



Constitution

(as adopted 23 June 2007)

Part I

ARTICLE 1 - THE ORGANISATION

- 1.1 The TAOIST ARTS ORGANISATION (THE ORGANISATION) was founded on February 1st 1995.
- 1.2 THE ORGANISATION has its headquarters in the London area and currently operates in the UK, France and Germany
- 1.3 Part I of this constitution governs the entire organisation.
- 1.4 Part II applies to the UK part of the organisation only. The French and German parts of the organisation should adopt parallel constitutions and policies within the constraints set down in Part I and their national legislative framework and culture.
- 1.5 THE ORGANISATION shall continue to exist until such time as it is dissolved in line with this constitution.

ARTICLE 2 - ORGANISATIONAL AIMS

THE ORGANISATION exists to promote the following aims:

- 2.1 To bring together all those persons, regardless of race, gender, sexuality or disability, wishing to practice the Li Family Arts.
- 2.2 To ensure that the purity and quality of the Li Family Arts is preserved.
- 2.3 To preserve all aspects of the Li Family Arts: physical, meditative, therapeutic, philosophical & spiritual.
- 2.4 To represent the interest of all those wishing to practice the Li Family Arts in all relevant areas and with all relevant organisations.
- 2.5 To promote and maintain high standards of teaching of the Li Family Arts.

ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP OF THE ORGANISATION

Those regularly attending training sessions in the Li Family Arts provided by THE ORGANISATION are required to become members. There are two categories of membership from which to choose.

- 3.1 Full Members will pay a greater fee that entitles them to the benefits specified in Article 5.1.
- 3.2 Associate Members will pay a lesser fee that entitles them to the benefits specified in Article 5.2. They will be required personally to arrange appropriate accident insurance to cover their participation in training.

Within these categories are sub-groups of members that are defined as follows:

- 3.3 Founder Members are current Full Members who were also Full Members on 1st February 1995.
- 3.4 Overseas Members are those who are Full or Associate Members from outside the United Kingdom.
- 3.5 Junior Members are Full or Associate Members who are under 16 years of age.
- 3.6 Eligible Members are Full Members over 16 years of age and are the only members entitled to vote at Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings, to nominate officers or propose motions.

ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Applications for membership and annual renewals should be made by the due date together with the appropriate fee.
- 4.2 Applications for membership shall be subject to the approval of the Committee and will not be unreasonably refused
- 4.3 An applicant who is refused membership has the right to appeal against the decision using the appeals procedure under Article 15.

ARTICLE 5 - BENEFITS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 Full Members are entitled to :
- a) preferential rates, on a higher scale, for attending THE ORGANISATION's classes, weekend courses and residential courses;
 - b) regular assessment of their progress by the Technical Director or his appointee;
 - c) once they are 16 years old or above, nominate committee members, propose motions and vote at Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings;
 - d) a licence to practise martial arts from the BCCMA or relevant national governing body; this includes free accident insurance in the UK;
 - e) in France and Germany, insurance as appropriate to the national system.
- 5.2 Associate Members are entitled to :
- a) preferential rates, on a lesser scale, for attending THE ORGANISATION's classes, weekend courses and residential courses;
 - b) regular assessment of their progress by the Technical Director or his appointee.
- 5.4 All members of THE ORGANISATION are expected to abide by its aims and constitution.
- 5.5 All members are required to pay the relevant membership fee annually; otherwise their membership ceases 12 months after the last payment.

ARTICLE 6 - LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP

- 6.1 Membership may be suspended or revoked at any time by the Technical Director or a simple majority of the Committee on the grounds that a member has:
- a) acted in a manner contrary to the provisions of this Constitution (or the French or German constitution if applicable); or
 - b) acted in a manner contrary to recognised safe training practices, or
 - c) acted in a manner likely to bring THE ORGANISATION into disrepute, or
 - d) committed an act of gross misconduct.
- 6.2 Anyone whose membership has been revoked may appeal against the decision using the appeals procedure under Article 15.

ARTICLE 7 - THE COMMITTEE

- 7.1 THE ORGANISATION shall be administered in accordance with this constitution by a committee (the Committee).
- 7.2 The Committee shall consist of no fewer than 5 members being the five principal officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Technical Director and may additionally include other officers with roles to be agreed as necessary.
- 7.3 Each of the national organisations within THE ORGANISATION shall be entitled to elect one officer as its representative on the Committee. That election may be organised by the national organisation and need not take place at the AGM.
- 7.4 Only Full Members of THE ORGANISATION that regularly attend both days of instructor training weekends shall be eligible to serve on the Committee.
- 7.5 All officers other than the Technical Director shall be elected.
- 7.6 The Committee may co-opt additional Full Members of THE ORGANISATION to become members of the Committee and assist in the performance of its duties.

