

AIKIDO RESEARCH FEDERATION

CONSTITUTION AND RULES

1.0 ORGANISATION AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 1.1 The name of the organisation shall be the AIKIDO RESEARCH FEDERATION (herein after called the A.R.F. or the Federation).
- 1.2 The Federation shall be managed by a Management Committee (hereinafter called " the Committee") who shall have the power to make rules for regulating the conduct and affairs of the Federation, providing the same are not inconsistent with the constitution.
- 1.3 The members of the Federation are the federate clubs, each of which is allowed one vote at General Meetings through its elected representative or person deputising for that Representative. Such federate clubs are referred to in this document as Members or Member Clubs and their representatives as Club Representatives"
- 1.4 Unless accorded Honorary Membership, individuals may only join the Federation by application to a federate club. Such applications are detailed in section 5.3
- 1.5 The use of the terms 'General Meeting" or "General Meetings" throughout this document shall apply to any of the Federation's meetings where Club Representatives are entitled to vote and includes the Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meetings.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 To provide facilities for the research, teaching and encouragement of Aikido and related arts and for the social intercourse of its members.
- 2.2 To stimulate interest in Aikido and related arts and through this to teach the true meaning of the way (DO) ; by holding instructional courses, gradings and demonstrations within the true meaning of Budo.
- 2.3 To establish and promote, through approved officials, Aikido and related arts schools in as many areas of the community as possible.

3.0 APPLICATION OF THE CONSTITUTION AND RULES

- 3.1 By joining the Federation each Member club and all the individuals comprising that club have agreed to be bound by its rules. The rules laid down in this document take precedence over any rules of the Member club whenever a conflict occurs.
- 3.2 Each federated club should possess a copy of the current Constitution and Rules of the A.R.F. and should act in accordance with these. Copies of the Constitution and rules are available, on demand, from the Secretary of the Federation.
- 3.3 Complaints about the conduct of any Officer of the Federation in the performance of the Federation's duties must be made in writing to the Executive Committee (as defined in Section 8.3) for consideration by the Executive. If any involved party is unhappy with the judgment of the Executive they may take this judgment to the full Committee.

4.0 FINANCE

- 4.1 All monies held by the Treasurer on behalf of the Federation are to be used for
 - (a) the running of the Federation
 - (b) the furtherance of the Federation's objectives
 - (c) any other uses specified in this constitution.
- 4.2 Persons engaged in an official function on behalf of the Federation may claim expenses incurred as a result of that function. Such claims must be approved by the Chairperson and must be submitted to the Treasurer in writing before payment.
- 4.3 Expenditure other than that given in section 4.2 must be presented to the Executive Committee for their agreement and so that this agreement and the reasons for the expenditure can be minuted. A copy of the relevant part of the minutes shall be given to the Treasurer as proof that such expenditure was properly authorised.

In the event that such expenditure must be made immediately and that there is insufficient time to call an Executive Committee meeting it will be sufficient for the members of the Executive to reach unanimous agreement by telephone or post and for the Secretary to minute this for formal agreement at the next Executive Committee meeting. If agreement is not unanimous then the expenditure must be held over to the next Executive Committee meeting where it may be passed by a simple majority vote

