

# National Vetting Policy

**IMAC Martial Arts Ireland**  
T/a Irish Martial Arts Commission

Policy & procedures to facilitate the Vetting of instructors, coaches, staff & volunteers by the National Vetting Bureau



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# Irish Martial Arts Commission

## National Vetting Policy

### Overview

1.1. The IMAC - Martial Arts Ireland - T/A Irish Martial Arts Commission (hereafter to be referred to as the Commission) will operate a National Vetting programme in conjunction with the National Vetting Bureau.

### Registered Organisation

2.1. The National Vetting Bureau has accepted the Commission's application to become a 'Relevant Organisation' and has allocated the Commission the National Vetting Registration Number 706.

### Exclusion Criteria

3.1. IMAC has adopted a membership criteria that clearly identifies offences that would exclude an individual working with the Commission, or any IMAC registered club, in any way (e.g.: as a member, instructor, assistant instructor, tutor, volunteer, employee or other assistant). See 'Exclusions' section.

3.2. The Exclusion Criteria allows for several levels of sanction taking into account the individual circumstances and considerations involved in each case.

3.3. In this Policy the IMAC has included a range of sanctions that will apply to any existing member should they refuse to co-operate with the National Vetting Process.

### Authorised Signatory / Liason Person

4.1. IMAC has appointed an Authorised Signatory to act as the IMAC National Liaison Person with the National Vetting Bureau who shall will be;

- The Commission's National Children's Officer, unless decided otherwise by the IMAC Executive.

4.2. The Authorised Signatory must undergo appropriate training as determined by the National Vetting Bureau.

4.3. The Authorised Signatory shall implement and enforce the IMAC National Vetting Policy, in line with the Commission's National Vetting Criteria and other IMAC Practices and Procedures, without on-going reference to the Commission's Executive.

4.4. The Authorised Signatory shall report directly to the IMAC Executive.

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## National Vetting Support Team

5.1. The Commission Executive Committee shall appoint a National Vetting Support Team to support and advise the work of the Authorised Signatory.

5.2. The National Vetting Support Team shall comprise of the Commission President and Chairperson (or one other Executive Member appointed by the Executive Committee).

5.3. The Support Team will convene when requested by the Authorised Signatory in order to advise in dealing with disclosures and other issues that might arise from time to time.

5.4. If the Authorised Signatory is unable to make a decision on an issue, having discussed it with the Support Team, the matter may be brought to the full Commission Executive Committee for a decision. In such circumstances the identity of the person referred to in the disclosure may, at the discretion of the Authorised Signatory, be revealed.

5.5. The Authorised Signatory will implement or enforce the decision of the Executive in line with existing IMAC Practices and Procedures.

## National Vetting Requirement

6.1. All IMAC Executive Members, IMAC Sub-committee Members, Instructors, Assistant Instructors, Coaches (whether assimilated or awarded), Volunteers and Employees must engage fully with the IMAC National Vetting programme.

## New Organisations

7.1. Any new Organisation joining IMAC must agree to the Vetting of all of their instructors as part of the membership application process.

7.2. New instructors joining an existing organisation, but who were not previously members of IMAC, are 'New Members' in the context of National Vetting.

7.3. A current member of IMAC opening a new club is not a 'New Member' in the context of this National Vetting policy.

## Pending Clearance

8.1. Any Commission member will be considered to be in full compliance with the IMAC National Vetting Policy requirements once they have completed and submitted, to the Authorised Signatory, the required documentation and National Vetting Application form - pending a Clear response from the IMAC National Vetting Bureau. If a concern is raised at this stage in relation to a previous conviction / prosecution/ relevant information the Authorised Signatory may require the Applicant to Step Aside (see later section) pending final clearance or appropriate action being taken.

## National Re-vetting

9.1. Commission members, instructors, tutors, employees, volunteers and others will be required to undergo re-vetting after five years, or from time to time as requested to do so by the Commission Executive and/or the Authorised Signatory or as advised by the National Vetting Bureau.

9.2. The following administration fees shall apply to IMAC National Vetting applications.

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| 1st application from an existing Instructor of an IMAC registered Club or Organisation. who has not submitted a completed Garda Vetting Application by 31/12/12 | €20  |
| 1st application from a new member   | €20  |
| 2nd or more applications - if returned to applicant as 'incomplete'   | €50  |
| Any member deemed to be in Non-compliance by the IMAC Executive Committee   | €100 |

9.3. There is no IMAC National Vetting fee for newly promoted Instructors or Assistant Instructors from Organisations or Clubs who were full members of IMAC on the 31/12/2012.

