



PREVENTION & PROTECTION:

A Short Guide on Safeguarding for Swiss HEMA Clubs





THE NEED FOR SAFEGUARDING:

Across the globe in the last few years there has been an increase in awareness of sport-related abuse scandals. Sport in Switzerland has not been immune to this. The release of the Magglingen Protocols in October 2020 shed a light on the abuse of gymnasts at the National Sports Centre in Magglingen. In the report the athletes described systematic intimidation, humiliation, excessive weight control, and psychological and physical abuse. Some of them developed eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicidal thoughts, and some athletes experienced lasting physical consequences from training on existing injuries.

Politicians, including the Minister for Sport, reacted to this report with demands for a contact and reporting centre for abuse in sport. This reporting centre was established at the beginning of 2022 through a broadening of the brief of the existing Swiss anti-doping agency to cover sanctions on ethical issues. By mid-2022, the Swiss Sport Integrity Foundation, the expanded anti-doping agency, stated it was receiving six to seven reports a week from athletes across a variety of sports.

The sheer number of cases demonstrates the dimensions of the problem of ethical abuses across Swiss sport: a problem that is an issue of concern for all sports clubs and societies, both professional and amateur. Indeed, while Swiss HEMA is not an officially recognised 'Olympic' sporting association – with a requirement to use the official reporting system – this reality necessitates that we must also be responsible in safeguarding our practitioners from potential abuse.

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING ABOUT?

Safeguarding has traditionally focussed on protecting people at risk in social settings. Usually minors – essentially children and adolescents – or vulnerable adults (the elderly or disabled). More recently this has been extended to cover all adults who are potentially vulnerable to abuse because of other characteristics. This can include their age (young and old), gender, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, physical, mental or other disabilities, social, civic or health status, sexual orientation, economic disadvantages, indigenous status, or migration status.

As one can realise from this list, **anyone can actually be at risk** from some form of abuse, harassment, bullying, or discrimination. Swiss HEMA considers it of the utmost importance that anyone taking part in HEMA activities feels safe and is proactively protected from harm. Indeed, it is important that our safeguarding preventions and protections extend to cover everyone taking part in our activities.

People might not think that such things can happen in their club, but that is only true until it does. In fact, Swiss HEMA has received reports of problematic issues from some of its member clubs. So, while it is not so easy to develop or apply safeguarding practices, being aware and prepared is important; as the impact on a club of a case of sexual abuse or of racial discrimination not being addressed is even more challenging. After all, while we do not usually expect to be in a road traffic accident, we all put our seatbelt on before setting off in a car.

ETHICAL VIOLATIONS

The Statute for Ethics in Swiss Sport has formed the underlying inspiration and basis of Swiss HEMA's approach to Openness & Safeguarding. It lists four groups of offences and actions which are classed as ethical violations.¹ Our main focus has been on the first of these:

- **Mistreatment and abuse:** including discrimination and unequal treatment, violation of psychological integrity, violation of physical integrity, violation of sexual integrity, and neglect of a duty of care;
- **Abuse of position in a sports organisation:** including corruption; ignoring conflicts of interest;
- **Unsporting behaviour:** usually covered by competition rules; and
- **Incitement towards violations:** inciting others to commit violations.

WHAT THIS GUIDE IS FOR:

It is evident that attending to safeguarding issues is expected in modern sporting culture. So, to ensure that Swiss HEMA's activities are welcoming, safe, and supportive of all participants, we need to provide certain policies, protections and protocols to safeguard peoples' participation. This means having in place measures to protect the health, well-being and rights of individuals, so that they can participate free from abuse, neglect, harassment, prejudice or discrimination.

If we do not, ultimately, we will lose members, damage our reputation, and will not be able to attract prospective participants. Put simply, it is the right thing to do, and we strongly recommend member clubs to put into place appropriate prevention and protection approaches. Swiss HEMA, as a federation, looks to offer models, guidelines and good practices that its member clubs can follow or utilise voluntarily, and this guide sets out ideas for our members to consider and provides some examples of what a safeguarding prevention and protection framework might look like.

GOING ABOUT IT: A SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

Swiss HEMA's Openness & Safeguarding Commitments oblige us to act responsibly towards our community through developing and maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for HEMA participation. A sporting culture that does not tolerate or allow for abusive behaviour of any kind needs to be cultivated, which, as one HEMA practitioner told us, '...is where all of us need to show leadership and courage.' But that culture must also be backed by appropriate measures and ways to address any issues arising from abusive or unethical behaviour. This requires the development of a **Safeguarding Framework** that comprises a number of related and integrated parts, and which includes various policies and procedures.