- 4.4 Funds shall be used to sponsor a child through Action Aid.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 The clubs within the Federation shall be open to practitioners of aikido regardless of sex, race, creed or colour.
- 5.2 Clubs wishing to join the Federation must apply to the Secretary in writing. Thereafter, their election will be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
Clubs which are members of the Federation shall retain independent control of their internal affairs.
- 5.3 Individuals may join the Federation by application to a federated club. Applications shall be made on the official form and must be signed by the candidate (or their guardian) and the instructor of the club at which they have applied for membership. Thereafter, their election shall be at the discretion of the Licensing Officer, who may refer an application to the Executive Committee if considered necessary.
- 5.4 A probationary period of FOUR weeks may be granted to any new individual before acceptance into the Federation. The insurance premium should be paid and an application form completed before they are allowed to practice. The club instructor or their authorised deputy shall immediately send the application to the Licensing Officer who shall complete the application and send all licences to the club instructor. After four weeks, if the new member is accepted, they shall pay the A.R.F. subscription and shall receive all licences.
- 5.5 No-one may train at any of the Federation's premises without suitable insurance cover, even as a guest. It is the responsibility of the club's instructor or their deputy to confirm the status of any trainee.
- 5.6 An individual may retire from the Federation at any time but will not be entitled to any refund of subscriptions.
- 5.7 The Committee shall have the power to expel any Member Club or individual within a Member Club who shall offend against the rules of the Federation, or whose conduct shall, in the opinion of the Committee, render them unfit for membership of the Federation. The Secretary must give those threatened with expulsion at least seven days' notice to attend a meeting of the Committee and shall inform them of the complaints made against them. No-one shall be expelled without first having had the opportunity of appearing before the Committee and answering the complaints made against them.

In the first instance of a complaint against a member, that complaint will be considered by the Executive Committee. The Executive may take appropriate remedial action up to and including a recommendation that the Committee consider expulsion.

No individual whose membership has been terminated shall be allowed to train at any of the Federation's clubs or be introduced to that club as a visitor.

- 5.8 Any individual who performs a service or services to the Federation of sufficient magnitude may be elected as an Honorary Life Member by the Committee and does not have to pay any further subscriptions.
There shall not be more than TEN Honorary Life Members at any one time.
- 5.9 The Founder Members of the Shugendo Ryu and the A.R.F. (namely J. Colclough, O.A. Birt, J. Kitchen, J.P. Middleham and M.E. Sheridan) are accorded a Special Honorary Status that they may advise and vote at any A.R.F. General Meeting without implying that they either hold or do not hold office. This vote to be additional to the vote wielded by the representative of any club where they may be a member or instructor but not additional to their vote as a Committee Member at any time that they hold office.

6.0 CALLING OF GENERAL MEETINGS

- 6.1 An Annual General Meeting shall be held every year not later than the end of February to transact the following business :
- (a) To receive, and if approved, to adopt a statement of the Federation s accounts to the end of the preceding year.
 - (b) To consider and, if approved, sanction any duly made alteration to the constitution.
 - (c) To appoint officers of the Executive Committee and other members of the Committee if necessary.
 - (d) To deal with any special matter which the committee desires to bring before the Members for consideration.

The Annual General Meeting shall be conducted according to the rules in section 7.

- 6.2 The Executive Committee may call a General Meeting at any time to deal with any special matter that they desire to place before the membership.

The General Meeting shall be conducted according to the rules in section 7

- 6.3 The Secretary will call an Extraordinary General Meeting on receipt of a written request specifying the objects of such a meeting and provided it is signed by at least FIVE individuals belonging to a Member Club or Clubs.

The Extraordinary General Meeting shall be conducted according to the rules in section 7.

7.0 CONDUCT OF GENERAL MEETINGS

- 7.1 At all General Meetings the A.R.F. Chairperson or their deputy shall preside. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to provide an interpretation of the constitution and rules whenever they may be disputed. Such interpretations should then become a fixed part of these documents and all clubs notified of such.

Where a member or member club of the Federation fails to adhere to the necessary insurance, Data Protection or Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) requirements, as stipulated by the Federation's Executive Committee, the Executive Committee shall reserve the right to withdraw membership of the Federation from that member or member club. Where club or individual membership is withdrawn due to an issue pertaining to insurance, Data Protection or CRB that withdrawal shall be with immediate effect.