9.4. There is no IMAC National Vetting fee for Volunteers or Parent helping to run a club.

## The Role of the IMAC National Vetting Liaison Person

10.1. The role of the IMAC Vetting Liaison Person (hereafter referred to as the Authorised Signatory) shall include:

- Overseeing the distribution, return and processing of all Commission Members' National Vetting Applications.
- Conducting all communications regarding National Vetting with the National Vetting Bureau.
- Implementing and enforcing the Commission's National Vetting Policy , in line with IMAC National Vetting Criteria and all other Commission Practices and Procedures.
- Keeping the Commission Executive informed of all issues of concern that may arise relating to the National Vetting Process (without identifying the individuals concerned).
- Consulting with the IMAC National Vetting Support Team when the need arises.
- Working to ensure that Commission Membership understands and engages with the National Vetting Process.

- If deemed necessary, training assistants in the larger Commission Organisations, to act as a point of contact to facilitate the smooth processing of their members' National Vetting Applications.

## Other Organisation Vets

11.1. The Commission will not accept National Vets processed on behalf of or through any other Organisation - unless agreed in advance with the National Vetting Bureau.

## IMAC National Vetting Certificate

12.1. The Commission may stamp National Vetting Reports received back from the National Vetting Bureau to state that each National Vet applies only to the applicant's membership of the Commission.

12.2. The Commission may issue an IMAC National Vetting Certificate to any person who has successfully undergone the IMAC National Vetting process.

12.2. The Commission shall only issue a National Vetting Certificate that remains valid for a period of one year, to any individual who is a member of an organisation that is a probationary member of the Commission.

12.3. IMAC National Vetting certificates cannot be display in any club other that the one for which it has been issued - and that club being at all times a current member of IMAC

12.4 Members moving from one club / organisation to another, within IMAC, do not need to be re-vetted.

12.5 Existing members opening a new club are not New Members in the context of the IMAC National Vetting Policy and, therefore, do not need to be re-vetted.

12.6 New instructors joining an existing club or organisation, who are not otherwise current members of IMAC, are New Members in the context of the IMAC National Vetting Policy and, therefore, do need to be Vetted.

## The IMAC National Vetting Process

13.1. The Individual to engage with the Commission National Vetting process will receive an official National Vetting Bureau Application Form, a Commission National Vetting Registration form from the Authorised Signatory, an IMAC cover letter, a sheet explaining the IMAC National Vetting process, a sheet explaining the IMAC National Vetting fee and a pre-addressed envelope with the Authorised Signatory's address clearly stamped in bold with 'Confidential'.

13.2. The individual applicant will complete the application material listed in 13.1. as requested and return it to the Authorised Signatory (by hand or by post).

13.3. IMAC National Vetting Applications will not be processed by e-mail.

13.4. National Vetting applicants are advised to keep a personal copy of their National Vetting Application forms, and any ensuing reports / communications.

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13.4. The Authorised Signatory will ensure that no other person opens any National Vetting related mail and that any person involved in handling the arrival of post at the assigned address should be fully aware of this requirement.

13.5. The Authorised Signatory will check that the Application Form has been satisfactorily completed, that there are no omissions and that the writing is clearly legible. The Authorised Signatory will also check that the information is accurate - only in so far as there may be other information at the Authorised Signatory's immediate disposal to make such a check.

13.6. If there is any information missing that is of minor significance (e.g. writing the name in block letters) the Authorised Signatory can contact the applicant via phone and complete the form accordingly.

13.7. If there are significant gaps in the information, or essential questions not answered, the Authorised Signatory should return the Application Form to the applicant, informing them of the additional information needed, and asking him/her to complete the application and return to it the Authorised Signatory as soon as possible. In such cases the applicant will be deemed not to have complied with the Commission National Vetting requirements until the completed documentation is returned.

13.8. If such material is not returned to the Authorised Signatory within 30 days (The Authorised Signatory may use his/ her discretion to extend this period to 60 days) there-after the person will be deemed to be in 'non-compliance' with the IMAC National Vetting requirements.

13.9 If the Authorised Signatory receives a substantially incomplete Garda Vetting Application s/he may, at his/her discretion, return all of the material received and request that they resubmit a correctly completed Application. In such cases applicant are deemed not to have complied with the IMAC National Vetting requirements.

14.1. When the Authorised Signatory is satisfied that the application form has been completed, they may take a copy of the completed application and file it in a designated safe place (see 'storing National Vetting Data').

14.2. The Authorised Signatory shall then allocate an IMAC National Vetting Number (IMAC + National Vetting Batch # + IMAC Ref # ) to the individual application, list it in the current/next batch of National Vetting Applications and forward the Batch to the National Vetting Bureau.

14.3. When the National Vetting Bureau responds to the application of a particular individual the response of the Authorised Signatory will depend on the contents of that response.

14.4. If the National Vetting Bureau requires further information or if it states that the application is not completed correctly, it will be returned by the Authorised Signatory to the individual applicant, with a copy of relevant correspondence and s/he shall be required to complete and return the form to the Authorised Signatory. The Authorised Signatory will then re-check the application and if satisfied, forward the application to the National Vetting Bureau.

14.5. If the National Vetting Bureau returns a Clear Vet, and if requested by the applicant, the Authorised Signatory may stamp the letter with the Commission

National vetting stamp, forward a copy of the stamped letter to the individual applicant and file the original response, with a copy of the National Vetting Application Form that may have been made, in the National Vetting file.