Here we present a simplified set of elements that might be applied within virtually any HEMA club. Together they represent a practical and pragmatic Safeguarding Framework. It is split into two main parts: those elements that concern **prevention** of abuses and those that relate to **protection** when things go wrong. These are set at a basic level to allow for easier application and clubs may wish to go further or adapt them to better reflect their own needs.

PART ONE: PREVENTION

Primarily the club's first emphasis should be on **prevention of abuse** in the first place. This is because once an issue of abuse, sexual harassment, bullying, prejudice or discrimination has arisen much of the damage has already been done. It necessitates the development of a safe environment for people to practise their sport or activities. This can be done through awareness-raising that highlights individual responsibility towards others and the community in general, and by developing policies and training that help to provide a safe space for all (particularly for children and vulnerable people). Preventing the occurrence of any damaging behaviour in the first place is crucial and, in this section, we set out some methods that a HEMA club can use to do so.

1) Making Your Position Known

As mentioned above, Swiss HEMA members have agreed to clear openness and safeguarding commitments. These commitments require that we project and embody a message of openness and inclusion. This means welcoming people from all backgrounds, regardless of factors like ability, gender, sexual orientation, age, origins or ethnicity, and taking a stance to broaden and deepen the diversity of HEMA participation so that anyone may freely participate in member clubs' training, events and other activities.

However, it is vital that our members and people who interact with us see, understand and support these commitments. Swiss HEMA has adopted the One for All, All for One logo that is used in its communicationsⁱⁱ and has a clear statement of its position placed on the federation's website. It reads:

Swiss HEMA is committed to treat everyone in the HEMA community with respect, and without judgement or bias, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, age or appearance, abilities, civil status, social background, religion or beliefs, ethnicity or national origins.

Swiss HEMA members are invited to use or adapt this commitment for their own club's purposes. Doing this can make people aware of what is accepted behaviour, what their own responsibilities are, and also begin a discussion in the club on what this means in practice. A club could link its statement to its social media and to that of the Swiss HEMA site, thereby being open about its position to the wider community.

2) Principles Set Out in a Code of Conduct or Charter

Having clear principles of behaviour, ethics and conduct for clubs and their members is important. Especially so that everyone knows what the accepted standards are and that this is a requirement of club membership. Indeed, to take any statement or commitment to the next level requires for it to be incorporated and adopted into the statutes, rules or regulations of a club. It means that it is then binding and the club's leadership, members and other relevant persons can be held accountable against it.

Essentially, this requires the **development of a policy, code of conduct/behaviour, or a charter** that is formally incorporated or adopted into a club's constituent documents (this could be the statutes, articles of association, constitution of a company; or the rules of an incorporated association) or the rules, regulations or by-laws that are made under any constituent document.

Such a policy should outline the club's commitment to any person's right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be safe and protected from discrimination, harassment and abuse. The policy informs everyone involved in the club of his or her legal and ethical rights and responsibilities and the standards of behaviour that are expected of them.ⁱⁱⁱ Ideally, it should also cover the care and protection of children participating in club activities.

Furthermore, it must be a condition of membership that all members are required to accept and sign. As such, the policy would cover all matters directly and indirectly related to the club and its activities, and it might also cover private behaviour where that behaviour brings the club or sport into disrepute or there is suspicion of harm towards a child or young person. Whatever the format, there are a number of aspects that should be considered in developing such a policy, code of conduct/behaviour or charter:

It should define the **approach of the club**, which might include:

- 1) How the club is committed to preventing and responding appropriately to abuse, harassment, prejudice or discrimination.
- 2) Expressing the belief that everyone should be protected from all forms of abuse.
- 3) Committing to a zero-tolerance approach towards such abuse.
- 4) How it openly communicates its policy within the club, including any associated complaints procedure and the potential sanctions.
- 5) Being backed by a written code of conduct, which specifies unacceptable behaviour.

It should also state the **responsibilities of individuals** with regard to their behaviour, so everyone associated with the club should:

- 1) Make themselves aware of the contents of the policy (ignorance is no excuse).
- 2) Comply with all relevant provisions of the policy, including the standards of behaviour.
- 3) Treat other people with respect.
- 4) Always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations.
- 5) Be responsible and accountable for their behaviour.
- 6) Follow the guidelines outlined in the policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible abuse, discrimination, harassment, bullying or other inappropriate behaviour.
- 7) Comply with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under the policy.