- 7.2 Notice of the calling of a General Meeting in any of the forms given in section 6 shall be given to members of the Committee and the instructors of Member Clubs or a nominated deputy not less than 28 days before the date of the meeting.
- 7.3 The agenda shall be circulated to members of the Committee and to Club Instructors (or their Club Representatives as appropriate) before the meeting.
- 7.4 Anyone wishing to bring up any business at the A.G.M. must contact the Secretary not less than 14 days before the date of the A.G.M. for the agenda to be correct for the said meeting.
- 7.5 A quorum is that number of members attending a properly notified meeting
- 7.6 Decisions will be approved by a simple majority of votes.
- 7.7 Before the start of any meeting it is the responsibility of the Secretary or their duly appointed deputy to make it clear to that meeting who is entitled to vote.
- 7.8 A motion of "no confidence" may be brought against any Officer of the Federation, including a member of the Executive Committee at a General Meeting.

To do this the motion must either have been notified to those eligible to attend at least 28 days before the meeting or be brought up as part of the disciplinary procedure given in section 10 and where the possibility of such a motion being brought has been given in the calling of the meeting.

For such a motion to succeed it must be voted for by at least two-thirds of those present at the meeting and who are eligible to vote. If the motion succeeds the Officer involved must resign their position immediately.

8.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

- 8.1 Each club shall elect a delegate to represent them at General Meetings. The election of a Club Representative is the business of that club and not of the Federation. Each Club Representative shall have one vote in any business raised at that meeting. The Federation's Secretary shall keep a list of the current Member Clubs all of whom will be allowed to vote

Those representing each club should make themselves known to the Secretary before the meeting opens.

- 8.2 The Executive Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Federation in each year and, subject to termination by resignation or otherwise, officers shall remain in office until their successors are elected at the Annual General Meeting next following their election. The Executive Committee shall have the power to fill any vacancy that may occur by co-option. Retiring officers shall be eligible for re-election.

No-one shall be proposed for election to the Committee in their absence unless that person has given prior consent to that nomination in writing.

- 8.3 The Officers of the Executive Committee shall be comprised as follows

Chairperson
Secretary
Treasurer

Any individual may only hold ONE of these positions in any one period of office. These positions shall carry a vote at all Meetings of the Federation with the proviso that no Member of the Committee also carry a vote as a Club Representative or as a Founder Member as laid down in section 5.9.

- 8.4 Further Members of the Management Committee (other than Club Representatives whose election is covered in section 8.1) will usually be filled by co-option but may be proposed and elected at a General Meeting if it is the wish of that meeting.
These positions do not carry a vote at General Meetings.

These positions may be held by any individual including an Officer of the Executive Committee (as defined in section 8.3) in addition to their Executive Committee position.

- 8.5 Founder Members have a right to vote as laid down in section 5.9

- 8.6 Officers serve for three years on a rolling basis such that only one officer resigns at any AGM in order to retain continuity in the Executive Council.

9.0 AWARD OF GRADES

- 9.1 Grades of shodan (1st dan) and above may only be awarded by the Federation's Yudansha Officer , normally at a Yudansha course and in consultation with other senior instructors.

The Yudansha Officer will be the Federation's Principal Coach as recognised by the British Aikido Board (B.A.B.) or the equivalent award given by any alternative governing body of which the Federation has become a member.

- 9.2 Students may be awarded the grades of 6th, 5th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd or 1st kyu by the Federation's Grading Officer in consultation with the Grading Panel, normally at one of the Federation's national courses. Hourly record cards will be kept. A minimum recommended number of hours of training are required before grading. The sensei of the student being graded will usually be invited to advise the panel at that grading.

The Grading Officer will hold a minimum of the B.A.B.'s Coach (Level 2) award and will normally be an elected Functionary.

The student will be examined to the Federation's agreed grading syllabus unless the panel has accepted an alternative grading syllabus from that student's sensei. Grading records will be kept of all students and it is the responsibility of the club sensei to keep such records. The conclusions of the Grading Panel will be reported back to the student's sensei and discussions held if the student fails.

