

Moderation Guidelines

Funny Subtitle Here

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Current Moderation Team

Name (pronouns)	Discord username	Other contact details (e.g. Tabletop website username)
Scarlett (she/her)	ORCH1D#3686	ORCH1D on Tabletop Website
Lap (he/him)	TheRealLap#0001	TheRealLap on Tabletop Website
Reylynn (she/her)	Fanged Cutie#1200	Fanged_Cutie on Tabletop Website

General References and Resources

Below is a list of resources that moderators are encouraged to take advantage of in order to improve their moderation-related skills and knowledge.

Further specific references are highlighted throughout this document where appropriate.

Warwick Students Union Active Bystander Intervention Training

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/dean-of-students-office/community-values-education/activebystanderintervention/abcourse/> - The Active Bystander Intervention course explores our role as active bystanders within the university community (and beyond), and equips participants with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make safe, effective interventions.

Hollaback!

<https://www.ihollaback.org/> - offers virtual, interactive harassment prevention & bystander intervention training, and further resources.

- Resources: <https://www.ihollaback.org/resources/> - there is a whole section about online harassment at the end
- Training: <https://www.ihollaback.org/harassmenttraining/>

The Discord Moderator Academy (referred to as DMA throughout this document)

<https://discord.com/moderation> - a comprehensive resource so that anyone, from first-time moderators to experienced veterans of massive online communities, can find resources to learn about moderation, community management, and more.

The NISEI Code of Conduct

<https://nisei.net/about/code-of-conduct/> - where we got some of our examples from. It attributes a few other Codes of Conduct that are worth looking at also.

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Introduction to this Document

This document was created as a result of a passed motion in the 2021 Society AGM. The motion is as follows:

2021 AGM Motion: On Discord Moderation

The Society Notes:

1. Currently, the society Discord server is effectively moderated by the exec, though this is not officially listed in anyone's duties aside from Web Admin.
2. Due to the current pandemic, the Discord server is seeing more and more use.
3. There are currently no guidelines on how exactly the Discord is moderated, excluding our Code of Conduct.

The Society Believes:

1. An exec member should not have to balance their degree, exec duties **and** increased moderation duties - particularly if these duties fall solely to the Web Admin.
2. Having what is essentially a group of 13 moderators with no unifying guidelines except for the Code of Conduct is unhelpful as it slows down decision making and ends up with many people with (possibly conflicting) opinions of whether a given message breaks a rule.

The Society Resolves:

1. To create moderation guidelines. While these documents will not remove all uncertainty from decision making, it should make the process clear. This will be the responsibility of the new Web Admin, Equal Opportunities Officer and Welfare Officer (the latter two are appointed internally).
2. To then publish these documents and ask for feedback from the society membership.
3. Finally, to call for moderators and appoint them by the end of Term 3, if enough suitable candidates respond to the call.

The goal of this document is to:

- 1) Provide guidelines for how to moderate our Discord server
- 2) Provide guidelines for how to appoint moderators
- 3) Provide guidelines for what to do in the case of an abuse of moderation power

Future moderators may want to update this document, whether just to fill in the names of the new moderators or to make larger changes to the process involved.

Part 1: Responsibilities and Relation to Exec

Part 1.1: What Does and Doesn't a Moderator do?

As a moderator, your job is to keep an eye on the Tabletop Discord community. This can be summarised by the following points.

- **Enforce the rules.** The Tabletop Discord has a good number of rules to keep the community positive. The rules are there to guide when moderators should take action (i.e. when the rules have been breached), but it is important to note that moderators should be enforcing the *spirit* of the rules, rather than following them to the letter. The rules are not exhaustive of every situation!
We'll discuss techniques for helpful community enforcement later on.
- **Set an example.** Users learn how to act from their moderators. If a moderator does something that skirts the rules and is left unpunished, users will see this as an excuse to do the same kinds of rule skirting. This is the same expectation as members have of the exec - you represent the community, so should act in the way you expect the community to act.
- **Be active in your parts of the community.** Moderators who say nothing except when they arrive to berate a user for breaking a rule will seem aloof and out of touch - so don't be a stranger!

There are also a number of things you are **not** responsible for, which are important to list.

