# INTRODUCTION

The Scottish Lowland Football League is committed to ensuring that all disciplinary matters are dealt with expeditiously, fairly and transparently.

This document defines the procedures from indication of potential breach of the Rules of the Scottish Lowland Football League to verdict and disposal. It is founded on the principles and practices for judicial panels as defined by the Scottish Football Association (SFA) and in the event of any doubt reference should be made to the SFA’s Judicial Panel procedures.

# PROCEDURES

The procedures are summarised as follows:

* Examination of potential breach of the Rules
* Notification of complaint
* Opportunity for defence or mitigation
* Disposal

# Examination

Situations which may represent breaches of the Rules can be identified by various routes including:

* Complaints from clubs
* Complaints from other footballing bodies
* Complaints from members of the public
* Media and public information publications
* Variances from Rules noted by office bearers of the League

The source of the information is irrelevant. If there is any intelligence that suggests that there has been a breach of the Rules the League is obliged to examine it although the Examiner may consider the reliability of the source of the information in determining the credibility of the complaint.

In all cases the Chairman or his nominated deputy will appoint a member of the Board to examine the complaint (the “Examiner”).

The Examiner will collate the available evidence regarding the complaint and may request further information. It must be stressed that, at this stage, requests for information do not indicate that a complaint will be raised or that there has been a *de facto* breach of the Rules.

The Examiner will provide the evidence to other Board members for an opinion regarding whether or not there are grounds for a Complaint. The basis for the decision will be a simple majority of the available Board members and the decision will not be delayed because of a lack of response from any Board member(s). In the event of a tied opinion the casting vote will be made by the first available of the following in order – the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, the Treasurer, the Examiner.

# Notification of Complaint

If it is decided that there are grounds for a complaint, the Examiner will provide the evidence to the Secretary (or nominated deputy).

The Secretary will:

* Set a date for a meeting of a Disciplinary Panel in compliance with the Timescale below;
* Select the members of the Disciplinary Panel in consultation with the Chairman;
* Inform the parties against whom there is a complaint, providing as a minimum:
* A summary of the evidence
* Details of the Rule upon which the complaint is based
* The date when the Disciplinary Panel will consider the complaint
* The members of the Disciplinary Panel
* An invitation (a) to provide written submission in defence or mitigations of the complaint and (b) to attend in person at the Disciplinary Panel
* A copy of these procedures

# Personal Appearance

For the avoidance of doubt, the following may make a personal appearance:

* The Principal subject of the complaint, i.e.,
* The individual (if the complaint is against an individual) or
* A member of the club named on the annual return of officials (as may have been subsequently amended) or
* The named party if the complaint is not against an individual or club
* An Advisor or Supporter

The names and positions of those who will attend must be notified to the Secretary at least 48 hours before the Disciplinary Panel meeting. The Disciplinary Panel chairman may, at his sole discretion, decline to permit participation of any individual but will provide a reason in writing which may be lead in the event of any appeal against the decision of the Disciplinary Panel.

# Disciplinary Panel Procedures

Please refer to separate guidance.

# Membership of Disciplinary Panel

The Secretary will arrange the membership of each panel in conjunction with the Chairman.

The following principles will apply.

1. Each panel will comprise three members plus a secretary who will manage the business of the Panel and record the outcomes but will not participate in discussions or decisions.
2. All members of the panel will be selected from a pool which has been approved by the Board.
3. The Chairman of the Disciplinary Panel will normally be a member of the Board
4. Members of the Panel must sign a declaration that they have no conflicts of interest before the meeting of each Disciplinary Panel
5. The parties against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of the members of the Disciplinary Panel. They may object to any member of the panel stating their reasons in writing. The Chairman of the Board will decide (at his sole discretion) if that person is suitable to continue or should be replaced. If the person continues the reason will be given in writing to the parties against whom the complaint has been made. *(Please note that the Disciplinary Panel may be delayed to allow for replacement of members without infringing the timelines defined in this document.)*
6. All parties to the Disciplinary Panel are bound to keep the content of the meeting confidential and any communications about the outcome will be issued by the Panel Secretary.

# TIMESCALE

There are two timescales – normal and expedited.

The expedited timescale will be used when there is a constraint on timing to reach a disposal of the case, *e.g.,* where there may be delays to the conduct of a competition. The normal timescale will apply in all other cases. The decision regarding which timescale will apply is the decision of the Chairman or his nominated deputy.

The performance standard for expedited procedures will be to dispose of the complaint within fourteen days of receipt of the complaint. For normal procedures disposal will be within forty-two days.