

Noosa Bridge Club

Conduct and Ethics Sub-Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The Conduct and Ethics Sub-Committee (“the Sub-Committee”) is established to promote a safe, respectful, inclusive, and enjoyable environment for all members, guests, and visitors of the Club. Its purpose is to uphold the Club’s standards of behaviour, ensure adherence to ethical practices, and address complaints or concerns in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.

2. Objectives

The Sub-Committee will:

- Promote a culture of respect, integrity, and good sportsmanship
 - Ensure compliance with the Club’s Code of Conduct and relevant governing body regulations
 - Provide a clear and confidential process for handling complaints and disputes
 - Protect the rights and wellbeing of all members
 - Encourage education and awareness of ethical behaviour within the Club
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3. Authority

The Sub-Committee operates under the authority of the Management Committee.

It is authorized to:

- Receive and review complaints or concerns relating to conduct and ethics
- Investigate matters as appropriate
- Make findings and recommendations to the Management Committee
- Propose disciplinary or corrective actions
- Recommend updates to policies and procedures

Final decisions regarding disciplinary action remain with the Management Committee unless delegated.

4. Scope

The Sub-Committee will consider matters including, but not limited to:

- Breaches of the Club’s Code of Conduct

- Unsportsmanlike behaviour
 - Harassment, bullying, or discrimination
 - Disputes between members
 - Ethical concerns relating to gameplay or club activities
 - Any conduct that may bring the Club into disrepute
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5. Membership

The Sub-Committee shall consist of:

- 3–5 members appointed by the Management Committee
- Including 1 member of the Management Committee (the Chair)
- Members who are respected, impartial, and able to maintain confidentiality

The Sub-Committee may:

- Seek input from witnesses to incidents
- Seek external advice if required (e.g., from the governing bridge organization)

Members must declare any conflicts of interest and recuse themselves where appropriate.

6. Meetings

- Meetings will be held as required, depending on the number and urgency of matters
 - A quorum shall be a majority of members
 - Decisions should be made by consensus where possible, or by majority vote
 - Minutes will be recorded and kept confidential
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7. Complaints Process

The Sub-Committee will:

1. Receive complaints in writing (or documented form)
 2. Acknowledge receipt within a reasonable timeframe
 3. Assess whether the complaint falls within its scope
 4. Conduct a fair and impartial review, including:
 - Gathering relevant information
 - Speaking with involved parties if necessary
 5. Maintain confidentiality throughout the process
 6. Make findings and recommendations to the Management Committee
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8. Principles of Operation

The Sub-Committee will operate under the following principles:

- **Fairness:** All parties are treated equally and given an opportunity to be heard
 - **Confidentiality:** Information is handled sensitively and shared only when necessary
 - **Impartiality:** Decisions are free from bias or conflicts of interest
 - **Transparency:** Processes are clear and documented
 - **Timeliness:** Matters are handled promptly
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9. Outcomes and Recommendations

The Sub-Committee may recommend actions including:

- No further action
 - Informal resolution or mediation
 - Education or guidance
 - Formal warning or reprimand
 - Temporary suspension from Club activities (subject to Management Committee approval)
 - Permanent termination of membership (subject to Management Committee approval)
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10. Reporting

- The Sub-Committee will report to the Management Committee as required
 - An annual summary (non-confidential) may be provided to members, highlighting general trends and improvements
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11. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually or as required to ensure they remain effective and aligned with Club needs and governing body requirements.

12. Adoption

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the Management Committee on:

19 May 2026

Signed: Boallen

Position: President NBC

Appendix: Code of Conduct

Noosa Bridge Club Code of Conduct for Members and Visitors

Purpose

This Code of Conduct is designed to promote a welcoming, respectful, inclusive, safe and enjoyable environment for all members, visitors, guests, directors, volunteers, and staff of the bridge club. All participants are expected to uphold the values of courtesy, fairness, integrity, and good sportsmanship.

1. Respect and Courtesy

All members and visitors are expected to:

- Treat others with courtesy, dignity, and respect at all times.
- Welcome players of all skill levels and backgrounds.
- Use polite and appropriate language.
- Avoid behaviour that may intimidate, embarrass, bully, or harass others.
- Respect the decisions of directors, tournament officials, and committee members.

