

Conduct Committee

Terms of reference

Oxford Bridge Club CIO delegates some of its operations and decision-making to officers and (usually) committees. The chair of any committee is the accountable officer, who acts on behalf of the board of trustees. The chair is responsible for ensuring that the committee acts within club policies and Charity Commission guidance and fulfils the terms of reference set out below.

Role / Purpose

The role of the Conduct Committee is to ensure that all members of Oxford Bridge Club abide by the policies of the club and that their behaviour is consistent with Best Behaviour at Bridge as defined by the EBU.

Where complaints are made about behaviour (this includes safeguarding issues) the Committee delegates the investigation of the complaint to an Incident Committee. The Incident Committee is a subcommittee of the Conduct Committee. The members may be members of the Conduct Committee but the Conduct Officer has the option to appoint other people, including members of the Conduct Panel, other members of the OBC or other suitable persons. The Incident Committee should include at least one Trustee, who could be the Conduct Officer.

Conduct Officer

The key responsibilities of the Conduct Officer are:

- To propose a Conduct Committee on an annual basis to the Trustees at the meeting following the AGM.
- To appoint an Incident Committee and a Chair of the Incident Committee when a complaint is made.
- To liaise with the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee when necessary.
- To maintain a full written record all reported Incidents.
- To provide feedback on decisions to all parties involved
- To convene a minimum of one Committee meeting per year. More meetings will be convened if considered necessary.
- To ensure Minutes are taken of all such meetings and circulated to Trustees.
- To submit an annual report to the Board of Trustees.

The key responsibilities of the Conduct Committee are:

- To promote and Enforce Best Behaviour at Bridge in conjunction with the Membership secretary and the Law and Ethics Committee.

- To assist the Chair to appoint a Conduct Panel to be available to investigate reported incidents.

Accountability

- The committee is accountable to the chair of the committee, who is accountable to the board of trustees.
- The committee is responsible for reporting to the board of trustees whenever there is something the board should know about. Minutes of all meetings must be available for trustees.
- The committee will review the relevance and value of its work, and how best to organize it, annually.
- The effectiveness of the committees will be kept under review by the board of trustees.

Membership

- The committee comprises a minimum of 5 members. At least one trustee must be a member.
- Membership of the committee is open to any club member with appropriate skills, interest and knowledge. Any member with a potential conflict of interest must declare it (a) before joining the committee and (b) when any relevant issue is being discussed.
- Members are usually appointed (or have their existing appointment confirmed) annually, at the first meeting of the board of trustees after the AGM. New members can join at any time by agreement with trustees.
- The normal period of membership is three years (as with trustees). This can be extended where people have valuable skills or knowledge.
- As with trustees, the Chair of the committee should aim to develop someone to take over when he or she resigns.

Making decisions

1. Decisions about a complaint will usually be made by the whole Incident Committee. Exceptionally, on a really urgent matter, the chair of the committee can make the decision and inform the rest of the committee later.
2. The quorum for any decision is 3 which must include at least one trustee. Such decisions are made on behalf of the board of trustees, and the committee should follow the same guidance as the board would. Such decisions must be minuted.
3. The chair of the committee must use his or her judgement in assessing which issues should be referred to the board of trustees for a decision: if in any doubt, he/she should check with the club secretary or chairman.

Communications

- The Chair of the Conduct committee is responsible for liaising with the heads of other committees on issues which may affect them and for referring any difficult issues to the board of trustees.
- The Chair of the Conduct committee is responsible for ensuring that due confidentiality is followed, that conflicts of interest are avoided, and that the minutes of all meetings are made available to trustees.

The Committee sets out to achieve the following outcomes:

- All club members, particularly new members are made aware of club rules and Best Behaviour at Bridge.
- Where appropriate, complaints about conduct at the bridge table are immediately referred to the session Tournament Director, in case the complaint can be swiftly dealt with under laws 90 and 91.
- Complaints are responded to within 7 days.
- Full written records are kept of all complaints.
- Where a member leaves the club records of any complaints against them will be shredded.
- Simple complaints should normally be resolved in one month, more complex complaints within three months.
- Sanctions are applied in conjunction with the Disciplinary Committee when appropriate. These can include loss of membership for serious or serial offenders.
- All investigations are timely, unbiased and confidential.
- Negative Feedback on the Conduct Committee is considered and learnt from.

Amendments / modifications to ToR

- These Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement with the Board of Trustees.

Appendix A – Committee members and roles

Conduct Committee Members:

Ruth Kim (Chair), Paul Watson, Mary Bennett, Martin Illingworth, Steph Bliss, Ursula Bowler, Victor Rae-Reeves, Holly Kilpatrick (Safeguarding only).

Conduct Panel Members

The conduct panel has been stood down as agreed

July 2025