

LANCASHIRE AIKIKAI CONSTITUTION

Introduction

This is a constitution for the Lancashire Aikikai hereinafter referred to as the Aikikai, which is an Association. An Aikikai Club is a Club where its members are Aikikai members and that it has not been resolved otherwise that they are not an Aikikai Club. An Executive Committee shall administer the Association.

Aims and Objectives

- a) To promote and support the development and practise of Aikido
- b) To support, regulate and establish Aikikai Clubs and their members
- c) To be professional in its dealings and work with other parties and bodies who are positively furthering Aikido in Great Britain
- d) To follow policies, rules and regulations of the national governing body – British Aikido Board
- e) To organise courses and other activities for its members benefit in line with this section.
- f) To levy membership fees and conduct activities to finance the activities of the Aikikai in line with these aims & objectives to ensure further growth
- g) To provide services in a way that is fair to everyone and that all present and future members receive fair and equal treatment

Membership

- a) Members are individuals who have paid the current year's membership fees (or part thereof) through an Aikikai Club.
- b) Renewal of membership and payment of fees are due annually by 31st January.
- c) New participants will be expected to pay membership fees within 4 weeks of starting to practise.
- d) Membership comes with the responsibility to be compliant with Aikikai policies, operating principles, rules and regulations.

Organisation

The Association is organised in a traditional hierarchal structure common to the martial arts & the Principal is the Head of the Association who is appointed by succession. Technical matters concerning Aikido and it's teaching are the responsibility of Aikikai Dan Grades within this same structure. This constitution does not alter that structure however the Principal will be normally the Chairman.

An Executive consisting of Chairman, Secretary & Treasurer will be appointed. In the event of a vacancy arising any member, who has been a member for the past 5 years and holds the grade of 3rd Dan or above may stand for election providing they have obtained 5 nominations of Dan Grade members of whom at least two are 3rd Dan or higher. Nominations to be received by the Secretary one month prior the AGM (or an extra-ordinary general meeting convened for that purpose). Then a vote will take place at the AGM or meeting convened.

Executive members would not normally be permitted to hold two Executive appointments. The Executive should not all be from the same Aikikai Club.

An Executive member may step down or may be removed from post if a no confidence motion is carried by a two thirds majority in any meeting.

The Executive will run the Aikikai in accordance with its stated aims and objectives, its policies and the members' mandates passed at a meeting.

The AGM and the Executive may appoint other members to posts (Officers); committees or working parties to assist the Executive to out carry its functions under the aims and objectives of the Aikikai. The Executive may appoint advisors to assist it should it be necessary.

The Executive:-

- a) may conduct its business as it sees fit - remotely by its 3 members agreeing – but shall meet formally if warranted in which case the quorum is two.
- b) The Executive or its Chairman may if an emergency situation arises and it is considered/deemed in the best interest of the Aikikai make a decision outside its normal operating powers – which will be reported to the next meeting of the Aikikai. This would include temporary powers of co-option in the event of a vacancy occurring on the Executive - before a AGM when the normal appointment procedure would apply.

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- c) The Executive would normally consult with officers, committees or working parties for their recommendations or views when their specific areas of responsibilities which would be affected by an Executive decision or recommendation; and similarly the converse would apply with access rights to the Executive.
- d) Will make a proposal regarding membership fees to be set at every AGM

Meetings

The Annual General Meeting will be held towards the end of each year usually on the last general course in November/December and will: -

- a) Receive reports from the Executive and Aikikai officials.
- b) Consider and approve accounts presented for the year ending and approve the recommendation of the Executive for next calendar year's membership fees
- c) Elect/Appoint the Executive if a vacancy has arisen.
- d) If a motion of no confidence in an Executive member has been carried by a vote of two-thirds of those present would remove that member from their position.
- e) Confirm new policies or amendments to existing policies provided these have been displayed on the website 10 days prior to the AGM
- f) Consider only other business as notified. Members may submit items to be discussed to the Secretary up to 21 days before the AGM – the agenda will then be circulated by email or other means and displayed on the Aikikai's website. Other business on the day may be permitted at the discretion of the person chairing the meeting for debate or discussion but would not be voted on.

Members are entitled to one vote in person. For the majority of business at a meeting a simple majority would be sufficient. For amendments to this constitution a two-thirds majority is required and a quorum of 10 members. An extra-ordinary meeting of the Aikikai may be called by the Executive or requisitioned by 20 members – to conduct specific business (Motion to be detailed and signed in writing) – 21 clear days notice posted to Aikikai Club Leaders of any such meeting must be given and also displayed on the Aikikai home page.