Unacceptable behaviour includes:

- Aggressive, abusive, discriminatory, or offensive language
- Personal criticism of partners, opponents, or officials
- Obstructing or preventing officials from performing their duties
- Actions that unduly or unreasonably destabilise or undermine the Management Committee or governance of the Club
- Persistent negative comments or disruptive conduct
- Malicious slander, gossiping or rumourmongering
- Harassment, bullying, or exclusion of any person
- Unwarranted, and/or unwelcome invasion of personal space
- Sexual harassment, including but not limited to
 - unwanted physical contact
 - explicit jokes / innuendo
 - other communication (including use of technology) of a sexual nature
 - leering and / or suggestive hand / facial gestures
 - sending / distribution of pornographic content

2. Unlawful activities

The Club has a zero tolerance policy towards activities that contravene State and Federal law. Such incidents occurring within the Club's premises or injurious to the Club in some manner, shall be subject to disciplinary procedures and review of membership. The Club reserves the right to refer matters to State and/or Federal authorities where required.

3. Etiquette at the Table

Players are expected to:

- Abide by the rules of the QBA and ABF
- Follow customs, ethics and etiquette of duplicate bridge
- Maintain a friendly and considerate attitude during play
- Refrain from criticising or instructing partners during or after a hand
- Avoid loud conversation or behaviour that may disturb other tables
- Keep mobile phones on silent or off and minimise distractions

- Play at a reasonable pace and be ready to begin rounds promptly
- Leave discussion of hands until all the boards at the table have been completed
- Welcome new players to your table

Players must not:

- Cheat or engage in unethical conduct
- Unduly disturb or approach other tables while play is progress
- Use unauthorised signalling or communication
- Discuss hands loudly where others may hear
- Consume excessive alcohol / illicit drugs or behave inappropriately under its influence
- Attempt to intimidate the opposition in any manner

4. Commitment to Good Sportsmanship

Bridge is a game of skill, partnership, and mutual respect

Members are encouraged to:

- Be gracious in both victory and defeat
- Encourage new and developing players
- Foster friendship and community through the game

5. Inclusiveness and Equity

The club is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination and harassment.

The club welcomes all participants regardless of:

- Age
- Gender
- Physical and/or cognitive ability
- Ethnic and/or cultural background
- Sexual orientation
- Religious or political affiliation
- Experience level

All members have the right to feel safe and included.

6. Responsibilities of Members

Members are expected to:

- Support the club's positive culture and reputation
- Comply with club rules, policies, and directions from officials, including Directors and Club Officers
- Assist in maintaining a pleasant playing environment
- Raise concerns respectfully and through appropriate channels
- Respect club property, equipment, and facilities and share communal supplies
- Contribute when feasible to maintaining a clean and tidy club house, especially the kitchen and playing tables

7. Directors and Officials

Club directors and officials shall:

- Apply the laws of bridge fairly and consistently
- Treat all players impartially and respectfully
- Address concerns and disputes professionally
- Take reasonable steps to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for members

6. Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

Any member who experiences or witnesses inappropriate behaviour should report the matter to a Director, Management Committee member, or Chair of the Conduct & Ethics Subcommittee.

Complaints will be handled:

- Confidentially where appropriate
- Fairly and promptly
- In accordance with principles of natural justice

Members who are under investigation for a suspected breach of the Code are required to cooperate with the Conduct & Ethics Subcommittee and be open and honest when information is requested. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Further information regarding the handling of complaints can be found in the Complaint Management Procedure document.

7. Access and confidentiality of Information

Where appropriate, some documents produced by and for the Club, are required to be confidential. Where authorised to view and/or contribute to a document, members are obliged to maintain the integrity and security of the Club's confidential information. When dealing with personal information, members must comply with the Club's Privacy Policy and the Privacy Act 1988.

8. Breaches of the Code

Alleged breaches of the Code will be heard by the Management Committee. If a breach of the Code has been confirmed, the Management Committee may consider the breach a wilful action prejudicial to the interests of the Club and may review the offender's membership.

Breaches of this Code may result in:

- A verbal warning
- Written formal reprimand
- Suspension from club activities
- Termination of membership in serious or repeated cases

Complaints that are frivolous or contain information that is deliberately false or misleading will not be accepted and may result in disciplinary action against the complainant.

8. Acceptance

Participation in club activities constitutes acceptance of this Code of Conduct.

All members and visitors are expected to comply with its principles and requirements.