- **Like exec, your degree comes first.** You are not expected to be active on the server 24/7, and you should definitely stick to your normal sleep schedule. If there are times where you feel that you need to take a break from the Discord server, this is absolutely fine - just make sure the other moderators know and can cover your absence.
Also consider splitting the work between the team of moderators - as long as some of the mods are present in each channel, you will have enough eyes on every part of the server.
- **As a moderator, you do not have the responsibilities that the exec have.** You aren't suddenly expected to run events (unless you want to!) or deal with the SU. That being said, you may have to liaise with exec in particularly difficult circumstances. You might also consider this a stepping stone to trying for exec positions if you like! (Although there is no need to be a moderator before being an exec.)
- **You are not perfect.** However convenient it would be for you to be perfect, it isn't feasible to expect perfection and you will likely make mistakes sometimes. This is okay! A key part of being a moderator is learning from those mistakes - as a moderation team, you will work together to make decisions and learn from each other about what works best to build a friendly community. What we expect you to do is to log what actions are taken and be open to discussion as to whether certain actions were handled correctly, in order to facilitate this learning both for the benefit of yourself and future moderation teams.

Part 1.2: What's the Hierarchy of Roles in the Server?

In the server, there are five main roles that need to be considered when thinking about permissions. We go through each of these in order and briefly comment on the permissions and expectations that come with the role. Each role is given the powers that they need to do their jobs and no more. **Full permissions are listed in [Appendix A](#)** - this section aims to give an overview.

Note that the ordering of this section is with respect to the permissions that they get, from most to least. This does not directly reflect the power that they have over the society - the Web Admin is not more powerful than the President because they are the server owner! Moderators operate under the watchful eyes of the exec team and should consider themselves as working for the exec to help the society run smoothly.

An exec member who wishes to have moderation duties and the extra responsibilities that come with them should consider applying for a moderator position.

Web Admin (Server Owner)

The Web Admin is the server owner, so has all permissions and can take action on everyone, including other moderators. This position is elected in the yearly Annual General Meeting, and answers to the rest of the exec.

Since they are the server owner, they have all permissions in the server. As mentioned, full details of this can be found in [Appendix A](#).

Moderators

These are the people who focus on moderating the server alongside the Web Admin, so have permissions in order to do that. They answer to the Web Admin and the rest of the Exec, but should contact the Web Admin first if a situation arises that warrants wider input.

Moderators have most permissions on the server, since that is what is required for moderation. Full details of what permissions this entails can be found in [Appendix A](#). Note that the moderators have the ability to ban and kick members, which the Exec do not have.

Exec

Exec deal with the general day-to-day running of the society, **and moderation of our Discord server does not come under their job remit** (as laid out in our constitution) that they are elected to carry out. They are still given a handful of permissions useful for the running of the society - creating new channels, updating their descriptions, pinning messages and so on. With these powers, they can act as temporary moderators, but only in the situation where no other moderators are present. Any exec member found abusing these powers will answer to the Web Admin.

The permission that exec have are all listed and justified in [Appendix A](#). Note that from a moderation perspective, Exec can delete messages, mute members and control people in voice calls (mute/deafen/move), so as to deal with quick issues (for example, in online exec meetings).

Ex-Exec

Ex-exec are essentially shiny members. They have no permissions that regular members don't have, but have access to a few hidden channels that regular members do not. These exist solely so that current exec can ask ex-exec questions about the previous running of the society.

Members

Everyone is a member, and as a result gets a base set of permissions that are fundamental for interacting with the server. We list a few things that members can do here as a helpful tutorial to those less familiar with Discord.

- You can change your own nickname.
- You can send messages in any channel you can access, and can read all messages posted in every channel you can access.
- You can edit and delete your own messages - although the Mods will be aware of how messages have changed as every action in the server is logged.
- You can speak in voice channels, and can stream audio and video.
- You can react to messages, use emoji and even use emoji from outside of this server if you have Discord Nitro.

Part 1.3: Who Watches the Watchers?

If moderators and/or the Web Admin do not follow or enforce the rules in good faith, or you feel that a decision that has been made by them is unfair, you have the right to discuss this with the moderators or exec. In order, these are the people you should consider contacting:

- **[The moderators](#)**. Of course, when wanting to complain about the conduct of moderators you may not want to contact them - hence why other people are on this list. But for issues where you feel comfortable explaining to the moderators why you feel you've been mistreated, they will listen to you.

Furthermore, you may also only be unhappy with the conduct of some of the moderators, and can thus raise your complaint with the entire team or those moderators which are not involved.