As an example, Swiss HEMA member, Militia Genavae adapted its statutes to include a section on equality, diversity and inclusion. This has been formalised through all members being required to sign a 'charter' that states that they agree to the behaviours and respectful conduct outlined in it and that they accept that they may receive sanctions if they do not adhere to them; which can include expulsion from the club. The full text of these is given in **Annex 1**). In addition, Militia Genavae also has a separate policy and participant agreement that covers issues regarding responsible behaviour in external events (such as at reenactments).

SELECTION AND SCREENING

It is important that a club's leadership implement robust selection and recruitment-screening processes through reference and background checks. Failure to do so may lead to liability claims against the club in the event of a transgression by a club official or instructor. In particular, if a person holds or applies for a role that involves regular unsupervised contact with a child or young person under the age of 18, or where otherwise required by law, they must consent to any screening requirements/working with children checks where required. Such measures aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children. If a criminal history report is obtained as part of the screening process, the club must ensure that the criminal history information is dealt with confidentially and in accordance with relevant legal requirements.

3) Safeguarding and Welfare Officers

It is highly recommended that, at least, one person in a club (or via an external ombudsperson or service provider) be designated as being responsible for safeguarding or welfare. Safeguarding and welfare officers in sport clubs play a crucial role in ensuring the safety and well-being of participants, particularly children and vulnerable adults, by promoting a safe and supportive environment.

Their primary responsibility is to uphold policies and procedures that prevent abuse, neglect, or harm within the sports setting. This might involve conducting background checks on staff and volunteers (see box above), providing training on safeguarding protocols, and ensuring that all individuals within the club are aware of the reporting mechanisms for any concerns related to safety or welfare. These officers are also responsible for staying up to date with current legislation and best practices related to safeguarding in sport, and they usually serve as the point of contact for any safeguarding concerns that may arise.

In addition to their protective role, safeguarding and welfare officers are also tasked with fostering a culture of respect and inclusion within the club (prevention). They should work to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, ability, or background, feels safe, valued, and empowered to participate in sports activities. This includes addressing any issues related to bullying, discrimination, or inappropriate behaviour and by working closely with club leaders, instructors and, where necessary, parents to create an environment that prioritises the well-being of all members. Their role is integral not only in crisis situations but also in promoting long-term positive experiences for all club members, helping to create a culture of responsibility and respect throughout the club. As such, they should undergo some training themselves to be able to cover this important brief.

4) Training

Training people to be aware of how abuse happens and how to ensure a club environment is safe for all is something that Swiss HEMA member clubs should consider. A particular priority for training courses should be those in a club who have the most responsibility for setting the tone of the club culture (club leaders and officials) and those that have the most interaction with participants (e.g. instructors). However, it is also of value to have some form of training or awareness raising of the entire club membership, so that they can understand their role in ensuring a welcoming and safe environment.

The types of training are varied. We suggest considering training under the following categories:

- **Safeguarding Training:** This helps to educate coaches, volunteers, officials, and other personnel on how to recognise, prevent, and respond to abuse, neglect, or harm involving children, young people, and vulnerable adults. It covers essential topics such as identifying signs of abuse, understanding legal and ethical responsibilities, creating safe environments, and following appropriate reporting procedures. The goal is to ensure that everyone involved in the club understands their duty of care and is equipped to protect participants' welfare and promote a culture of safety, respect, and inclusion.
- **Inclusivity Training:** Inclusivity training is an educational approach aimed at promoting awareness, understanding, and acceptance of diverse individuals and groups within sporting environments. It focuses on fostering equitable participation regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status, or cultural background. Through workshops, discussions, and practical strategies, inclusivity training helps coaches, athletes, and staff recognise unconscious biases, challenge discrimination, and create safe, respectful, and supportive spaces where everyone feels valued and empowered to contribute and succeed in sport.
- **Awareness Raising of Members:** Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) awareness-raising in sport clubs involves a range of approaches designed to create a more inclusive and respectful environment for all members. Approaches typically include interactive workshops, unconscious bias training, and inclusive leadership development, alongside the integration of EDI policies into club governance and codes of conduct. Awareness campaigns using social media, newsletters, and club events help normalise diverse representation and challenge stereotypes. Involving members in open dialogues, storytelling, and peer-led initiatives fosters empathy and shared understanding, while visible support from leadership signals a strong commitment to cultural change and accountability.