ARTICLE 8 - APPOINTMENT AND DISMISSAL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- 8.1 Tony Swanson is and shall remain the Technical Director until he chooses to appoint his successor. In the event that he fails to make such an appointment and is unable to do so, his successor will be appointed by a majority of those with at least 1st Tengchi grade who are Full Members of THE ORGANISATION at the time.
- 8.2 All other officers shall be elected at an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting. Any member eligible under article 7 to serve on the Committee, may stand provided they are nominated by at least 2 Eligible Members. Election to these posts shall be by a simple majority of Eligible Members present at the relevant meeting.
- 8.3 At least one third of the officers shall stand for re-election at each AGM and no officer shall serve for more than three years without seeking re-election.
- 8.4 At the first Committee meeting after any elections, the Chairman may allocate any roles, not currently filled, to Committee members.
- 8.5 In the event that a simple majority of committee members decide that an officer has not performed their duties satisfactorily or has ceased to comply with article 7.4, that officer may

be suspended with immediate effect. If the suspended officer requests, an EGM will be held as soon as practicable to allow members to consider a vote of no confidence in the suspended officer, otherwise the matter will be dealt with at the next AGM.

- 8.6 In the event that a simple majority of committee members decide that a co-opted member has not performed their duties satisfactorily they should terminate the co-option. Should the committee member wish to complain about that decision s/he should use the grievance procedure.

ARTICLE 9 - POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Subject to a discretion to delegate as he thinks fit to suitably qualified members of THE ORGANISATION, the Technical Director has sole responsibility for:

- i the assessment and grading of members,
- ii the authorisation of Instructors and Senior Instructors,
- iii the appointment of members of the Technical Team and Assessors
- iv provision of continuing training for Instructors and Senior Instructors,
- v creating and keeping up to date THE ORGANISATION'S Coaching Manual and Instructor's Administration Pack,
- vi ensuring that information on current best practice in martial arts training is available to all Instructors,
- vii deciding, with reference to the Coaching Manual, any questions relating to ethical, technical or teaching aspects of the Li Family Arts.

ARTICLE 10 - INSTRUCTORS

THE ORGANISATION'S policy in relation to the qualification and training of instructors of all levels will be monitored by the Technical Director who may revise it as necessary from time to time. THE ORGANISATION will be administered in accordance with current policy.

ARTICLE 11 - POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

- 11.1 A Committee meeting requires a quorum of 3 members of whom at least 2 should be principal officers.
- 11.2 There shall be no less than four Committee meetings each year.
- 11.3 The Committee shall take decisions based on a simple majority of members present except that a two-thirds majority is required to call an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- 11.4 The Committee shall have responsibility to manage all aspects of the administration of THE ORGANISATION other than those defined under Article 9.
- 11.5 At every meeting minutes of the previous meeting shall be presented in writing and must be agreed by a majority of those who were present at the previous meeting.
- 11.6 Any full member may inspect the minutes, at a reasonable time.
- 11.8 All THE ORGANISATION'S income shall be used or invested by the Committee for the administration of THE ORGANISATION and the furtherance of its aims.
- 11.9 Upon the dissolution of THE ORGANISATION the Committee shall make appropriate arrangements for the use of any surplus funds remaining after the discharge of THE ORGANISATION'S debts.

ARTICLE 12 - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 12.1 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held within six months of the end of THE ORGANISATION'S financial year.
- 12.2 Notice of the time and place of the meeting together with the proposed agenda shall be published to members on THE ORGANISATION'S website at least 28 days in advance.
- 12.3 The business to be conducted at the AGM shall include the publication of accounts, the election of committee members, any changes to the constitution and votes of no confidence in officers.
- 12.4 Votes of no confidence, if not arising from a decision by the Committee to suspend, must be proposed by at least 2 Eligible Members with 2 weeks notice to the officer in question who shall be given an opportunity during the meeting to reply to the case against them. Such votes can only be passed by a two-thirds majority of Eligible Members present at the relevant meeting. If passed the officer must resign from the Committee and has no further appeal but may invoke the grievance procedure if s/he wishes.
- 12.5 Otherwise decisions shall be made by a simple majority of Eligible Members present.

ARTICLE 13 - EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

- 13.1 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called at any time by a two-thirds majority of the Committee or by a written request to the Committee from 10 Eligible Members.
- 13.2 The notice requirements for an EGM are those prescribed under article 12.2.
- 13.3 An EGM shall be required to deal with any matters which would be dealt with at an AGM but for their urgency. Decisions shall be made by a simple majority of Eligible Members present, except that votes of no confidence shall require a two-thirds majority of Eligible Members present.
- 13.4 THE ORGANISATION can only be dissolved through an EGM held specifically for that purpose. A motion for dissolution shall not be carried without a two-thirds majority of Eligible Members present.

ARTICLE 14 - GRIEVANCES

- 14.1 Any member with a personal grievance about THE ORGANISATION, their coaching or tuition should notify the Committee in writing giving full details.
- 14.2 Within 14 days of receipt of such notification, the Committee will deal with the matter in confidence and will respond in writing, specifying what action has or will be taken to resolve the matter.