Regardless of what group of moderators you contact, if you feel that the response is unfair, then you can contact the other people on this list.

- **[The Welfare Officer / ED&I Officer](#)**. Their jobs are to keep an eye on the welfare of members and to deal with issues relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion¹ respectively, so may be the best people to contact in cases that relate to either of these topics.
- **[The President](#)**. As the leader of the society, they keep an eye on the exec as well as the society as a whole, so can be contacted about issues with said exec.
- **[Other non-moderator exec](#)**.

Your complaints will always be treated seriously, and transgressions by people in power will be considered as seriously as those by regular members. (See [Part 3.4.5](#).) Moderators and exec are reminded that they set an example in the society, so will be held to a high standard.

¹ That is, fair treatment and equality for all, and ensuring a welcoming and accepting environment for everyone regardless of their background (including but not limited to gender, race, ethnic group, sexuality, religion, disability and neurotype).

Part 2: Appointing Moderators

We now talk about when and how these moderators are appointed.

Part 2.1: Applying

Moderators are appointed yearly a few weeks after the Annual General Meeting.

Members of the Discord server are allowed to apply if the following conditions hold:

- **They are a current standard member of the society**, so have purchased membership from the SU. They also need to be a member until the end of their year-long term as moderator, if appointed.
In some years, you may not get enough interest from standard members. If so, you can do a second round of applications where others can also apply.
- **They have been present on the Discord server for at least five months**. This amount of time has been chosen since this allows a first year student who joined the Discord at the start of their first term at Warwick to qualify.
- **They have not been elected as President or Web Admin**. The Web Admin is already the head moderator, and the President is needed to be a point of contact if someone feels that the moderation team has been unfair.
- **Additionally, at least one of the Welfare Officer and ED&I Officer cannot be a moderator**. This is again so that people outside of the moderation team can be contacted if someone feels that the moderation team has been unfair. This means that at least two people (the President and one of the above positions) are available in this case.

Appointment is done via an application form distributed on Discord, with potential applicants given at least a week to complete this form. The application process consists of three short parts that an applicant must complete. The parts are as follows:

1. **A short manifesto**. This should be about why you are applying and what skills you bring to the table (e.g. past moderation experience, past teamwork experience). This is so we can get an idea of who you are!
2. **A list of channels that you are active in** out of the most popular channels on the Discord at that point. This is so we can assemble a team of moderators who are able to work together to moderate all parts of the server.
3. **A brief written task about how to deal with a situation if it arises**. This is to test how potential moderators act, and whether it is in line with the guidelines in this document.

Part 2.2: Appointing

Once the application period has closed, a small committee consisting of the President, Web Admin, Welfare Officer and ED&I Officer will go through the applications. In doing so, they will rate potential moderators on a few different criteria:

- **Potential moderators will be subject to a brief background check** of their most recent (five months) Discord history, and a check through the moderation logs to check for past infractions. A past infraction does not automatically disqualify you from a moderation position, especially if it was not recent.
- **Potential moderators will be appointed as a team**, and as such the channels that they frequent will be used to build a team that covers all areas of the society. The list of frequented channels will be checked, to see how active a potential moderator is and how they currently contribute to the community.
- **The manifestos will be read through** to look for people that are passionate and motivated about moderating and making the community better. Prior experience will also be noted, although it is not necessary. Similarly, the written responses will be looked through to see how potential moderators act.

The number of moderators appointed will depend on the circumstances of the year. More moderators will be appointed in years where the Discord server is expected to be more active (such as when we're stuck inside during a major pandemic).

Once the new moderation team has been chosen, they will be promoted to moderators and the results will be announced on Discord. Anyone that did not get appointed will get full written feedback on how they could improve their application.

Part 3: Infractions and How to Resolve Them

In this section, we look at how to identify and resolve infractions.

Part 3.1: A Not-So Quick Look Over the Code of Conduct

Our code of conduct can be found here: [Warwick Tabletop Games and Role-Playing Society Code of Conduct](#)

This section will go through the rules in the code of conduct one-by-one and elaborate on what would be considered a breach of the rules.

1. We are a welcoming society. Please welcome new members and help them to fit in. Please invite newcomers to your games, or if you see someone without a group, invite them in!

This rule is about being kind to newcomers - any behaviour that is derogatory towards people who are new or less experienced (e.g. calling them noobs, making fun of their lack of knowledge) should be moderated.