Submission of any motion of no confidence against a member of the Executive or other officer to be considered at any meeting would require:-

- a) counter signing by 5 Dan Grade members of which 2 would be 3rd Dan or higher
- b) to be submitted to the Secretary 28 days before the AGM – if it is to be the business in the AGM
- c) if it is to be the subject of an extra-ordinary meeting requisitioned then an additional 15 members need to sign the motion to comply with the preceding paragraph

Finance

- a) The Aikikai Treasurer will be responsible for the finances of the Aikikai.
- b) All Aikikai monies will be banked in an account held in the name of the Aikikai.
- c) The financial year of the Aikikai will end annually on 31st October.
- d) The Treasurer at the Annual General Meeting will present a statement of annual accounts.
- e) Any cheques drawn against funds will hold the signatures of the Treasurer & Chairman.

Disciplinary Matters

Where a member (or Club) has brought Aikido, the Aikikai or their club into disrepute, has acted in an unbecoming way or manner, infringed any Aikikai/Club rules, regulation, constitution or code of conduct then action falls within this section. Disciplinary outcomes may include sanctions, conditions, reprimands, termination of membership, suspension or other measures.

For Aikikai Clubs that do not have a constitution or if they do where it does not cover disciplinary matters then such matters should be dealt with by the Club Leader – fairly, honestly and inline with Aikikai policies and operating principles. For Aikikai Clubs where disciplinary matters are dealt with by their constitution or adopted policy/rules then that will govern how that Club handles such matters.

The Executive will decide to act of its own volition or when matters are brought to its attention. The Executive shall convene a panel to consisting 3 senior Dan Grades, who are unconnected with the subject matter of concern, to consider the matter and decide. The member (or club leader in the case of a complaint against a club) will be notified of the hearing and asked to attend in person. A second member for support may accompany them.

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Any Club Leader will notify the Chairman of any disciplinary matter arising other than of minor matters.

Appeals

Any member dissatisfied with any outcome arising from action taken under previous paragraphs in this section may appeal to the Aikikai by setting out the circumstances within 6 weeks by writing to the Secretary – the Chairman will convene a 'special panel' – to hear the appeal they will determine their own procedure and timescale. The panel members appointed will consist of 3 senior Dan Grades unconnected with the case previously. The panel may quash the appealed outcome, confirm it or vary it.

The rules of natural justice will be borne in mind in following best practise, which will include the rights of the individual.

The panel will progress each investigation and appeal with due diligence. In cases where a Aikikai investigation or appeal may prejudice the outcome of any investigation or appeal process being undertaken by another organisation the Aikikai investigation or appeal may in the discretion of the panel be delayed pending the outcome of the other organisation's proceedings.

The Chairman may suspend membership of an individual or a club – if it appears to him there are justifiable reasons to do so based on information before him with immediate effect pending investigation. Any suspended individual would be barred from other Aikikai Clubs. For avoidance of doubt suspension is regarded as independent to matters referred to in the preceding paragraph.

In this section notices/correspondence will be sent to members using addresses held by the Aikikai in its records. Information and outcomes may be shared with other bodies in appropriate instances.

Dissolution

A resolution to dissolve the Association can only be passed at a meeting through a two-thirds vote of those present subject to a quorum of 10% of members. Should a meeting decide that the Aikikai should be dissolved – any surplus monies will be distributed in a manner decided at such a meeting to other bodies that have similar aims and objectives.

Operating Principles

- a) The Aikikai is committed to ensuring that equity and equality is incorporated in what it does and will influence others wherever possible to do likewise.
- b) The Aikikai encourages both its Clubs and members to practise in a dojo in safe environment in accordance with any code of conduct it adopts, or is subject to, or is regarded as best practise; Health & Safety regulations and with specific regard/respect to the needs of those under 18 years of age.
- c) The Aikikai is committed to providing quality tuition only through qualified and regulated coaches.
- d) Data Protection - the Aikikai is committed to abide by the 1998 Act and any subsequent amendments.
- e) Members and those practising in our Clubs shall not bring the Aikikai or Aikido into disrepute through any act or omission and bound the Constitution.
- f) Finance – that no member or Club shall incur debts on behalf of the Aikikai without authorisation.