ARTICLE 15 - APPEALS

- 15.1 Any member personally affected by a decision taken under the preceding clauses of this constitution has the right to appeal.
- 15.2 Persons to whom article 4.3 or article 6.2 apply also have a right of appeal.
- 15.3 Notification of any appeal must be received in writing by the Technical Director or a principal officer of the committee within 14 days of notification of the decision being appealed. Notification of appeal must state clearly and fully the grounds for the appeal.
- 15.4 Upon receiving such notification, the Committee will select three full members and, if requested by either the Appellant, Chairman or Technical Director a senior member of the BCCMA who is not a member of THE ORGANISATION, qualified to consider the appeal in an informed and impartial manner (the Appeal Panel).
- 15.5 The Appeal Panel shall allow both the Appellant and the Complainant to make their case in full, giving each the right to reply to the other's allegations. This may be done in writing or in person as appropriate. It may confirm, reverse or vary the original decision.
- 15.6 Where possible, the Appeal Panel's deliberation, together with any hearing, shall be concluded so that the appellant receives written notification of the decision within 28 days of receipt of the written appeal.

ARTICLE 16 - "WHISTLE BLOWERS"

THE ORGANISATION will support and protect those Instructors and Members who, in good faith and without malicious intent, report suspicions or concerns that the conduct of other members, whatever their status within the organisation, contravenes this constitution or current policy.

Part II**ARTICLE 17 - HEALTH AND SAFETY**

THE ORGANISATION's [health and safety policy](#) will be monitored by the Committee who may revise it as necessary from time to time. THE ORGANISATION will be administered in accordance with current policy.

ARTICLE 18 - CHILD PROTECTION

THE ORGANISATION's [child protection policy](#) will be monitored by the Committee who may revise it as necessary from time to time. THE ORGANISATION will be administered in accordance with current policy.

ARTICLE 19 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

THE ORGANISATION's [equal opportunities policy](#) will be monitored by the Committee who may revise it as necessary from time to time. THE ORGANISATION will be administered in accordance with current policy.

ARTICLE 20 - CONDUCT

THE ORGANISATION'S [code of conduct and anti-bullying policy](#) will be monitored by the Committee who may revise it as necessary from time to time. THE ORGANISATION will be administered in accordance with current policy.

ARTICLE 21 - INSURANCE

THE ORGANISATION'S [policy in relation to the insurance of participants](#) will be monitored by the Committee who may revise it as necessary from time to time. THE ORGANISATION will be administered in accordance with current policy.

Policy in relation to the qualification and training of Instructors.

1. STATEMENT OF POLICY

In aiming to preserve the purity and quality of the Li Family Arts, the TAO strives to provide the highest quality training for all those who wish to practice them.

The Technical Director authorises persons entitled to offer instruction so that participants may have confidence in the quality of the instruction provided under the auspices of the TAO.

The TAO is committed to providing the highest quality training and support for its Instructors and to offering them appropriate opportunities to continue the development of their skills.

2. AUTHORISATION AND QUALIFICATION OF INSTRUCTORS

Instructor status shall be conferred separately in each of the three arts: T'ai Chi, Feng Shou and Ch'i Shu. No member shall offer or advertise themselves as an instructor, coach or teacher of any of the arts unless they are currently authorised to instruct in the same art.

Instructors are appointed at the Technical Director's discretion but will normally have achieved a minimum grade of 1st Tenchi and passed the BCCMA level 2 instructors' assessment.

Trainee Instructors may be authorised to assist an Instructor or act on their behalf. To qualify members must have reached a minimum of 2nd Pan. Trainee Instructors may only run their own clubs with the specific approval of the Technical Director.

Senior Instructors are those who have

- achieved Tenchi grades in at least 2 of the 3 Arts one of which must be 2nd Tenchi or above, and
- passed the BCCMA level 2 coaching qualification or been exempted by the Technical Director from this requirement, and
- passed a practical assessment of their ability to take authorised TAO weekend courses.

From the currently authorised Instructors and Senior Instructors, the Technical Director may select the Technical Team to assist him. Technical Team Instructors must have the capability to take regional weekend courses.

From the current members of the Technical Team or Senior Instructors the Technical Director may appoint Assessors, authorised to grade junior or adult members up to 1st Pan level on behalf of the TAO.

No Instructor of whatever level may teach any person under 18 years old without the approval of the Technical Director.

No Instructor of whatever level may teach weapons without the approval of the Technical Director.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTRUCTORS

All authorised Instructors, whether teaching at TAO clubs or for other organisations, are required to:

- have current personal liability insurance and public indemnity insurance and, if necessary, professional indemnity insurance.
- have Criminal Records Bureau clearance;
- have a person holding a current First Aid Certificate (whether themselves or another) in attendance at their classes;
- follow the guidelines laid out in the Coaching Manual, Assessors' Manual, Instructors' Administration Pack, together with recognised good practice for the coaching and teaching of martial arts;
- maintain and develop their coaching skills and knowledge of the Li Family Arts by attending at least 4 of the 7 weekend training courses provided by the Technical Director each year (or equivalent training at the Technical Director's discretion);
- support the development of the TAO by enrolling new members and encouraging all their students to attend training courses provided by the Technical Director or other Senior Instructors.

