

# Historical Combat Collective Society Policies



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## Definitions and Acronyms

HCCS	Historical Combat Collective Society
Board Member	Refers to the directors <sup>1</sup> that oversee the operational aspects of the organization.
Voting Member	Members who attend HCCS activities, actively paying dues, and have voting rights within the organization.
Facilitator	Refers to a Member qualified in facilitation who is in charge of leading an HCCS Activity.
Participant	Refers to those who are attending an HCCS activity, but are not paying membership dues to the organization.
Member	Refers to Board Members, Voting Members, and Participants.
Branch Manager	A Board Member or Voting Member appointed by the Board to be in charge of a location.
Warm-up	A light-duty physical activity used to prepare members at the start of each class. Warm-ups are usually followed by flow drills and guard transitions with the training simulators.
Demonstration	A facilitator driven display of a target technique. Typically completed at slow or high speed.
Technique Drill	The practice of a target technique by the participants and other members. The technique is typically completed at a slow speed with minimal to no contact to refine the technique.

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<sup>1</sup> For a complete description of directors and their associated responsibilities, please refer to the HCCS bylaws.



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Live Drill	The practice of a target technique by members at a medium speed. Selected protective gear is required.
Sparring	The practice of techniques freely used against an active opponent. Sparring is Performed in a controlled manner at high speed by qualified Members and is governed by a significant number of protocols outlined in this document (see section 6).

## Document Scope

The activities and conduct of the Historical Combat Collective Society (HCCS) members are governed by the policies below.

All HCCS members must adhere to the policy manual while participating in HCCS activities.

Several HCCS policies may apply to the conduct of members outside of HCCS. In these cases, the intent is to ensure that a safe and open environment is provided for HCCS members. Members are therefore further urged to adhere to the policy manual while conducting themselves in public or on social media.

### 1. Objectives

- 1.1. HCCS aims to provide a safe and professional environment for Members to practice Historical Martial Arts.
- 1.2. HCCS will provide a welcoming environment which respects the diversity of its Members; We will practice this inclusiveness and professionalism through conscious choice.

### 2. Culture

- 2.1. To adhere to its objectives, HCCS will:



- 2.1.1. Create and maintain an inclusive space through the creation and use of its policies.
- 2.1.2. Actively communicate the content and intent of these inclusive policies to Members and Participants.
- 2.1.3. Dedicate itself to providing a harassment free experience for everyone, regardless of belief, body size, disability, gender identity, mental health, physical appearance, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Harassment or discrimination, even beyond the descriptions listed above, will not be tolerated from Members in any form.
- 2.1.4. Utilize welcoming and inclusive language whenever possible.
- 2.1.5. Respectfully engage with the HEMA community over differing viewpoints and experiences while still following our own commitments.
- 2.1.6. Openly accept, actively seek, and respectfully address feedback.

### 3. Governance

- 3.1. All HCCS activity is to be governed by The Board of Directors.
- 3.2. Directors will fill the following roles and be responsible for performing the outlined functions:
  - 3.2.1. Secretary: responsible for the creation and maintenance of documentation.
  - 3.2.2. President: responsible for ensuring that HCCS policies and codes of conduct are adhered to.
  - 3.2.3. Treasurer: responsible for all financial accounts and transactions.
- 3.3. Board Members may be involved in assisting another Board Member with their responsibilities as required.
- 3.4. HCCS Activities that fall outside of the responsibilities outlined above will be assigned on an as-needed basis by the acting President.
- 3.5. The HCCS Board has the sole right to change policies, content, fees, and any other matter related to HCCS Activities.



- 3.6. Each change must be voted on by present Board Members. Each Board Member has an equal vote. The majority vote wins.
  - 3.6.1. Any change requiring a vote must have at least three Board Members present.
- 3.7. Records of all votes will be kept through meeting minutes.
- 3.8. Board Members are to abstain from any vote or infraction investigation if a conflict of interest arises.
- 3.9. In the event of a tie, the President's vote will determine the tie-breaker
- 3.10. The President, or any one Board Member, is never to have sole control of changes in Board structure or policy that shift executive control to the President or any other Board Member, and will be considered null and void regardless of voting results.
- 3.11. If a Board Member resigns or is removed through an infraction they must be replaced as soon as practicable.
- 3.12. In the event a Board Member must be replaced, the remaining Board Members will identify another Member who is both willing and capable of filling the empty role within two months.
- 3.13. Rotation, process of selection, and changes to Board Members will be reviewed annually at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

## 4. Participant and Member application

- 4.1. HCCS is a volunteer organization with the goal of providing a safe and professional environment for Members to practice Historical Martial Arts, and as such does not necessarily desire to expand its Membership.
  - 4.1.1. The Board of Directors may choose whether applications for new Members are being received.
  - 4.1.2. Memberships of Voting Members must be renewed after each fiscal year (See: 10.9.)