2. We support a large array of people from all kinds of backgrounds. Discriminatory language of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or religious slurs.

This is a rule that covers a large variety of behaviours. While there is overt discrimination (i.e. calling someone a slur), there are also covert discriminations that may not appear to be discriminations at a glance, or to those less informed or experienced in spotting them. Moderators should try and educate themselves on discrimination; this section is not exhaustive, but acts as a starting point to gaining that knowledge.

Importantly, if a member of a minority group says something is offensive, then you should believe them. It is not the place of someone not in that minority group to be the arbiter of what is and is not offensive to people from that group.

! CW/TW for this section: descriptions of racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and other discriminatory behaviours. Use of (partially censored) slurs.

You can find the main content for this particular topic here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/16ju2DT_637kYne_s2qq_pxDFUDfAmngDDy7-9Wb9HkQ/edit?usp=sharing

3. People do not always conform to your expectations, and that's ok. We have members of a diverse range of genders, many of which are not immediately identifiable. For this reason, **you should not assume someone's gender based on their appearance; please ask for and respect people's pronouns.** Many of our members wear badges to identify their pronouns and we encourage you to do the same. (Badges can be acquired from the [University](#) or occasionally us.) Deliberate misuse of pronouns is transphobic and will not be tolerated in this society.

This links up to Rule 2 (in the transphobia part of the clause), so I recommend going into that section and reading up on what transphobia is and how it manifests.

However, this rule is specifically here because we have a lot of trans people in our exec and membership, and one of the common instances of transphobic behaviour is using the wrong pronouns for someone.

People tend to put their pronouns in their intros and in their nicknames - if someone has made their pronouns clear, either through those methods or by specifically saying them/introducing themselves with them, and someone still insists on using the wrong pronouns without apology, then that would be a breach of these rules.

Assumption of pronouns is harder to police, but if a member comes to moderators to say "this person has been using the wrong pronouns for me," you can then contact that person to follow this up.

Additionally, as a moderator, if you personally hear someone using the wrong pronouns for someone, you have a duty to step in and correct them (either in the moment or privately via DMs).

4. We treat everyone with respect. Bullying, harassment and discrimination are never acceptable. Directing any sort of unpleasant or unwanted behaviour towards another person violates the university's policy on dignity and respect, which is treated with the level of seriousness it deserves. Please refer to the university's [policy](#) for further details.

Again, this links up to Rule 2, but bullying and harassment do not have to be on the grounds of discrimination to still be bullying/harassment.

Bullying:

“Bullying is the use of force, [coercion](#), hurtful [teasing](#) or threat, to [abuse](#), aggressively [dominate](#) or [intimidate](#). The behavior is often repeated and habitual. One essential prerequisite is the perception (by the bully or by others) of an imbalance of physical or [social](#) power. This imbalance distinguishes bullying from conflict.^[1] Bullying is a subcategory of aggressive behavior characterized by the following three criteria: (1) hostile intent, (2) imbalance of power, and (3) repetition over a period of time.^[2] Bullying is the activity of repeated, aggressive behavior intended to hurt another individual, physically, mentally, or emotionally.”

- [Wikipedia](#) article on bullying, which has a lot of good descriptors

On Discord, this will come under [cyberbullying](#) (the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person).

Often, someone being bullied will not come forward to say they are being bullied. It is very important to keep an eye out for behaviour that can constitute bullying to actively head this off, and to not be a passive bystander in such situations.

It's important to mention that **bullying may not solely take place in the public Tabletop Society Discord**. Please see the below section on harassment for more on this.

Further resources:

[Cyber bullying advice](#)

Harassment:

“Harassment is unwanted behaviour which you find offensive or which makes you feel intimidated or humiliated. It can happen on its own or alongside other forms of discrimination.”

- [Citizen's Advice on Harassment](#)

“The Equality Act says it's harassment where the behaviour is **meant to** or **has the effect of either**: violating your dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment”

- [Citizen's Advice on Harassment](#)

There are some good examples of harassment on the Citizen's Advice page linked above, and some online-specific examples in the [Online Harassment Field Manual Glossary of Online Harassment Terms](#). It includes definitions of harassment-related terms, examples of these, and what to do if you are subject to them.