4. TAO CLUBS AND TRAINING SESSIONS

In addition to the responsibilities set out above, those Instructors running clubs or training sessions on behalf of the TAO are required to ensure that the requirements of the following are observed:

- the current TAO policies with regard to
 - health and safety,
 - child protection,
 - anti-bullying
 - equal opportunities
 - insurance

5. MONITORING AND CONTINUING ASSESSMENT

Instructors will be subject to continuing assessment of their technical and teaching skills by the Technical Director as he thinks fit.

The Technical Director or his appointee will monitor instructors' administration and conduct of TAO classes annually. Instructors must promptly complete and return such monitoring forms as may be required as part of this process.

6. DISQUALIFICATION

Instructor authorisation may be suspended or revoked at any time by the Technical Director or a simple majority of the Committee on the grounds that an Instructor:

- has acted in a manner contrary to the provisions of the Constitution or the annexed policies, or
- has acted in a manner contrary to recognised safe coaching practices, or
- has acted in a manner likely to bring the TAO into disrepute, or
- has committed an act of gross misconduct.

Health and Safety Policy

1. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The TAO is committed to providing participants with opportunities to explore the Li Family Arts in safety. While the practice of the martial aspects of the Arts may involve some risk, Instructors are trained to ensure that no participant is exposed to risks they do not understand or to risks that are unnecessary to the practice of the Arts.

2. PREMISES

It is the Instructor's responsibility to select suitable premises for the classes s/he runs on behalf of the TAO, having regard to the type of activity proposed, the number of people expected and the detailed guidance set out in the Instructors' Manual.

The Instructor will be required annually to complete a health and safety risk assessment form in respect of each of the premises s/he uses for classes.

The TAO will monitor whether the written assessment has been made without assuming responsibility for its accuracy or the safety of the premises.

3. PARTICIPANTS

The TAO provides a health questionnaire for new participants. It is the Instructor's responsibility to ensure these are completed so that s/he is aware at all times of participants that may be at a heightened risk because of their state of health and to pass this information on accurately to any visiting Instructors.

The Instructor should give appropriate warnings to all those who may be at particular risk from a certain activity because of their state of health and prevent participants from performing activities that put them at significant risk.

4. TEACHING

The safe conduct of a class is the responsibility of the Instructor running it. Instructors should comply with the guidance given in the Instructors Manual and at Instructors' training weekends as to safety and best practice in the teaching of the arts.

The Technical Director or his appointee will monitor teaching standards with a view to improvement and development of the standards within the organisation but cannot be held responsible for the failure of an Instructor to conform to the standards set down by the organisation.

5. EQUIPMENT

It is the responsibility of the Instructor to maintain any equipment used in the course of a class in a good and safe condition and to ensure that it is properly and safely used by participants.

6. WEAPONS

Those Instructors authorised to teach weapons must ensure that the greater risks involved are reflected in the care taken over the suitability of premises, equipment and conduct of the training.

7. WEEKEND & RESIDENTIAL COURSES

On these occasions the host Instructors are responsible for the premises and the senior visiting Instructors for the conduct of the training. They should liaise to ensure that all aspects of health and safety are addressed. The Committee is responsible for all aspects of health and safety on residential courses.

CHILD PROTECTION MATERIAL

CONTENTS

- A Child Protection Policy
- B Organisational Requirements for Classes for Children
- C Child Protection Information for Instructors and Assistants
- D Guidelines for Instructors and Assistants.

A. Child Protection Policy

1. TERMINOLOGY

In this document the terms *child* and *children* and *young people* all refer interchangeably to any person less than 18 years old.

2. INTRODUCTION

Participation in Chinese Martial Arts can and does provide valuable life experiences. Sporting activities offer significant opportunities for participants to develop social skills, self-esteem, confidence, teamwork and leadership qualities that develop a well-rounded individual.

The TAO acknowledges that despite all the benefits of participation, sport can provide easy access to children and present opportunities for an individual who wants to harm children. We accept that the welfare and safety of children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of everyone involved in our organisation.

Most children and vulnerable adults are well cared for and have happy and trusting relationships with adults. However, some less fortunate can be vulnerable to neglect or abuse, whether physical, emotional or sexual. The abuse may occur in the home, at school, in the park or in the sporting environment. It is known that some perpetrators of abuse may actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them.

3. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The protection of young people and vulnerable adults within the TAO is the responsibility of the Organisation and its instructors. Our approach to Child Protection is based on and reflects the principles of United Kingdom legislation and guidance and international agreements. The main tenets are that:

- The welfare of the young person is paramount
- All young people, regardless of their age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief or sexual identity, have a right to protection from harm or abuse
- Inter-agency co-operation is vital if young people are to be truly protected

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTRUCTORS:

It is not the responsibility of an instructor to decide whether a young person is being or has been abused. It is their personal responsibility, however, to take action to protect a young person through following the prescribed procedures. Non-action is not an option in the protection of young people and they do have a duty to act. It is also their responsibility to ensure that only those who need to be informed are told and that confidentiality is respected at all times.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ORGANISATION:

It is the responsibility of the TAO through the Committee to

- ensure that it's Instructors are trained in procedures for dealing with allegations or legitimate suspicions of child abuse;
- implement such policies as seem best suited to ensure the prompt and proper handling of such situations;
- monitor it's policy and practice and make improvements where practicable;
- arrange for 3 members to serve: one as Child Protection Officer and the others as Child Protection Assistants, and provide them with adequate training, resources and support;
- co-opt the Child Protection Officer onto the Committee.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER (CPO)

The CPO will be responsible for advising and guiding Instructors and Assistants in relation to child protection procedures and ensuring the reporting procedure above is properly observed.