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- 4.1.3. The Board of Directors can choose to invite a new Voting Member, or can review applications, taking into account an individual's volunteering record.
  - 4.2. New participants may be admitted to HCCS after signing the waiver and code of conduct, and after completing an application form to be submitted to the Board of Directors.

## 5. Confidential Information

- 5.1. Several pieces of information required by HCCS Board Members for participation will contain private information in the form of home addresses, phone numbers, and other personal details.
- 5.2. HCCS will never collect information from Members which is not relevant to its own activities.
- 5.3. All private information handled will be controlled by HCCS Board Members or designated representatives, in such a way as to ensure it stays confidential.
- 5.4. Confidential information stored in a paper format will be kept in a locked container owned by an HCCS Board Member.
- 5.5. Confidential information that will be stored in a digital format such as; Names, emergency contacts, and phone numbers, will be used solely for the purpose of responding to emergencies and contacting members regarding club activities and will be password protected on a secure platform for the protection of the sensitive information.
- 5.6. HCCS Board Members are required to keep all private information confidential regardless of format. Paper documents are to be viewed only by HCCS Board Members or their designated representative, digital information must be password protected and saved only to HCCS owned accounts, and all private/confidential information discussed above is never to be discussed in public.
- 5.7. In the situation that an HCCS Member becomes privy to another Member's private information, even if it is unrelated to HCCS Activities, it is never to be discussed or disclosed unless it is relevant to the safety of another Member.



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## 6. Safety, Equipment, and Training

- 6.1. The practice of Historic Martial Arts entails several risks that can result in injury. HCCS is committed to the safety of their membership through the control of equipment and establishing guidelines for Members to mitigate these risks as much as possible.
- 6.2. HCCS Members must confirm that they have read and understand the HCCS Waiver along with the Student Code of Conduct. This confirmation, obtained through the Member's signature on those documents, must be obtained prior to participation in HCCS Activities.
- 6.3. All HCCS Members are to take every step and precaution to ensure their own safety and that of other Members. All members are expected to put safety first in all situations.
- 6.4. A major component of mitigating this risk is the use of proper protective equipment and training simulators. All Members are required to inspect their equipment prior to each use to ensure it is free of damage that may compromise its safety.
- 6.5. Protective equipment and training swords from dedicated historic martial arts manufacturers, other sport manufacturers, and vendors with positive track records will be the standard for equipment used by Members. Any new equipment, manufacturers, vendors, or altered equipment is subject to HCCS Facilitator approval prior to use.
- 6.6. To ensure that risks of injury are mitigated as much as possible, all Members will be required to:
  - 6.6.1. Wear protective headgear during partnered drills regardless of intensity.
  - 6.6.2. If a drill is performed at a higher intensity or targets an area of the body that is easily injured (such as the shins), the facilitator will require Members to wear additional protection.
  - 6.6.3. Wear protective equipment that is adequate for the training simulators being used during sparring. The head, throat, torso, forearms, elbows, hands, shins, knees, and groin must be adequately protected during sparring.



- 6.6.4. Ensure that all training equipment is free of damage that may compromise the simulators during all HCCS Activities.
- 6.6.5. Facilitators demonstrating a technique are not required to wear protective equipment so long as both individuals performing the demonstration are well rehearsed in the technique and it is performed at a safe speed.
- 6.6.6. Members performing the warm-up portion of class are not required to wear protective equipment.
- 6.7. HCCS Board Members and Voting Members have the right to declare equipment as safe or unsafe. Any Member may use whatever discretion they feel is valid in this assessment. Any equipment deemed unsafe is not permitted for use in HCCS activities.
- 6.8. All Members, during all activities, will:
  - 6.8.1. Perform actions and techniques with control and without the use of excessive force.
  - 6.8.2. Refrain from exposing the back of their head, torso, and limbs to an opponent.
  - 6.8.3. Refrain from striking the back of the head, torso, or limbs of their opponent regardless of whether these targets were presented intentionally.
  - 6.8.4. Refrain from striking any opponent on the foot or the ankle.
  - 6.8.5. Immediately cease their activity if a piece of protective equipment fails or a training simulator breaks.
  - 6.8.6. Immediately cease their activity if anyone calls “hold”.
  - 6.8.7. Adhere to the decisions of HCCS Board Members and Facilitators in regards to equipment which has been deemed safe or unsafe.



