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Chairman:
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SHB(GB) Complaints and Disciplinary Policy

The Society is committed to maintaining the highest standards of behaviour and fairness in all its activities. This policy explains how complaints are handled and how disciplinary matters are addressed. It ensures that all parties are treated fairly, consistently and transparently.

1. Purpose and Scope:

This policy applies to all Members, officials, volunteers, and participants of the Society. It covers complaints about conduct, breaches of rules, or behaviour that may bring the Society into disrepute. Complaints about staff are handled separately under employment procedures. Complaints regarding JMB Height Certificates must be made directly to the Joint Measurement Board. Complaints about Council Members will be investigated ensuring and evidencing that there are no conflicts of interest during the investigation and formal review process.

2. Guiding Principles:

- a. Complaints will be handled fairly, promptly, and without prejudice.
- b. Everyone involved will be given the opportunity to present their case.
- c. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible.
- d. All proceedings will follow due process in line with the Society's rules.

3. How to Make a Complaint:

Complaints must be made in writing within 14 days of the incident, marked 'Private and Confidential'. Anonymous complaints cannot be accepted.

- a. Please include:
 - (i) Your full name, address, phone number, and Membership number (if applicable).
 - (ii) A clear description of your complaint and any supporting evidence.
 - (iii) (Optional) A supporting statement from an independent witness.
- b. Send by recorded delivery or email (requesting a delivery receipt) to:
 - (i) Sport Horse Breeding of Great Britain
 - (ii) 96 High Street, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 5AR
 - (iii) Email: office@sporthorsegb.co.uk

4. Stage 1 – Informal Resolution:

Upon receipt, the Chair and Vice-Chair will review the complaint and may suggest mediation or informal resolution. If resolved, the outcome will be confirmed in writing. If not resolved, the matter will move to Stage 2 – Formal Review by the Council. An investigating Officer will be appointed at this stage.

5. Stage 2 – Formal Council Review:

The Council will review the complaint and invite written or oral representations from the parties involved. The Council will decide whether there has been a breach of rules and may impose one or more of the following outcomes:

- (i) Dismiss the complaint in whole or part.
- (ii) Uphold the complaint but take no action (where mitigating circumstances apply).
- (iii) Issue a reprimand or caution.
- (iv) Suspend Membership temporarily or permanently. Suspensions will be applied to ensure that they are effective in terms of the period they cover.
- (v) Suspend a horse, owner, rider, producer or official from competition.
- (vi) Impose a fine of up to £5,000. Suspensions will be applied to ensure that they are effective in terms of the period they cover.
- (vii) Remove a Judge from the panel or prevent an official from officiating at Society events.

If the Council considers the matter serious or complex, it will refer the case to the Disciplinary Panel (Stage 3).

6. Stage 3 – Disciplinary Procedure:

- a.** The Disciplinary Panel will consist of three independent individuals.
- b.** The Member will be informed of the allegations, the evidence, and their right to attend a hearing or submit written evidence.
- c.** The Panel will hold a fair hearing, consider all evidence, and may call witnesses. Its written decision, with reasons, will be issued within 14 days of the hearing.
- d.** Possible outcomes include:
 - (i) Dismiss the complaint in whole or part.
 - (ii) Uphold the complaint but take no action (where mitigating circumstances apply).
 - (iii) Issue a reprimand or caution.
 - (iv) Suspend Membership temporarily or permanently. Suspensions will be applied to ensure that they are effective in terms of the period they cover.
 - (v) Suspend a horse, owner, rider, producer or official from competition.
 - (vi) Impose a fine of up to £5,000.

(vii) Remove a Judge from the panel or prevent an official from officiating at Society events.

7. Animal Welfare Offences:

- a.** If a court finds a Member guilty of an offence relating to animal welfare, the Society may take reciprocal action consistent with the Court's decision. If a Member is banned by a Court from keeping or owning animals, the Society may revoke their Membership for the same or longer period.
- b.** There is no right of appeal against a welfare issue determined by a Court.
- c.** In addition to cases determined by a Court, the Society reserves the right to take disciplinary action in relation to animal welfare concerns where credible and evidenced reports are received. Where sufficient information is provided to suggest that a Member has engaged in, contributed to, or permitted the neglect, mistreatment, or harm of animals, the Society may initiate an internal investigation and take appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with this procedure.
- d.** Such measures will be determined following due process and fair consideration of the evidence presented. All reports will be assessed objectively, with confidentiality maintained wherever possible, and outcomes recorded in accordance with the Society's disciplinary and data protection procedures.

8. Stage 4 – Appeals Procedure:

- a.** Members may appeal in writing within 14 days of being informed of a disciplinary decision. The appeal must state the full grounds and be sent to the Secretary.
- b.** An independent Appeal Committee of three people will review the case. The Committee may uphold, overturn, or amend the decision. The decision of the Appeal Committee is final.

9. Information Sharing:

- a.** Any Owner, Rider, Producer, and/or Horse or Pony who is, for any period, suspended, banned, or otherwise subject to disciplinary sanction imposed by the BSHA, BSPS, CHAPS, TSR, NPS, or any other recognised equine governing body, association, or discipline affiliated to, or operating in accordance with, the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) or its recognised Member bodies, shall not be eligible to compete in SHB(GB) Affiliated Classes for the duration of such sanction. The application and enforcement of this restriction shall be at the sole discretion of the SHB(GB) Council.
- b.** SHB(GB) reserves the right to disclose, receive, and exchange information concerning any disciplinary action taken against an Owner, Rider, Producer, and/or Horse or Pony with the BSHA, BSPS, CHAPS, TSR, NPS, and any other recognised equine governing body, association, or discipline, where such disclosure is deemed appropriate for the purposes of maintaining the integrity, reputation, and good conduct of the sport.

10. Definition:

- a.** For the purposes of this regulation, the term 'recognised equine governing body, association, or discipline' shall refer to any organisation or body responsible for the regulation, governance, or administration of an equestrian sport or activity within the United Kingdom, recognised by or operating in accordance with the principles and standards of the British Equestrian Federation (BEF), or any equivalent international federation.

11. JMB Objections:

- a.** Any dispute concerning a JMB Height Certificate must be referred to the Joint Measurement Board (JMB) Stewards and will be handled under their Rules. Details can be found at: The Joint Measurement Board Ltd, P.O. Box 396, Hereford HR1 9QQ, Tel: 01981 510201.
- b.** The SHB(GB) have the right to request a measurement on any horse registered on an Annual JMB Height Certificate. The horse must be measured at the owner's expense within 21 days of notification by the SHB(GB).
- c.** Unless the horse is measured within this time its SHB(GB) registration will be withdrawn and the matter may be referred to the Disciplinary Committee and the Membership of the owner, at the time of the request for a measurement will be suspended.
- d.** An animal that received an objection to its JMB height certificate which is subsequently upheld will forfeit any previous qualification gained for Horse of the Year Show, RIHS, or SHB(GB) Championships Shows in the current year and the qualification will be passed to the next eligible exhibit with the eligible placings.