- 9.3 Grades awarded by other organisations may be confirmed by the relevant official on production of valid documents of proof of these grades. The relevant official is the one defined in sections 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 as being responsible for the award of the grade being sought.

A provisional recognition of grade may be awarded.

- 9.4 Persons gaining advancement in other organisations are required to wear their A.R.F. grade belt at club and course level, and are required to present themselves for grading at their A.R.F. grade.

10.0 DISSOLUTION OF THE FEDERATION

- 10.1 If the Committee decides, by a simple majority vote, at any time, that on the grounds of expenses or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Federation, it shall call a meeting of all the Members of the Federation who have the power to vote, at which meeting, not less than 28 days notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed there at) shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the area(s) of benefit.

APPENDIX 1 - THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ITS OFFICERS AND FUNCTIONARIES

(1) DEFINITION OF OFFICERS AND FUNCTION OF OFFICERS AND FUNCTIONARIES

The Officers of the Executive Committee are deemed to be Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer and are elected and hold voting rights as laid down in sections 8.2 and 8.3 of the Constitution and Rules. All other offices are Functionaries of the Committee and whether filled by election or co-option do not carry a vote at General Meetings.

All Officers and Functionaries are the servants of the Federation and must "carry out their duties with regard to the current Constitution And Rules and bear in mind the best interests of the federation.

(2) DEFINITION OF DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE

The duties of the officers of the Executive Committee are currently defined as:

CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson bears ultimate responsibility for the Group. They must ensure that all members comply with the rules and that these rules are correct and not contrary to natural justice. They are also legally responsible for all insignia (badges, headings, signs etc.) and for ensuring that they are being correctly used and are not misleading.

The Chairperson may request a General Manager to help with these duties.

The Chairperson, or their deputy, preside at all General Meetings and must ensure the correct running of that meeting. They must first ensure that the meeting has been properly convened and constituted and that the meeting is then conducted in accordance with the rules. During the

meeting they have a duty to preserve order, to ensure that the order of business is maintained and that reasonable time is allowed for discussion. Interpretation of the rules governing the meeting shall be the duty of the Chairperson whenever they may be disputed.

The Chairperson may appoint a deputy to preside at a General Meeting.

SECRETARY

The Secretary is responsible for :

- 1) all non-financial papers sent to, or by, the Federation
- 2) general planning carried out in collaboration with the other officers
- 3) keeping an accurate list of all the member Clubs
- 4) the organisation of all meetings and courses of the Federation

The Secretary should liaise with the Chairperson to establish the order of business of any meeting and is then responsible for the booking of suitable venue, preparation and circulation of agenda and the taking of the minutes of the meeting. Before the start of any meeting it is the responsibility of the Secretary or their duly appointed deputy to make it clear to that meeting who is entitled to vote.

Records of all meetings should include copies of any written reports presented by Officers or Functionaries of the Federation or include an accurate and informative summary of any verbal report. All decisions of the meeting should be recorded and it is the Secretaries duty to ensure that the wording of such decisions is accurate and any vote taken is properly recorded.

The Secretary may co-opt the positions of minutes secretary and course organiser(s) as necessary.

TREASURER

The Treasurer has responsibility for all financial matters and their associated books and paperwork. All monies paid into and from the Federation must be paid through the Treasurer in order that the transaction be properly recorded. At the Annual General Meeting the Treasurer must present a report detailing the Federations income and expenditure for the preceding year.

There can be no delegation of this responsibility

As part of their duty the Treasurer must keep an accurate list of all those who have paid subscriptions to the Federation and be responsible for the issuing of reminders to those who have failed to pay.

The Treasurer may co-opt a Licensing Secretary to assist with this latter duty.