## 7. Live Blades

- 7.1. A live blade is a sharp blade, regardless of whether it is a reproduction or historic original. Sharp blades are not permitted at HCCS Activities.

## 8. Tournaments

- 8.1. Competitive tournaments will present Members with a greater level of intensity than regular HCCS Activities. As competitive tournaments carry an increased intensity, they also carry an increased risk of injury. HCCS Members are therefore governed by the following restrictions if they wish to participate as a Member of HCCS:
  - 8.1.1. An HCCS Member wishing to participate in a competitive tournament, even one not hosted by HCCS, requires permission from an HCCS Board Member.
  - 8.1.2. The tournament must be approved by HCCS Board Members.
  - 8.1.3. An HCCS Board or Voting Member must be present at the tournament.
  - 8.1.4. HCCS Board or Voting Member have the right to withdraw participation from any tournament if they feel a Member's safety or well being is at risk.
- 8.2. Permission to participate in a tournament will be given in writing. A copy of this written permission will be given to the Member and the original will be saved by HCCS.
- 8.3. Any HCCS Member may choose to enter a tournament as an individual. However, they cannot claim to be representing HCCS or utilize any HCCS equipment.
- 8.4. Entering a tournament as an individual carries a significantly higher risk of injury. It is highly recommended that HCCS Members do not enter competitive tournaments without written approval to ensure they are properly covered under HCCS's banner.
- 8.5. HCCS Members participating in competitive Historical European Martial Art tournaments as a member of HCCS without approval, if discovered, will be committing an infraction as described below.



## 9. Insurance

- 9.1. HCCS will maintain adequate insurance to cover HCCS Activities, injury of Members, and damage to the venue prior to the activity.
- 9.2. HCCS will not host competitive tournaments without adequate insurance coverage.

## 10. Finances

- 10.1. HCCS will maintain Not-For-Profit status.
- 10.2. HCCS will collect a fee from students for the purpose of maintaining equipment, rentals, insurance, and other HCCS Activities.
- 10.3. HCCS will collect an annual fee from Voting Members. This fee is due at the first class of the fiscal year.
- 10.4. Each HCCS location may choose to set both single-class drop-in and class fees at their discretion, so long as they are able to contribute equitably to shared expenses.
  - 10.4.1. Shared expenses include: society insurance, society equipment costs, accountant
  - 10.4.2. Location-specific expenses include: space rentals, space cleaning, space-specific supplies & equipment and day-to-day expenses. Directors and branch managers may request the Board to finance new equipment.
- 10.5. Failure to pay any fee will result in a Member being barred from HCCS Activities until fees are paid.
- 10.6. Funds collected by HCCS will only be used for HCCS purposes.
- 10.7. HCCS Fees are subject to any changes approved by the board.



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- 10.8. HCCS will produce a budget each fiscal year, building in a baseline contingency of 5% to account for unforeseen circumstances.
    - 10.8.1. This contingency will not be carried over year-over-year -- unspent contingency funds will be counted as revenue in the next fiscal year.
  - 10.9. The HCCS will work to a fiscal year that runs from August to July of each calendar year.
  - 10.10. At fiscal year end, the HCCS finances will receive an annual review by a professional accountant in order to produce audited financial statements for the previous fiscal year.
  - 10.11. HCCS Board Members will prepare an Annual Financial Memo to Members no less than once per year. This memo will contain an explanation of how fees are utilized and rationalize any changes.
  - 10.12. HCCS is not required to disclose detailed financial reports to Members; HCCS will maintain audited financial statements.
  - 10.13. In the event that HCCS dissolves its organization, it will auction off all surplus equipment. The funds from the sale of surplus equipment will first be used to refund any outstanding start-up fees. Any excess funds generated outside of this purpose will be donated to a charity of the HCCS Board's choosing.

## 11. Relationships

- 11.1. In general, Directors and Voting Members are not permitted to engage in intimate relationships with Participants due to the inherent power imbalance and tendency towards favouritism.
- 11.2. Exceptions will be considered for the following reasons:
  - 11.2.1. The relationship in question existed prior to either individual becoming a Participant or Voting Member.
  - 11.2.2. An official declaration is made to the Board by the Member involved stating the intent to form a relationship. The Voting or Board Member must step down from their role, and relinquish facilitation rights.