The CPO will carry a mobile telephone designated only for use where there are concerns about child protection and this will be switched on at all times. When the CPO is not available calls will be diverted to one or other of the Child Protection Assistants so that a response is available at all times.

Where abuse or bullying is alleged against a member of the TAO the CPO will ensure that, where appropriate, the Organisation's internal complaints procedure is initiated and progressed through to a proper conclusion.

The CPO will monitor the performance of the Organisation's child protection and anti-bullying policies and will report regularly to the Committee including making recommendations for improvements where necessary.

B. Organisational Requirements for Classes for Children

1. QUALIFICATION OF INSTRUCTORS

The Instructor must have at least 1st Tengchi grade in the art they are teaching and have passed the BCCMA level 2 instructors' assessment. In addition they must have the express approval of the Technical Director for running a children's class.

2. ASSISTANCE

The Instructor must have assistance from a member of the TAO at every class, or failing that a chaperone of the opposite gender. Ideally the assistant should have achieved a minimum of 3rd Pan and be of the opposite gender to the Instructor, however, where this is impractical, the Technical Director may authorise assistants with different qualifications, provided the welfare of children is not compromised. Ratios of adults to participants would be determined by considering age of the participants, the type of activity and where the activity is taking place. For club training and external events the TAO adopts the BCCMA's recommended ratios :

- for children between the ages of 5 and 12 years - a minimum ratio of 2 adults to 16 participants
- for children between the ages of 13 and 17 years - a minimum ratio of 2 adults to 20 participants

Any assistant must be familiar with their responsibilities under this policy.

3. CRB CHECKS

Both the Instructor and their Assistant must have passed the enhanced CRB check.

4. FIRST AID

Either the Instructor or the Assistant must hold a current first aid certificate.

5. INSURANCE

The Instructor must hold the relevant insurance. No young person or vulnerable adult may participate in a class without current personal accident insurance.

6. WRITTEN CONSENT AND INFORMATION FROM PARENTS

No person under 16 years of age may participate without the written consent of an adult with parental responsibility. This will include authorisation to act *in loco parentis* in an emergency, relevant medical history and details of emergency contact numbers all of which should be kept to hand at every class. (See form provided in instructors pack)

7. INFORMATION TO BE HELD IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES

In addition to the information specified in the instructors' pack, those running classes for children should have the telephone number of the local social services and the local police to hand at every class.

8. SPECIAL CONSENTS

Specific written consent must be obtained from an adult with parental responsibility before children may be photographed, videoed or images of them may be published on the website or elsewhere in the Organisation's publications. Written consent must be obtained before a child is taken on any trip to participate in activities at a venue other than their regular training hall.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT FOR TRIPS

When planning health and safety measures for any proposed trip, the organisers must ensure that child protection issues are considered fully. (See forms provided in instructors pack)

10. BEST PRACTICE

Instructors will :

- inform participants of the Organisation's Child Protection and Anti-Bullying Policies in language they can understand;
- work to build relationships with young people which encourage them to have confidence to bring any concerns to either the Instructor or the Assistant without fear of victimisation or reprisal;
- avoid situations where an adult is alone with a single child wherever possible;
- ensure parents are aware of the Organisation's Policies, by directing them to the website.

C. Child Protection Information for Instructors and Assistants

1. UNDERSTANDING AND RECOGNISING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse can and does occur in a wide range of settings, including sport. The effects of abuse can be so damaging, they may follow a person into adulthood. For example, a person who has been abused as a young person may find it difficult or impossible to maintain stable, trusting relationships, become involved with drugs, experience mental health problems or self-harm. A child who has been neglected can experience serious impairment in their health and development.

2. RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND EQUALITY

It is possible that people from any racial group may experience harassment, discrimination and institutional racism. Although racism clearly causes harm, it is not itself a category of abuse. However, it may be considered emotional abuse and racism is illegal. Through adherence to the Taoist Arts Organisation Equal Opportunities Policy problems such as racial discrimination should be avoided.

3. PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

People with a disability or impairment may be vulnerable to abuse or poor practice, since they may not be suitably able to express their concerns or protect themselves or understand what is happening. Instructors must avoid discrimination against people with a disability and must be vigilant in caring for these vulnerable people.

4. ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Somebody may abuse a child by inflicting harm or neglect them by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and vulnerable adults may be abused within their family, at school and sometimes in the sporting environment. There is growing evidence to suggest that peer abuse is an increasing concern for young people.