(3) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called to consider :

- 1) the acceptance of new members (Constitution and Rules, sections 5.2 & 5.3)
- 2) how to enforce the rules of the Federation where these have been broken, and in the final instance to recommend expulsion to a General Meeting (Constitution and Rules, section 5.7)
- 3) to recommend candidates for Honorary Life Membership (Constitution and Rules, section 5.8)
- 4) the interpretation, clarification or formulation of rules (further discussed in section 4)
- 5) any business which may be considered to be of advantage to the Federation

The Executive Committee shall have the power to invite any person within the Federation to attend an Executive Committee Meeting if any of the Executive consider them to have a suitable contribution to make to that meeting.

(4) INTERPRETATION, CLARIFICATION AND FORMULATION OF RULES

Officers and Functionaries of the Executive are empowered by the Federation to carry out the Rules within their areas of responsibility defined above. In the event of a rule being unclear they have the power to interpret that rule or to refer it to a meeting of the Executive Committee. All interpretations and clarifications must be noted and reported to the next meeting of the Executive Committee or a General Committee Meeting, whichever is soonest.

The Executive have the power to interpret and clarify existing rules or to formulate rules to regulate the conduct of the Federation where current rules do not exist. All new rules and clarifications and interpretations will be deemed effective from the date of formulation by the Executive but are all subject to ratification at the next General or Extraordinary meeting. All decisions of the Executive must be notified to the membership as soon after the relevant meeting as practicable.

The Executive are servants of the Federation and as such do not have the power to rescind or override decisions made by the full Committee at General Meetings. Such decisions may only be changed at a General Meeting under the procedure laid down in the Constitution and Rules (sections 6 and 7).

11. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AGAINST OFFICERS OF THE FEDERATION

11.0 This section deals with the procedure by which an individual may progress a complaint against any of the officers of the Federation. An unresolved complaint will travel up the levels of the committee until eventually reaching a meeting of the membership. All reasonable steps will be taken to resolve a complaint at the lowest possible level.

11.1 Stage 1. In the first instance it is preferable for the individual to approach the Officer concerned to raise the matter at a personal level. If a mutual agreement cannot be reached or if the individual feels unable for any reason, to approach the Officer concerned then the procedure will move to stage 2.

11.2 Stage 2. The complainant should write to the Secretary stating their grievance as fully as possible and any steps they may have taken to try to rectify matters. The Secretary shall acknowledge receipt of this letter within 14 days of their receiving it. From this point the Secretary will write to the complainant at monthly intervals until the complaint is resolved in order to keep them aware of any progress being made.

in the event that the complaint is about the Secretary the complainant should address all correspondence to the Chairman, to whom all the procedures in 10.2 will then apply.

11.3 Stage 3. The Secretary shall raise the matter with the Officer concerned and an attempt be made to deal with the complaint. Any proposed action shall be reported back to the complainant for their agreement. If agreement cannot be reached the procedure moves to stage 4.

11.4 Stage 4. If the matter remains unresolved the Secretary will raise this grievance with the member of the Executive Committee responsible for that Officer's function. If the complainant does not accept any actions proposed by the Executive, or if the complaint is about a member of the Executive, the procedure moves to stage 5.

11.5 Stage 5. The Secretary shall call a meeting of the Executive Committee to discuss the complaint. Both the Officer who the complaint is against and the complainant must be invited to attend the meeting and the Secretary shall make all reasonable attempts to arrange the meeting so that both can attend.

The complainant and the Officer would normally both be present at the meeting, but either may present their case to the Executive without the other being present if they so wish.

11.6 Stage 6. If the complaint remains unresolved the Secretary shall call a General Meeting in accordance with rule 6.2 where the complaint and all of the steps taken shall be explained to the meeting. This General Meeting shall have the power to discipline any individual, including the Federation's Officers and members of the Executive Committee.

Steps the Meeting may take shall include

1. To dismiss the complaint.
2. To order rectification of any action.
3. To order rectification plus any combination of the following
 - a) an apology
 - b) a motion of censure to be recorded against an individual
 - c) to bring a motion of 'no confidence' against an individual.

A motion of "no confidence" will be taken under rule 7.8 of these Constitution and Rules.4