There are various government initiatives (federal and cantonal), non-governmental organisations, and safeguarding specialists who offer relevant resources and training across a wide variety of fields. A few of these are suggested in the box below:

TRAINING RESOURCES

J+S/ESA: Although HEMA is not an official sport, member clubs might be able to gain access to the training offered by J+S/ESA. Some of their courses are highly relevant and include training for instructors on issues such as: Preventive Action; Cultural Diversity in Sport; Commitments to Prevent Violence in Sport; and Proximity and Distance.

Swiss Olympic: Offers a lot of material and brochures for clubs to download and runs initiatives to combat abuse and to support openness. Included on its Prevention and Environment webpages^{iv} are the: 'Are you Okay?' initiative; information to combat sexual abuse, through to issues on drug abuse and encouraging of life skills through the Cool and Clean programme.

Expert organisations/foundations: Several bodies support and work with sporting clubs to prevent abuse: **Limita** (Swiss-German) and **ESPAS** (Swiss-French); and **Patouch**, which supports schools and clubs. **Pro Juventute** offers a free advisory service for coaches and club officials, as well as youth monitors, in conflict situations and for questions on many other topics; such as addictive substances, violence, bullying, abuse and depression. The advice service is available 24 hours a day.

PART TWO: PROTECTION

We are also conscious that, despite the best prevention schemes, instances of abuse, sexual harassment, prejudice or discrimination can still occur. This means that certain approaches or measures that provide **protections** for victims of abuse also need to be in place. Indeed, where a member of a club feels that they have been discriminated against, experienced prejudice, or where their well-being or rights have been undermined, there needs to be a mechanism for redress.

Efforts here may involve mediation support, complaints procedures or, in certain cases, the involvement of external authorities and the police. Fundamentally, in any club, participants should know who they can turn to. Furthermore, any such mechanism must also be available for those that witness abuses to come forward.

However, such safeguards are often complex, require specialised expertise and, given the voluntary nature of most club leadership, can be difficult to apply.^v The different types of abuses and the different characteristics of those potentially being abused represents a mosaic of problems to solve. However, in this guide we have sought to set out some basic approaches that can be applied in any club.

It is important to state here that what is proposed only takes its authority from the code of conduct or statutes set down by an individual club and its own regulations. They are meant to build out from those and do not replace any legal provisions that are covered by the Swiss legal code or other legislation that are pertinent to these cases.

The procedures that we set out here are an example of a simplified **internal mediation and complaints procedure**. For issues where the police or specialised authorities should or could become involved, we have made an indication. Clubs only have competence and can only act where the actions or behaviour of an individual contravenes the regulations of the club. Where crimes may have been committed then any recourse must go via legal or judicial authorities.

Basic Principles

As mentioned above, Swiss HEMA members have agreed to clear openness and safeguarding commitments. These commitments require that we project and embody a message of openness and inclusion. This means welcoming people from all backgrounds, regardless of factors like ability, gender, sexual orientation, age, origins or ethnicity, and taking a stance to broaden and deepen the diversity of HEMA participation so that anyone may freely participate in member clubs' training, events and other activities.

In essence any club should look to ensure that its leadership, instructors and members are able to identify and respond appropriately to cases of abuse, neglect, harassment, prejudice or discrimination. This means that, in addition to potential legal obligations, if any person believes that another person or organisation bound by club policy is acting inappropriately towards them or another person, and is in breach of its policy (code of conduct or charter), then they should make an internal complaint.

The club should address all complaints about potential breaches of policy. The club should handle complaints based on the principles of procedural fairness, and ensure:

- all complaints will be taken seriously;
- the person being reported (alleged transgressor) will be given full details of what is being alleged against them and have the opportunity to respond to those allegations;
- irrelevant matters will not be taken into account;
- decisions will be unbiased; and
- any penalties imposed will be proportionate and reasonable.

If the complaint relates to suspected child abuse, sexual assault or other criminal activity, then the club will need to report the behaviour to the police and/or relevant government authority.