There are many forms of abuse –

Physical Abuse:

Where someone

- physically hurts or injures a child intentionally by hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning or any other physical harm
- gives alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison to a child
- uses drugs to enhance performance or delay puberty
- inappropriately restricts a child's diet out of a desire to increase chances of success but without concern for the child's health and nutritional needs
- inflicts a type and intensity of training which exceeds the capacity of the child's maturation

Sexual Abuse

Where adults or other children (male and female) sexually abuse boys or girls to satisfy their own sexual needs, or where children are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity.

This could include:

- full sexual intercourse, fondling, masturbation or oral sex
- taking or possessing inappropriate photographic materials involving children
- showing inappropriate, pornographic materials to children

It should be noted that in sports situations where physical contact is made i.e. in stretching exercises or supporting, sexual abuse may go unnoticed. These situations also provide the opportunity for abuse to occur.

The misuse of the power of the Instructor over young children or vulnerable adults may lead to abusive situations developing.

Abuse of Trust

The Sexual Offences Amendment Act 2000 makes it an offence for an adult to have a sexual relationship with a person less than 18 years of age where the young person has a relationship of trust with the adult by virtue of their residential or educational circumstances. While the Act does not cover the relationship between a sports coach and participant in organisations other than schools, the TAO considers that this relationship is one of trust. It therefore requires:

- all members engaged in instructing or assisting in the training of young people to avoid any sexual relationship with participants under 18 or vulnerable adults;
- all those in the TAO to raise concerns about behaviour by those instructing or assisting in the training, which may be harmful to those in their care.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be described as the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, which can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Examples of this may include when:

- the child is constantly shouted at, taunted, humiliated or ignored
- the child is subjected to constant criticism, name calling, sarcasm or bullying
- an unrealistic pressure to perform consistently to high expectations is placed upon the child by the coach, club officials or parents.

Neglect

Failure of an adult to provide food, shelter and clothing for a child, or failure to protect a child from danger or physical harm, may constitute neglect. Failure to access appropriate medical care or provide love and affection may be classified as neglect.

Coaches who allow children to be exposed to unnecessary risk of injury or harm are being neglectful.

Bullying

It is important to remember that severe cases of bullying may amount to abuse. The CPO will help Instructors decide on the appropriate procedures to adopt. (See TAO Anti- Bullying policy)

Poor Coaching Practice

Poor practice may be defined as any action or behaviour that contravenes the following: best coaching practice as advocated in the most current version of the Taoist Arts Organisation Instructors' Manual;

- coaching guidelines as issued from time to time by the British Council for Chinese Martial Arts;
- the Taoist Arts Organisation Code of Conduct;
- the Taoist Arts Organisation Anti-Bullying Policy;
- the Taoist Arts Organisation Equal Opportunities Policy;
- the Taoist Arts Organisation Child Protection Policy

In its extreme form poor coaching practice may amount to abuse. Again if there is any doubt you should consult the CPO.

5. INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Indications that a young person may be being abused can be difficult to recognise even for the experienced. There are signs, which could alert you to the fact that a child might be being abused, and these include:

- unexplained bruising or injury particularly in unusual places
- an injury for which the explanation seems to be inconsistent
- unexplained sudden changes in behaviour (i.e. withdrawing, very quiet, sudden outbursts of temper or emotion)
- inappropriate sexual awareness or language or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- is prevented from socialising with other children or has difficulty making friends
- is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected (i.e. parents, instructor, family friend)
- displays variations in eating patterns (i.e. overeating or loss of appetite)
- the child becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt
- something another child has said which suggests a child is being abused
- the child describes an act or behaviour that appears to be abusive

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these symptoms is not proof that abuse has taken place, but it should raise concerns.

D. Guidelines for Instructors and Assistants

These Guidelines for Instructors and Assistants has been developed not only protect young people but also to help them to identify practices which could be misinterpreted and perhaps lead to false allegations of abuse. All Instructors and Assistants should, therefore, follow this code.

1. IF A YOUNG PERSON TELLS YOU THAT THEY ARE BEING, OR HAVE BEEN, ABUSED

Young people will occasionally disclose abuse to an adult that they have come to trust. If they do tell you, they are doing so in the hope that you will stop it happening, even if they ask you not to do anything with the information. It takes great courage to disclose abuse and your response can be crucial – it is important that you react appropriately.

