



NAFAS Members' Charter

A shared commitment to Fun, Friendship and Flowers

1. Purpose and scope

This Charter has been developed as part of NAFAS's wider Renewal Programme.

NAFAS faces significant challenges, including a long-term decline in membership and the need to help our Clubs, Areas and national organisation remain relevant, welcoming and sustainable. Renewal is not only about changing structures or introducing new systems. It also depends on how we work together and the responsibility each of us takes for strengthening the NAFAS family.

This Charter provides a shared foundation for that work. It describes the standards of behaviour and mutual responsibility that every member should be able to expect - and that each of us agrees to uphold. It asks us to consider not only our own interests or those of an individual Club, Area or activity, but also the wellbeing and future of NAFAS as a whole.

The Charter applies to everyone who is part of the NAFAS community, whether through an affiliated Club, an Area or direct membership. Some 'members' of our community also wear additional 'hats' - as volunteers, Club or Area leaders, committee members, trainers, demonstrators, teachers, speakers, judges, adjudicators or representatives of all of NAFAS. Those hats may bring additional responsibilities, but our starting point remains the same: **whatever else we do, we are all members first.**

The Charter is not a legal document or a complete disciplinary or complaints procedure. Nor does it replace the constitutions, agreements, professional standards, codes of practice or other guidance that apply to particular roles and activities. It provides a common baseline for all members, to be considered alongside those more specific arrangements.

2. One NAFAS community

NAFAS brings together people who share a love of flowers, floral art and the friendships that grow around them. We may experience NAFAS principally through a local Club, an Area, a national activity or a particular interest, but each forms part of one connected community.

Our shared commitment to Fun, Friendship and Flowers expresses the kind of community we want NAFAS to be:

- **Fun** means creating opportunities for people to participate, learn and be creative in an atmosphere where they feel welcome, safe and appreciated.
- **Friendship** means treating one another with kindness, dignity and respect; listening to different perspectives; and helping new and existing members feel that they belong.
- **Flowers** represent the shared passion that brings us together. We celebrate creativity, share knowledge generously and value both the traditions of floral art and the new ideas that will help it flourish in the future.

Every member contributes to this community in a different way: through creativity, encouragement, knowledge, volunteering, leadership, professional expertise or simply by taking part. No one contribution is the only measure of a member's value.

Whatever our contribution or additional responsibilities, we remain members of the same community first, sharing an interest in the wellbeing and future of NAFAS as a whole.

This is to say that the health and future of our Clubs, Areas and national organisation depend upon one another. Strengthening one part of the NAFAS family should not come at the unnecessary expense of another. By recognising our shared interests, alongside our local relationships and responsibilities, we can help the whole community thrive.

3. Our shared commitments

As members of NAFAS, we share responsibility for the culture, strength and reputation of our community. These commitments describe how we will seek to fulfil that responsibility in our relationships, our activities and the different roles we may hold.

3.1 How we treat one another

We commit to:

- treating fellow members, volunteers, leaders, visitors and staff with dignity, kindness and respect;
- welcoming, encouraging and supporting others to participate, whatever their background, experience or role;
- listening to different perspectives and challenging ideas without belittling, dismissing or attacking individuals;
- speaking to and about one another in ways that help preserve trust and reflect positively on the NAFAS community;
- recognising the effect our words and actions may have on other people, including whether they feel able to contribute and belong;
- respecting appropriate confidentiality, and handling personal or sensitive information with care.

3.2 How we contribute to and represent NAFAS

Putting NAFAS first means considering the wellbeing and future of the whole community - alongside our personal interests and our responsibilities to a particular Club, Area, activity or role. With this in mind, we commit to:

- contributing to the Renewal agenda and strengthening of NAFAS, recognising that its future is a shared responsibility;
- considering the interests of the wider NAFAS community when making decisions or acting on behalf of a Club, Area, committee or activity;
- being honest and consistent about our relationship with NAFAS and respecting the responsibilities attached to our membership, qualification or role;
- being clear when we are expressing a personal view and when we are authorised to speak or act on behalf of a Club, Area or NAFAS;
- using positions of responsibility, NAFAS recognition, confidential information and organisational resources appropriately;
- ensuring personal, professional or commercial interests do not improperly influence our decisions, compromise the way we treat others or conflict with the wider interests of NAFAS;
- modelling the spirit of this Charter whenever we lead, train, assess, employ, contract with or otherwise provide opportunities or recognition to others through NAFAS.

Upholding these standards is a responsibility shared by every member. This includes being willing to raise legitimate concerns and responding constructively when concerns or disagreements involve us. Section 4 describes the principles we should follow when doing so.

4. When concerns or disagreements arise

Differences of opinion are a normal part of any active and creative community. Members will not always agree about decisions, priorities, standards or ways of working.

Disagreement in itself is not a breach of this Charter, and the Charter should not be used to silence reasonable challenge, or to gain advantage in a personal dispute.

What matters is how we express disagreement, how we raise concerns and how we respond when concerns involve us.

4.1 Starting constructively

Wherever possible, concerns should be addressed early, before misunderstanding or resentment is allowed to grow. Depending on the circumstances, this may mean:

- checking the facts and reflecting on whether assumptions have been made;
- speaking privately and respectfully with the person concerned;
- allowing a reasonable time for people to respond, recognising that many NAFAS roles are undertaken by volunteers;
- asking a mutually trusted person to help facilitate a conversation where direct discussion is difficult.