Complaint and Mediation Process

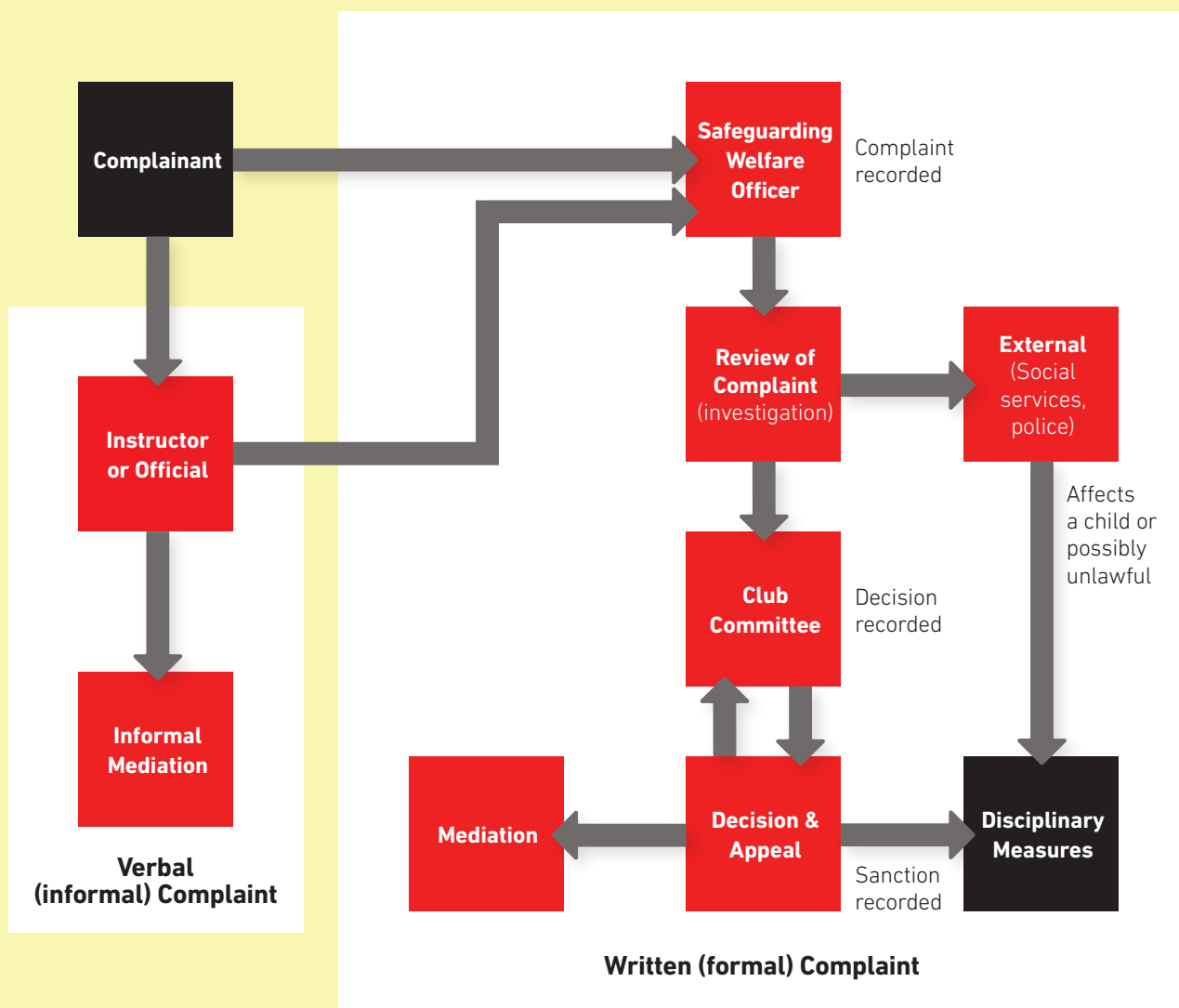
We recommend that there are two potential pathways for dealing with behaviour that may contravene a club's code of conduct or charter. So, either via an informal/verbal process or via a formal/written complaint procedure.

The reason for this informal/verbal option is to highlight the potential, in many cases, to prevent unnecessary escalation of an issue by dealing with it in a less intrusive way. Although, an informal complaint may also result in a formal complaint if the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of all involved.

So, if any club member feels that they have experienced or witnessed any sanctioned behaviour, in contravention of the club statutes, then they are required to take action, either:

- 1) Speak with a club instructor or official (informal/verbal) and/or
- 2) Contact the Safeguarding/Welfare officer to lodge a formal/written complaint.

The suggested processes are shown in the diagram below.



