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Complaints Policy

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This document summarises how complaints will be received and dealt with within BDL. The Company will take every complaint seriously and apply appropriate resources to fully understand and investigate any form of grievance.

It is in everyone's interest that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. The experience of the first contact between the complainant and the organisation can be crucial in determining whether the complaint will escalate. To that end, staff who are aware of the procedures will know what to do when they receive a complaint.

Complaints can be made to either a staff member or a member of the management team. All complaints **must** be made in writing. If the complainant is unable to produce a written complaint, a staff member will offer to transcribe the complaint on the complainant's behalf. Where this is the case, the complainant must sign the transcript to confirm that it is a valid reflection, and that the transcription was carried out accurately.

Stage One: Complaint Heard by Staff Member

If a client is unhappy with any aspect of BDL, (s)he is first encouraged to approach a member of staff. This may be, but does not have to be, the complainant's trainer.

We respect the views of a complainant who indicates that (s)he would have difficulty discussing a complaint with a particular member of staff. In these cases, either one of the founders can hear it. Where the complaint concerns that founder, the complainant can submit the complaint to the other.

Stage Two: Complaint Heard by Management

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the way the complaint was handled at Stage One, or wishes to report the complaint to management without first undertaking Stage One, the complaint must be submitted in writing to either founder. A written confirmation of receipt of the complaint will be sent within three working days. The founder may delegate the task of collating the information to another staff member but not the decision on the action to be taken.

Dealing with Complaints

As soon as a formal complaint is received, it must be logged in the company's Complaints Log. The Complaint Recipient will record the date, nature of the complaint and identity of the complainant.

The Complaint Recipient will then speak to any and all other parties involved in the nature of the complaint, in order to generate as much evidence as possible. Once all reasonable evidence has been gathered and considered, the Complaint Recipient will recommend what action is to be taken. This recommendation will be examined and either accepted or challenged by both founders. As a result of this process, the Complaint Recipient will either implement the recommendation, updating the Complaints Log with the outcome, or (in the case of a challenged decision) carry out further investigation before re-submitting the recommended outcome.

Stage Three: Complaint Heard by Complaints Appeal Panel

If the complainant is unhappy with the aforementioned decision, (s)he has the right to raise the issue with the Complaints Appeal Panel. The Chair, usually a founder, will convene a complaints panel.

The appeal hearing is the last stage of the complaints process, and is not convened merely to rubber-stamp previous decisions.

The panel can:

- dismiss the complaint in whole or in part;
- uphold the complaint in whole or in part;
- decide on the appropriate action to be taken to resolve the complaint;
- recommend changes to the company's systems or procedures to ensure that problems of a similar nature do not recur.

Notification of the Panel's Decision

The chair of the panel is responsible for ensuring that the complainant is notified of the panel's decision, in writing, with the panel's response; and within seven days. The letter will explain if there are any further rights of appeal and, if so, to whom they need to be addressed.

Complaints Procedure