DO:

- Remain calm and receptive
- Listen without interrupting
- Only ask questions if you need clarification – leading questions should not be asked as they may cause legal difficulties if the matter proceeds to Court
- Make it clear to the young person that you are taking them seriously
- Acknowledge their courage in telling you
- Tell them they are not responsible
- Let them know that you will do all that you can to help them

DON'T:

- Allow your shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information
- Make assumptions or speculate
- Make negative comments about the abuser
- Make promises that you can't keep
- Agree to keep the information secret
- Begin counselling them

YOU MUST:

- Make an immediate record of what the young person has said, using their own words as much as possible
- Follow the procedures for reporting as below

2. IF YOU THINK THAT A YOUNG PERSON MAY BE AT RISK OF ABUSE, IS BEING OR HAS BEEN ABUSED

- You must not wait nor must you investigate or seek additional information
- You should inform the young person of your concerns and the actions you will be taking
- Within the hour you should contact the Child Protection Officer on the dedicated telephone number to report your concerns.
- The Child Protection Officer will provide guidance as to the relevant agencies which are to be informed and if, for some reason, you are unable to inform those agencies, will be responsible for ensuring the information is promptly passed on.
- The Child Protection Officer will continue to provide appropriate support and guidance to you during the course of any investigation.

Equal Opportunities Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The TAO is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and will strive to ensure that anyone participating in the Li system of Health and Martial Arts has open access to participate and does so in a discrimination-free environment.

The TAO will work to raise awareness of equality throughout the TAO, and will continually monitor its methods, activities and resource materials and challenge assumptions and preconceptions

2. STATEMENT OF POLICY

- The TAO will respect the equal rights, dignity, worth and right to self-determination of every human being who is part of or associated with the Organisation.
- The TAO aims to ensure that no member, participant or instructor receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of their race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origins, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.
- Any individual who believes they or another member have received unfavourable treatment within the scope of this policy should raise their concern in line with TAO grievance procedure. No individual who raises a concern in good faith should be treated unfairly as a result of raising their concern.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee has overall responsibility for monitoring the procedures and policies of the Organisation to ensure that they are working to promote equality and to keep in line with current legislation.

As part of the ongoing support for Instructors, the TAO will

- ensure Instructors are aware of current policies, and
- inform them of changes of policy within the TAO or new responsibilities arising from changes in equal opportunities legislation, and
- provide information on sources of training necessary to their implementation.

Each Instructor has responsibility for ensuring that the policy principles are implemented in the clubs and any weekend courses that they run. The Committee has that responsibility in relation to residential courses.

4. VULNERABLE ADULTS

A vulnerable adult is defined as any person aged 18 or over who is or may be:

- in need of assistance by reason of mental, physical or learning disability, age or illness, and
- unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation which may be occasioned by the actions or inactions of other people.

The Organisation through its officers and Instructors aims where possible to provide vulnerable adults who wish to participate with a physically safe and emotionally protected environment in which to explore the Taoist Arts. Instructors are required to liaise with carers as appropriate and give particular thought to provision for their health and safety. Depending on the circumstances of the individual it may be appropriate to invoke relevant aspects of the child protection policy.

MATERIAL RELATING TO CONDUCT & THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING

CONTENTS

- A Code of Conduct
- B Anti-Bullying Policy
- C Information and Guidelines for Instructors in relation to bullying

A. Code of Conduct

- ❖ Respect the dignity and spirit of all participants, including children, young people and vulnerable adults
- ❖ Treat all participants fairly
- ❖ Establish supportive positive environments to encourage healthy competition, skill development, fun and achievement
- ❖ Avoid contact or conduct that may be interpreted as having sexual connotations or which is defined as inappropriate within the context of Chinese Martial Arts
- ❖ Do not take part in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a participant or that negatively affects their self esteem
- ❖ Do not tolerate acts of aggression
- ❖ Work towards eliminating harassment and abuse from sports environments
- ❖ Be prepared to intervene if a child or young person under 18 is being abused or neglected
- ❖ Practice fair play both during and outside of all sports activities. 'Fair play' is defined as showing considerate regard for participants, staff, parents, spectators and officials; abiding by the rules of the sport; abiding by the officials' decisions
- ❖ Adhere to the policies and guidelines of the Taoist Arts Organisation and the British Council for Chinese Martial Arts

B. Anti-Bullying Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Bullying may take the form of physical attacks, taking or damaging belongings, verbal assault, including name-calling, insults, repeat teasing, racist assaults, or it may take more indirect forms, such as spreading malicious gossip, rumours or excluding someone from a social group. It is widespread and there is increasing evidence of immense distress caused by bullying, with a small number of children being driven to suicide every year. Anyone can be the victim of bullying and being or feeling bullied is not a sign of weakness and does not make the victim a less valuable person.

Within a martial arts organisation participants will routinely be training with partners and that training may include pushing, punching, kicking, throwing and other physical contact. Such acts, when carried out in the course of training and with the intention of assisting the partner in developing self-defence skills, self-esteem and confidence are to be distinguished from bullying which involves an abuse of power and an element of malice.

Training within the TAO, particularly for those who have chosen to be coached towards and take part in competitions, may involve more intense physical and psychological pressures. Instructors are trained always to use pressure as a constructive tool, to be used to support a participant's aspiration to improve their performance. This is to be distinguished from inappropriate pressure, which could be damaging to the participant's fitness or morale and might amount to bullying. TAO Instructors are trained to recognise the distinction and to adopt appropriate and constructive coaching methods.