Informal/Verbal Process

If a club member (the complainant) has experienced or witnessed any behaviour from another club member (the accused) that they believe contravenes the behaviour policy then they can raise (informally/verbally) the issue with any club official (instructor, club committee member, Safeguarding/Welfare Officer). That official will consult with them on the seriousness of the complaint (although they might ask for advice from the Safeguarding/Welfare Officer(s)). They can propose the following actions:

- 1) An official of the club will informally speak with the accused person to make them aware of their behaviour, and/or facilitate a rapprochement between the two parties (mediate).
- 2) Advise the complainant that the issue should be better considered as a formal/written complaint.

Formal/Written Process

If a club member (complainant) has experienced or witnessed any behaviour from another club member (accused) that they believe contravenes the behaviour policy then they can also raise (formally/written) the issue with any the club's Safeguarding/Welfare Officer. The suggested procedure is as follows:

The complainant should contact the Safeguarding/Welfare Officer (it is optimal that there are both male and female officers) via one of the following means: face-to-face, telephone, or e-mail. They will then meet to discuss the case with the complainant. During this discussion, the Safeguarding/Welfare Officer receiving the complaint will:

- ask the complainant to fill in the **complaint record form** (see **Annex 2**).
- listen carefully and ask questions to understand the nature and extent of the concern;
- explain the different options available to help resolve the complainant's concern;
- where the complaint involves a **child** or a potentially **unlawful act** then they will refer the matter to the Police and/or social services; and
- ask the complainant how they would like their concern to be resolved and if they need any support.

Once the complainant decides on their preferred option for resolution, the Safeguarding/Welfare Officer(s) will assist, where appropriate and necessary, with the resolution process. This may involve:

- supporting the person complaining to talk to the person being complained about;
- bringing all the people involved in the complaint together to talk objectively through the problem (this could include external mediation);
- conduct an inquiry into the case by gathering more information (e.g. from other people that may have seen the behaviour);
- seeking advice from an external agency (e.g. specialist resource body); and/or
- referring the complainant to an external agency, such as a mediation centre, police or anti-discrimination agency.

An inquiry may involve discussion with witnesses, the complainant and the accused person. On finalising its inquiry, the Safeguarding/Welfare Officer(s) will submit the findings and a suggested course of action to the club's committee members (leadership of the club). N.B. if one of the members of the club committee is the complainant or the subject of the complaint then they must be excluded from this stage. The club's committee should discuss the case and propose an appropriate sanction (if warranted). This will be a written decision of the club's committee and should be signed and witnessed.

Both the complainant and the accused person will be able to lodge an appeal to the club's committee against a decision made in relation to a complaint, by submitting a written response within one week of the decision. The president/leader of the club will review any submitted appeals and then discuss further with the club's committee and/or Safeguarding/welfare officer(s). However, the grounds of an appeal should be specific, for example they may be limited to a denial of procedural fairness, on grounds of unjust or unreasonable disciplinary measure(s) being imposed, or on the grounds that the decision was not supported by the information/evidence presented and available to the decision maker/club.

After the appeal process is finalised, a final decision will be enacted (in a written form that is signed and witnessed). Decisions might include:

- Mediation between parties to secure a rapprochement;
- A direction that the individual concerned make a verbal and/or written apology;
- A formal warning/reprimand;
- Awareness training or counselling of the individual concerned to address behaviour;
- Suspension or expulsion from the club (for a period or permanently); and/or
- Referring the matter to the Police and/or social services.

This is a highly simplified procedure, but it is workable and within the scope and resources of most HEMA clubs. Of course, it is to be hoped that such a process never has to be enacted, but it is better to be prepared. Furthermore, the understanding within the club that such mechanisms are available for members goes a long way to demonstrate the protection that they can have.

Good luck with your endeavours!

ENDNOTES:

i Sanctioned behaviour may include those covered within an individual member club's rules, Swiss HEMA's Openness & Safeguarding Statement, and/or those noted in the Swiss Olympic Statutes on Ethics in Swiss Sport (**mistreatment and abuse** (including: discrimination and unequal treatment, violation of psychological integrity, violation of physical integrity, violation of sexual integrity, and neglect of a duty of care); **abuse of position** in a sports organisation (including: corruption; ignoring conflicts of interest); **unsporting behaviour**; and **incitement towards violations**).

ii Which can be utilised by Swiss HEMA members, please contact the Openness & Safeguarding Commission: safeguarding@swisshema.ch

iii Freifechter Basel has a **Health and Ethics Policy** which covers a general code of conduct.

iv <https://www.swissolympic.ch/fr/federations/prevention>

v **Fédération Française des Arts Martiaux Historiques Européens (FFAMHE)** has developed a centralised reporting procedure: <https://www.ffamhe.fr/signalement/>



Members of
Militia Genavae's
EDI Commission

ANNEXES

1). Example Statutes and Charter (code of conduct).