## 12. Infractions

- 12.1. The contents of this policy manual are expected to be adhered to by all members. In the event that an item in the policy manual is breached, and infraction has occurred.
- 12.2. Infractions are to be brought to the attention of a Board Member as soon as possible.
- 12.3. Infractions are to be communicated to the HCCS Board in person or in writing.
  - 12.3.1. HCCS will communicate to Members and Participants how to submit an infraction in person, in writing, or through other means.
  - 12.3.2. In the event an infraction is reported anonymously, HCCS will trigger an investigation process to the greatest extent possible. Any potential conflicts of interest within the investigation team must be disclosed before triggering the investigation process.
- 12.4. Once a Board Member has received notice of an infraction they will communicate the relevant details to the rest of the HCCS Board. The only exception to this process is if a Board Member is responsible for the infraction. In this case the Board Member accused of an infraction will be investigated.
- 12.5. The HCCS Board will determine the severity of the incident:
  - 12.5.1. Minor Infractions include but are not limited to cases of: offensive and/or disrespectful uses of language or terms, accidental disregard for the safety of HCCS Members or other Historical Martial Arts practitioners, accidental disregard for equipment or facility, accidental disregard for the direction given by facilitators, and other unbecoming conduct.
  - 12.5.2. Critical Infractions include but are not limited to cases of: intentional non-consensual contact, sexual harassment, intentionally harmful use of offensive and/or disrespectful language or terms, intentional cause of harm, injury, or excessive force beyond the requirements of a technique, and other unbecoming conduct that seriously threatens the



health, safety, and/or well-being of HCCS Members or the organization itself.

- 12.6. If a reported infraction is found to be of a serious criminal nature, HCCS will report it to the local authorities regardless of confidentiality.
- 12.7. The HCCS Board has the sole right to determine the severity of an incident.
- 12.8. The HCCS Board may change the severity of an incident over the course of its investigation.
- 12.9. HCCS will investigate each reported infraction by using any means available.
- 12.10. HCCS will keep written copies of all infractions and may require Members to provide written statements.
- 12.11. All material/information discovered throughout the course of an investigation is confidential.
- 12.12. Once HCCS concludes an investigation, it will identify the cause of the infraction and how to best prevent it from occurring again. Depending on the severity of the infraction, this prevention can range from document/standard changes, coaching or warnings to Members, and/or termination of HCCS Membership.
  - 12.12.1. Minor infractions generally allow for improvement on the part of the Member to prevent future occurrences of the same behaviour. The HCCS Board will generally be confident that the Member can be coached to avoid the same behaviour in the future.
  - 12.12.2. Critical Infractions generally do not allow for improvement on the part of the Member and/or present a situation that is deemed immediately intolerable by the HCCS Board. Critical Infractions may also be considered as repeated occurrences of Minor Infractions that the HCCS Board deems intolerable.
- 12.13. Once an investigation is complete, the HCCS Board will present its findings and its resolution to those Members involved. Findings and resolutions will always be presented in writing. Findings and resolutions are always to be identified and delivered in good faith on the part of the HCCS Board.



- 12.13.1. HCCS does not intend to further endanger or compromise its Members in any manner with the resolution of an investigation. Confidentiality will be maintained to the greatest extent that an infraction allows.
- 12.13.2. In the event that findings involve a Board Member, and they remain a Board Member at the conclusion of the investigation, that Board Member will not be given full access to the details of the investigation beyond what is shared in the resolution process.

## 13. Forced Termination of Membership

- 13.1. In the unfortunate event that the HCCS Board deems an Individual as no longer fit to be an HCCS Member, their membership will be terminated.
- 13.2. All terminations will be provided in writing.
- 13.3. In the event that an Individual's HCCS Membership is terminated, they will be barred from attending HCCS Activities, paying further dues, and making donations of any kind.
- 13.4. In the event that an Individual's HCCS Membership is terminated, no refund of any fees paid will be provided.

## 14. Refusal of Service

- 14.1. HCCS retains the right to refuse service of all HCCS Activities to any individual as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors, Voting Members, or Facilitators.

## 15. Communications

- 15.1. HCCS will communicate with Members at the beginning and end of each HCCS Activity. Communications can range from changes to class structure, venue locations, and other relevant information.



- 15.2. The HCCS Board Members will hold no fewer than one Membership Meeting per year.
- 15.3. The Membership Meeting is to be held at a location that is both reasonably comfortable and accessible for Members. Online video conferences or phone calls are acceptable.
- 15.4. All active HCCS Members will receive invites to the annual Membership Meeting