Competitive sport creates an ideal environment for the bully. The bully in sport can be the over-zealous coach, a parent who pushes too hard, a player who intimidates others or an official who places unfair pressure on a person. TAO Instructors are trained to be alert for such situations arising, particularly where junior members are competing and to take appropriate steps to protect participants.

2. STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is unacceptable that anyone in the TAO should be subjected to bullying, whether by a child or adult participant, an instructor, an official or a parent.

Any bullying situation within the Organisation will be taken seriously and dealt with through the complaints procedure having regard to both the behaviour exhibited and the reasons for the behaviour.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee has overall responsibility for monitoring the procedures and policies of the Organisation.

The Technical Director and Child Protection Officer will monitor the incidence of bullying with a view to identifying potential improvements in the Organisation's policies and practices and reporting to the Committee.

As part of the ongoing support for Instructors, the TAO will

- ensure Instructors are aware of current policies, and
- inform them of changes of policy within the TAO
- provide information on sources of training necessary to their implementation.

Each Instructor has responsibility for ensuring that the policy principles are implemented in the clubs and any weekend courses that they run. The Committee has that responsibility in relation to residential courses.

C. Information and Guidelines for Instructors in Relation to Bullying

1. INFORMATION ABOUT BULLYING

Bullying can be defined as deliberate, hurtful behaviour either physical or verbal towards another person, usually repeated over a period of time, which it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves against.

Although anyone can be a target of bullying, the victim is usually shy, sensitive and perhaps insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons, overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, culture or religious belief.

It occurs if someone regardless of age, gender or status within the organisation

- name calls, teases, threatens, uses graffiti or gestures
- intimidates, torments, ridicules or humiliates
- hits, kicks (other than in the course of training) or thieves
- uses racist or homophobic taunts
- is overly sarcastic to another person
- uses unwanted physical contact or abusive comments

2. GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF BULLYING

If a member complains of being bullied within the TAO:

- give the member time to say how they are being bullied;
- reassure the member that they are right to tell you about the bullying.
- **if the alleged victim and perpetrator are adult**
 - report the matter to the Technical Director who will invoke the grievance procedure under article 14 of the constitution with the possibility of invoking sanctions under article 6, and
 - keep the victim advised of the action taken in response to their complaint.
- **if the alleged victim or perpetrator is under 18**
 - where necessary, consult with the CPO to decide whether it is appropriate to deal with the matter internally or whether child protection procedures should be invoked..
 - If it is to be dealt with internally:
 - discuss the matter with the victim's parents and inform them of the Organisation's policy and practices regarding bullying;
 - talk with the perpetrator, explain the situation, and seek any underlying reasons for the behaviour. Try to get the perpetrator to understand the consequences of their behaviour.
 - inform the perpetrator's parents and explore any potential underlying reasons for the behaviour;
 - devise and impose sanctions which seem just and appropriate in all the circumstances;
 - inform the parents (where appropriate) of the sanctions to be imposed;
 - keep a written record of the incident and the action taken and provide a copy to the Child Protection Officer.
 - to try to prevent recurrence:
 - encourage and support the perpetrator in changing his behaviour;
 - support the victim in regaining any loss of confidence in the group
 - liaise with both sets of parents, as appropriate.

Policy in relation to the Insurance of Participants

1. INSTRUCTORS' INSURANCE

All Instructors must have current public liability and professional indemnity insurance with the correct level of cover for their activities. The TAO is not responsible for any failure by Instructors to keep themselves fully insured.

2. PARTICIPANTS' INSURANCE

The TAO policy is that there should be no participation in classes without personal accident cover for participation in martial arts. The level of cover should meet the Sports Council Minimum Standards.

All Instructors should ensure that people participating in their classes are informed of the organisation's policy relating to insurance. The BCCMA instructor's insurance provides cover for newcomers for the first four attendances at a class.

If participants take out Full Membership of the TAO they will have a BCCMA licence, which provides free personal accident cover tailored to these requirements. The details of the cover are set out on the website.

If participants take out Associate Membership of the TAO they are required to make their own arrangements for accident cover for their training to at least the Sports Council minimum standards. Instructors should require Associate Members to confirm in writing that they have such cover before allowing them to participate in training.

Cover cannot be backdated so it is important that the Full Membership or, for Associate Members, other insurance is purchased initially before the end of the 4 week trial period and subsequently renewed before it expires each year. Full Members may renew their membership and BCCMA licence on-line at the TAO website where a Paypal facility is available for secure payment.

It is the responsibility of the Instructor to monitor the insurance status of their participants. The TAO will not issue reminders about the need to renew membership and/or policies.

3. UNINSURED PARTICIPANTS

Should participants over 16 years old fail to acquire or renew their insurance at the relevant time and Instructors allow them to continue to participate in classes, this will be at the participant's and the Instructor's own risk. The Organisation can take no responsibility for uninsured participants. It is the responsibility of the Instructor to maintain an awareness of the insurance status of participants in a class and to regulate their activities accordingly.

No vulnerable adult or person 16 years or under may participate in a class without insurance.

4. OBSERVERS

People should only be allowed to watch a class if covered by the premises' public liability insurance.