The aim should be to understand what has happened and identify what would help to resolve it, rather than to attribute motives or establish blame prematurely.

4.2 Addressing matters at the lowest appropriate level

Most everyday disagreements are best explored by the people directly involved or within the Club, Area, committee or activity where they have arisen.

The “lowest appropriate level” means the person or body closest to the issue that has the authority, independence and ability to respond fairly. It does not mean that every concern must begin with a direct personal conversation, particularly where doing so would feel unsafe or where there is a significant imbalance of authority.

Moving a concern to another level may be appropriate where:

- reasonable attempts at local resolution have not succeeded;
- the matter is serious, repeated or affects people beyond the immediate situation;
- the people responsible for dealing with it locally are involved in the concern or have a conflict of interest;
- someone may be at risk of harm or unfair treatment;
- the issue involves safeguarding, unlawful conduct or a significant misuse of responsibility;
- a formal agreement, policy or professional standard requires a particular route to be followed.

Escalation should be proportionate to the nature of the concern. It should not be used primarily to apply pressure, embarrass another person or bypass a reasonable opportunity for the matter to be addressed.

4.3 Raising a concern responsibly

When raising a concern, members should seek to:

- describe the specific behaviour, decision or situation involved;
- explain the impact of the matter and why it requires attention;
- identify, where possible, what a fair or constructive outcome might look like;
- share information only with those who need it in order to understand or address the concern;
- avoid widening the dispute through informal speculation, public criticism or unnecessary circulation of correspondence.

4.4 Responding when a concern is raised

Receiving a concern can be uncomfortable, but every member should be able to expect it to be heard respectfully and taken seriously.

Those receiving or responding to a concern should seek to:

- listen before reaching conclusions;
- clarify what has happened and what response is being sought;

- avoid dismissing, belittling or retaliating against someone for raising a genuine concern;
- ensure that everyone directly involved has a fair opportunity to explain their perspective;
- acknowledge mistakes and take reasonable action to put matters right where this is needed.

Wherever possible, the aim should be to restore understanding, working relationships and trust.

Restoration does not mean overlooking poor conduct or avoiding accountability. Some matters may require formal consideration under the relevant NAFAS policies, agreements or role-specific standards.

5. One Charter, additional responsibilities

This Charter provides a common baseline for every NAFAS member. Some members also hold positions or undertake activities that carry additional authority, trust, visibility or influence.

This includes members who exercise leadership or governance responsibilities; undertake trained, qualified, paid or public-facing roles; or make decisions about the opportunities, recognition and resources provided to others through NAFAS.

Those undertaking such roles remain members first and are expected to model the spirit of this Charter. The greater the authority, influence or public recognition associated with a role, the greater the responsibility to exercise it fairly, respectfully and in the wider interests of NAFAS.

5.1 Working alongside existing standards

The Charter does not replace the more detailed responsibilities attached to particular roles or activities. It should be considered alongside the relevant constitutions, policies, agreements, contracts, qualification requirements and professional or role-specific standards.

These may include, where applicable:

- Club, Area and national constitutions or governance arrangements;
- the “Blue Form” governing arrangements between Clubs and demonstrators;
- the NAFAS Code of Practice for Clubs, demonstrators, teachers and speakers;
- standards and arrangements relating to judges, adjudicators, trainers and candidates;
- agreements governing appointments, paid work, commissioned services or the use of NAFAS qualifications and recognition;
- relevant safeguarding, equality, data protection, financial or other organisational policies.

These arrangements serve different purposes, but the Charter provides the shared behavioural foundation that should underpin how they are used. Where an existing agreement or standard applies, concerns should be considered through the arrangements associated with it. The Charter may help inform how those arrangements are interpreted and applied, but it does not by itself create new powers or determine an automatic sanction.

5.2 Providing opportunities, recognition and authority to others

Members and NAFAS bodies that train, assess, qualify, appoint, contract, employ, commission or otherwise provide recognition and opportunities to others have a particular responsibility to uphold the Charter.

Where appropriate, they should:

- make clear that adhering to the spirit of the Charter is a behavioural expectation associated with the opportunity or role, alongside competence, experience and any role-specific requirements;
- ensure that decisions are fair, proportionate, consistent and made within the authority available to them;
- identify and manage personal, professional or commercial conflicts of interest;
- consider any established conduct concerns that are directly relevant to the role, within their existing authority and the applicable agreements or procedures;
- distinguish between established concerns and allegations that have not yet been fairly considered.

Accepting a wider NAFAS role or opportunity therefore carries an expectation that the individual will uphold both its specific requirements and the shared commitments of membership. As the Renewal Programme develops, NAFAS will continue to clarify how the Charter relates to existing agreements, how concerns should be addressed and what proportionate forms of redress or sanction may be available.

6. Our commitment to one another

This Charter will have meaning only when its spirit is reflected in our everyday choices, relationships and actions. It does not ask us to agree about everything or expect that we will always get things right. It asks us to approach one another with respect, to take responsibility for our impact and to be willing to listen, learn and put things right when difficulties arise.

By upholding these commitments, we help create Clubs, Areas and activities in which people feel welcome, valued and able to contribute. We also help strengthen the trust, shared purpose and sense of responsibility that NAFAS needs in order to renew and flourish.

Together, we can ensure that Fun, Friendship and Flowers is more than a strapline. It can describe the experience we create for one another and the community we pass on to those who join NAFAS in the future.

This Charter is our shared commitment to one another - and to the future of NAFAS as a whole.