporting)

## 11. Formal Disciplinary Procedure

Where a formal disciplinary hearing is required, the following process will usually apply.

### 11.1 Notice of Hearing

The individual will be informed in writing of:

- the nature of the allegations or concerns
- the date, time, and location of the hearing
- the possible outcomes
- any documents or evidence to be considered
- their right to be accompanied where applicable

Reasonable notice will be given to allow preparation.

### 11.2 Disciplinary Hearing

The disciplinary hearing will normally be chaired by a Director, senior manager, or other appropriate person not directly involved where possible.

At the hearing:

- the concerns or allegations will be outlined
- evidence will be presented
- the individual will have the opportunity to respond
- questions may be asked
- any mitigating circumstances may be considered

The hearing will be conducted professionally and respectfully.

### 11.3 Decision Making

Following the hearing, the chair will consider:

- the evidence available
- the seriousness of the matter
- any previous conduct history
- whether policies or expectations were breached
- safeguarding implications
- any mitigating circumstances• whether there is confidence that improvement or compliance can be achieved

A decision may be communicated either at the meeting or afterwards in writing.

## 12. Possible Disciplinary Outcomes

Depending on the seriousness of the matter, the following outcomes may be issued:

### 12.1 No Further Action

Where there is insufficient evidence or no disciplinary breach identified.

### 12.2 Informal Management Action

Where the concern is better addressed through guidance, support, or supervision.

### 12.3 First Written Warning

Issued where misconduct is substantiated but not serious enough to warrant a final warning.

A first written warning will usually include:

- the nature of the concern
- expected improvements
- timescales for improvement
- any support or monitoring arrangements
- the consequences of further misconduct

#### 12.4 Final Written Warning

Issued where:

- the misconduct is serious, or
- there is repeated misconduct following an earlier warning

A final written warning will make clear that further misconduct may lead to dismissal or termination.

#### 12.5 Dismissal or Termination of Engagement

Dismissal or termination may occur where:

- misconduct continues despite previous warnings
- conduct is serious enough to justify dismissal
- gross misconduct is substantiated

For volunteers, contractors, or sessional staff, this may result in immediate termination of duties, placements, or engagement.

## 13. Appeals

Any individual who receives formal disciplinary action has the right to appeal the decision. Appeals should:

- be submitted in writing
- normally be made within 5 working days of receiving the disciplinary outcome
- clearly state the grounds for appeal

Grounds for appeal may include:

- new evidence
- procedural concerns
- disproportionate outcome
- belief that the decision was unreasonable

Where possible, the appeal will be heard by a person not previously involved in the matter.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed in writing and will usually be final.

## 14. Safeguarding and External Reporting

Where a disciplinary matter involves safeguarding concerns, allegations against staff, or conduct affecting suitability to work with children, the Federation may need to take action beyond the disciplinary procedure.

This may include:

- internal safeguarding action
- referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where applicable
- referral to external agencies or statutory bodies
- DBS-related considerations where legally required
- professional suitability reviews

The Federation's duty to safeguard children and young people will always take priority.

## **15. Record Keeping and Confidentiality**

The Federation will keep a confidential written record of:

- allegations or concerns raised
- investigation findings
- disciplinary meetings
- decisions made
- warnings issued
- appeal outcomes

All records will be handled in accordance with data protection, confidentiality, and safeguarding requirements. Disciplinary matters are confidential and should not be discussed inappropriately with colleagues, parents, students, or other parties.

Breach of confidentiality may itself result in disciplinary action.

## **16. False, Malicious, or Vexatious Allegations**

The Federation takes all concerns seriously and encourages staff to raise genuine concerns appropriately.

However, where it is found that a complaint or allegation has been made deliberately falsely, maliciously, or with intent to cause harm, this may itself be treated as a disciplinary matter.

This does not apply to concerns raised in good faith, even where they are not ultimately upheld.

## **17. Relationship with Other Procedures**

There may be occasions where matters overlap with other Federation procedures. Depending on the nature of the issue, the Federation may decide that the matter is better managed under:

- the Grievance Policy
- the Safeguarding Policy
- the Capability / Performance Management process
- the Attendance Policy
- the Whistleblowing Policy
- external safeguarding or regulatory procedures

The Federation reserves the right to determine the most appropriate procedure to apply based on the circumstances.

## **18. Equality, Fairness and Consistency**

The Federation is committed to ensuring that disciplinary matters are managed fairly and without discrimination.

No individual will be treated less favourably on the basis of:

- age
- disability
- sex
- race
- religion or belief
- pregnancy or maternity
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership• sexual orientation
- any other protected characteristic under applicable law

Reasonable adjustments will be considered where needed to ensure fairness and accessibility throughout the disciplinary process.

## **19. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains:

- legally compliant
- operationally appropriate
- reflective of safeguarding expectations
- aligned with the Federation's values and structure

The Federation reserves the right to update this policy at any time where necessary.

## **20. Policy Statement**

All staff, coaches, volunteers, contractors, and representatives of the Karate & Dance Federation are expected to uphold the standards, values, professionalism, safeguarding responsibilities, and operational expectations of the organisation at all times.

Failure to do so may result in management action or disciplinary action under this policy.

The Federation is committed to dealing with concerns fairly, professionally, and in a way that protects both individuals and the wider organisation.