14.6. The Authorised Signatory shall maintain a register of Cleared Vets that the Commission Executive may request to see at any time.

14.7. If the National Vetting Bureau returns a vet with disclosures (identifying possible convictions or prosecutions) the Authorised Signatory will refer to the agreed Commission Exclusion Criteria and will respond accordingly.

14.8. The Authorised Signatory will have the authorisation to operate within the range of sanctions that are laid down by IMAC in the National Vetting Criteria and can proceed to inform the individual of the outcome of the National Vetting Process.

14.9. The Authorised Signatory may convene a meeting of the Commission National Vetting Support Team if advice is needed on how to respond to any National Vetting reply s/he has received.

15.1. As part of the response, the Authorised Signatory (and 1 member of the National Vetting Support Team if the Authorised Signatory so chooses) may then meet with the applicant to ascertain whether or not s/he accepts the findings of the National Vet.

15.1. If a case arises where the Authorised Signatory, having consulted with the National Vetting Team, is still not able to, or not clear on how to, respond to a National Vetting Report, they may bring the matter to the attention of the Commission Executive for a decision.

15.2. In such circumstance the Authorised Signatory will then implement the decision of the Executive in line with all existing Commission Practices and Procedures.

15.3. At all times during this process the Authorised Signatory is authorised to consult with the National Vetting Bureau as necessary.

## Exclusion Criteria

16.1. The offences that will warrant an individual to be excluded from membership of the Commission shall be;

- 1 Harm of a child or vulnerable adult  
(see National Vetting Bureau Bill for definition).
- 2 Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) against any person
- 3 Any offence that brings Martial Arts into disrepute.
- 4 Other offences directly relevant to the applicant's role in the organisation.

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## Step-a-side Mechanism

17.1. If any matter of concern arises during the National Vetting process of any existing member(s) they must, on the request of the Authorised Signatory, step aside from instruction and/or direct contact with Children and Vulnerable Adults associated with their club until the matter is cleared up.

17.2. Therefore, existing members will be strongly advised to notify the Authorised Signatory as soon as possible of any issues that might arise so that steps can be initiated to minimise the length of time an instructor might have to step aside.

17.3. Non-disclosure of any significant offense or charge on a submitted National Vetting Application form will automatically trigger the 'Step-a-side' process until the matter has been determined and acted upon by the Authorised Signatory.

17.4. The Commission material explaining the National Vetting process should make members aware of section 17.3.

## Appeal Against a National Vetting Report

18.1. If an applicant feels that any aspect of a report received on foot of their National Vetting Application is incorrect, the Authorised Signatory will assist them in querying the findings with the National Vetting Bureau.

18.2. Accepting that the National Vetting Bureau is reporting what is on record in response to the name and information provided by the applicant, the Authorised Signatory will take the findings of any National Vetting Report to be accurate in regard to any such appeal until such times that the National Vetting Bureau may inform the Authorised Signatory to the contrary.

## Appeal Against a Decision Made by the Authorised Signatory

19.1. Any applicant wishing to appeal any decision made by the Authorised Signatory, or the Commission's Executive, relating directly to their application under the IMAC National Vetting programme, may lodge an appeal with the Executive Committee.

19.2. The Commission Executive shall, in response, set up an Appeals Committee (excluding any person involved in the initial decision - other than the Authorised Signatory) who shall hear the appeal and rule in full consideration of all existing Commission rules, regulations, policies and procedures, with special attention being paid to the National Vetting Criteria and Sanctions adopted by the Commission.

19.3. The decision of this Appeal Committee shall be final - unless the decision is to exclude the individual from membership of the Commission - in which case they have the right to appeal to the next Annual General Meeting (AGM). In such cases, the individual will be taken to be a suspended member pending the outcome of the AGM Appeal.



## Confidentiality

20.1. All material relating to the Commission National Vetting Process must be treated with absolute confidentiality.

20.2. All personnel processing or privy to any documentation regarding the National Vetting process (including the members of the IMAC National Vetting Support Team) should, themselves, undergo National Vetting before commencement of such role/s.

20.3. Upon receipt of a request from a member Organisation, or an IMAC Advisory Board, the Authorised Signatory can issue to the Organisation / Advisory Board Executive a list of their members who are in full compliance with the Commission's National Vetting requirement. If a query arises in regard to an outstanding or delayed individual National Vet - the individual concerned (not the Advisory Board) shall contact the Authorised Signatory for an update.

## Storage and Holding of Data

21.1. All electronic files shall be stored within a password protected computer and under the direct supervision of the Authorised Signatory.

21.2. All reasonable effort should be made to avoid carry National Vetting related personal information on lap-top computers or other removable data storage devices.

21.3. All hard-copy files, including any photocopies of the original National Vetting Form, must be kept in a locked cabinet, in a room or place to which the general public do not any access and under the direct supervision of the Authorised Signatory.

21.4. All National Vetting related material will be held for a period of 5 years.