Harassment on Discord could look like (but is not limited to) the following:

- Words of abuse/offensive terms
- Hate speech (expression that attacks a specific aspect of a person's identity, such as their race, ethnicity, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc)
- Sending unwanted pictures (sexual, illegal, extreme content)
- Doxxing (the publishing of sensitive personal information online)
- Threats (of doxxing, threats to safety of an individual, a group of individuals or someone connected to an individual, death threats)
- Impersonation

Harassment does not need to be specifically targeted at an individual for it to be harassment. As stated by the Equality Act above, it is harassment if it creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Discrimination

Is covered under Rule 2, please see that section.

Overall

Harassment, bullying and discrimination may not solely take place in the public Tabletop Discord. Users belonging to the same server may be able to Private Message (PM) each other, which might lead to one society member harassing another in private. A member may find out the social media details of another member via the Tabletop Server and then harass them across other social media platforms. In this case, the person being harassed would have to come forward to moderators of their own volition to report such behaviour.

Remember not to belittle the experiences of someone who says they are being subjected to harassment, bullying or discrimination. What might seem inconsequential to you might be really impacting them. As said in the section on Rule 2, you should believe the victim.

5. We're here to play games. We try to keep political debate out of the society's activities. This rule exists to avoid heated debate about topics that genuinely have two sides, as opposed to anything that contradicts rule 2. The lived experiences of marginalised people will not be removed under this no politics rule. We ask that you refrain from discussion that could spark political debate at our events and in our online communities (like our Discord server).

This rule has some nuance to it.

Politics can (and have) caused heated debate due to their often polarising nature. In order to keep a positive atmosphere in our spaces, and to provide a haven where people can escape these debates, we discourage politically-themed discussion. This could be discussion about a local/national election, discussion about political alignments/parties, or discussion about political philosophies/ideologies (e.g. Marxism, Socialism, Communism, Conservatism, Liberalism, Nationalism...).

However, some marginalised people's lives are inherently politicised due to their identity. A marginalised person talking about their experiences navigating the world that are linked to their identity should not be censored. Examples of this could be: "I feel uncomfortable going to x place because I'm a woman" or "I avoid playing this RPG because it contains certain stereotypes that people use to demean me."

6. Our society should be a safe place for everyone to have fun. Like above, please avoid discussing potentially disturbing topics (such as gore and topics of a sexual nature) in public locations and channels without warning people who may come across this material. Online, this should normally take the form of warnings at the beginning of a discussion and spoiler tags if available. Offline this is more difficult, so please use your common sense.

We do not explicitly ban disturbing topics, except in the case where they are illegal (as illegal activity should not be taking place due to the nature of it... being illegal).

The key part of this rule is that these topics should have a pre-warning. On Discord, this should take the form of a CW (content warning) or TW (trigger warning), followed by the content being hidden under spoiler tags.

It is not enough to either hide the content without the CW or TW (as then someone is making a gamble as to whether to reveal said content), or to just give the CW or TW without hiding the content under spoiler tags (as someone will likely just see the content anyway, even if they would like to avoid said content).

Please see this comprehensive guide on content and trigger warnings:

<https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health/looking-after-yourself/a-guide-to-content-and-trigger-warnings-37946.html>

7. We like to cultivate a positive atmosphere. Please avoid excessive cursing. We are all adults, but overboard or extreme language can make some people uncomfortable. Please avoid directing insults or strong language towards people.

We're (mostly) all adults in the Tabletop Discord server, by virtue of it being a University Society space. However, not everyone is comfortable with excessive cursing. While we don't aim to censor someone's freedom of expression, we are a public space that aims for its members to be comfortable, and we expect a level of kindness and consideration amongst our members towards each other. Additionally, some cursing can steer towards being discriminatory or sexist, and it is important to bear this in mind.

Additionally, it is important for this language to not be targeted towards individuals. While between close friends, insults may be a form of endearment, but this level of over-familiarity between people who are not that close can become offensive.

As stated in other rules above, if someone is uncomfortable with something, then moderators are to support them in stopping the behaviour that is making them uncomfortable.

8. We respect others' opinions. If someone approaches you asking you to avoid doing something, please do so. There are many reasons someone may ask you to desist, and it often isn't kind to require justification. If you have an issue with a request, please contact an exec to help resolve this dispute.

Again, as stated above, if someone is uncomfortable with something, then moderators are to support them in stopping the behaviour that is making them uncomfortable. Remember not to belittle the discomfort of someone. What might seem inconsequential to you might be really impacting them.