Extract of Statutes:

Art. 7 Equality, diversity and inclusion

7.1 The Association undertakes to encourage an inclusive and open attitude towards everyone, regardless of their personal history. It ensures that its activities promote equality, diversity and inclusion. The objective is to ensure that every member is treated with respect, fairness and without prejudice. It also acts to protect the welfare and rights of all, while actively combating any discrimination or prejudice.

7.2 In accordance with article 7.1, all members must comply with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter. This sets out the behaviour required and the penalties for non-compliance, in line with the constantly evolving national and international sports ethics.

7.3 In addition to Article 8 of the Swiss Federal Constitution; in addition to Article 261 bis of the Swiss Penal Code; in addition to Article 15 of the Constitution of the Republic and Canton of Geneva: each member of the association undertakes on his or her honour to follow and promote the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter.

7.4 Any disrespectful, abusive, inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour, contrary to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter, has no place within the association, must be reported and may give rise to disciplinary measures (see article 7.5).

7.5 In the event of failure to comply with the above articles, and once proof has been established, the Committee will impose a penalty on the offending member, which may include immediate and permanent exclusion from the association.

7.6 Any minor amendments that do not change the general and/or primary meaning of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter or the Service Rules may be made at any time by the Committee. Only major amendments and/or amendments that change the general and/or primary meaning of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter and the Service Rules must be approved by the members at the next General Meeting (hereinafter referred to as the AGM).

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter (code of conduct):

The Militia Genavae association, through its committee, its instructors and its members, undertakes to:

- Oppose any form of direct or indirect discrimination or harassment (physical, psychological or sexual).
- Clearly reject any form (words, gestures, actions) of physical, psychological or sexual violence and to act, where necessary, to put an end to it.
- Not harm the personality of any member of the association.
- Treat all members fairly.
- Foster a climate of respect, tolerance and inclusion.

- Respect the dignity of all members, regardless of:
 - Their ethnic and/or geographical origin,
 - Their cultural background,
 - Their language and communication,
 - Their identity, sexual orientation and gender expression,
 - Their age,
 - Their neurodiversity (ADHD, HPI, autism, etc.),
 - Their appearance or physical characteristics,
 - Their religious, philosophical and political beliefs,
 - Their experience and skills,
 - Their socio-economic status.
- Demonstrate exemplary behaviour and respect the value of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Report any act, gesture, word or situation that does not comply with this charter to the teachers' committee or college or to the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion commission.

The signatory of this charter is also aware that any conduct or attitude that does not comply with this charter may be subject to a sanction, which may go as far as immediate and permanent exclusion from the association, in accordance with Article 26 of the Articles of Association.

2). – Example Complaints Record

Person receiving complaint:	Date:
Complainant's Name:	Contact details: Phone: E-mail:
Name of person complained about:	Role/status in Club: ☐ Official ☐ Instructor ☐ Member
Location/date(s) of alleged event/issue:	
Description of alleged event/issue:	
Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds): Tick all that apply ☐ Child Abuse ☐ Harassment ☐ Discrimination ☐ Sexual/sexist ☐ Sexuality ☐ Racial ☐ Bullying ☐ Religion ☐ Disability ☐ Selection dispute ☐ Personality clash ☐ Other	
Complainant's preferred option for resolution:	
Suggested Action:	

Spotlight on
our sport: RTS
feature on HEMA



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As such, Swiss HEMA has committed itself to **Be Responsible**: By developing and maintaining safeguarding protections and protocols for HEMA participation. This means having in place measures to protect the health, well-being and rights of individuals, so that they can participate free from abuse, neglect, harassment, prejudice or discrimination.

This guide, which focusses on promoting Safeguarding, is designed to encourage Swiss HEMA clubs to think about how they can be welcoming and safe spaces, and supportive of all participants. By following this guide, member clubs can develop their own policies, protections and protocols to safeguard peoples' participation.

There is also a companion guide on Openness, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.



From an example initiative:
Swiss HEMA members
show their support for
International Women's Day 2024