9. Finally, if an exec makes a request, please follow it. We're here for the benefit of everyone. If you have any complaints regarding a member's conduct, you can contact the [exec](#) (particularly the Welfare exec or Equal Ops exec), or the SU directly for support.

If someone continually goes against what an exec has asked (e.g. asking someone to stop talking about something), then that is when the moderators step in.

Part 3.2: General Approach (A Brief Overview)

The general approach to moderating consists of four steps, which we briefly outline here.

1. **Identify whether moderation is needed.** The cases outlined in Part 3.4.1 should aid in making this decision. This may require brief moderator discussion. If moderators need to intervene, make sure that exactly **one** moderator is doing so - having many moderators giving (possibly conflicting) instructions is unhelpful at best and actively fans the flames at worst.
2. If moderation is needed, first **try to de-escalate**. Remember that those involved are likely to be annoyed or upset about what is going on, and are unlikely to react positively to stern action from moderators. A good example of something that could be sent to defuse a heated argument is the following, taken from DMA202:

“Hey guys! While we appreciate discussion and think disagreement is healthy for promoting productive discourse, we think this particular discussion may have gone a little too far. Could we please change the subject and talk about something else? Thanks!

You may have to skip this step if you did not respond quickly enough - i.e. if you are cleaning up after an incident and can't wait for messages to be modified or deleted.

3. If de-escalation is not enough, then **take action proportionally**. Responding to tiny infractions with huge penalties does not help foster a welcoming and understanding environment, so act calmly and reasonably. This is discussed in [Part 3.4.2](#).
4. Finally, **transparently respond about what happened, and log the incident**. This is discussed during [Part 3.4.2](#) (responding) and [Part 3.4.3](#) (logging).

Part 3.3: Tools of the Trade

In this section we briefly look at the tools that mods have for moderation. The syntax provided assumes that we are using Carl-bot - whether this is the right choice will be investigated as we put moderation into action.

- The `!report msg` command allows a user to report an incident in a certain channel (with comment msg), which is messaged directly to the moderators. Note that the report itself is then deleted, so (barring bot downtime) no non-moderators will know about the report. This is a useful tool for users to contact the mods discreetly.
- Many moderation bots (and UB3R) provide *ongoing logs*, detailing actions (such as message editing and deletion) that users take. This allows you to keep an eye on any edits that avoid users getting into trouble.
- `!mute` allows a moderator to mute a user, thus preventing them from sending messages until they are unmuted. This is a useful tool for stopping a spammer from doing any damage while investigating them, or stopping an argument between a few individuals.
- *Slowmode* can be set on a channel to prevent large discussions from spiralling out of control. This slows down everyone except for moderators and Exec, so should only be used when a channel is dominated by an argument or similar.
- A user can be *kicked* to temporarily remove them from the server. However, this does not stop them from rejoining. If you would like a temporary ban instead, Carl-bot provides `!tempban`.
- Finally, in the worst case, you can *ban* a user, thus permanently removing them and preventing their account from rejoining. Note that this does not stop ban evasion (e.g. a user making a new account to rejoin with), which you'll have to keep an eye on.

Some of these tools require the use of alternative channels. These are as follows:

- `#mod-communications`, where the mods generally discuss actions if needed. This is where the report logs go.
- `#mod-log`, where final actions are noted for future use.
- `#x-log`, where x is the name of the moderation bot used. This keeps track of all actions taken, so they can be reviewed later.

Part 3.4: Infractions

In this section we detail a general approach for dealing with a problem when it occurs. This provides specifics for implementing the general workflow in [Part 3.2](#).

Part 3.4.1: The Four Cases

We split situations into one of four categories, in order of severity from least to most severe. Cases 1, 2 and 4 have fairly simple resolution methods, which we detail in this section, while Case 3 requires more discussion and is detailed in [Part 3.4.2](#).

You may want to read this section alongside the [DMA 202 “Handling Difficult Scenarios” section “Situation Identification”](#) from the Discord Moderator Academy series.

Case 1: Cases That Resolve Themselves

Adam: “Yeah I used X and it was really crazy!”

Patt: “Hey, could you not use that word? What about ‘ridiculous’ instead?”

Adam: “oh sorry, sure.” -> edits old message to say “it was really confusing!”

(altered from <https://nisei.net/about/code-of-conduct/#best-case>)

In this case, the moderators do not need to act as the situation has resolved itself. A similar example to the above would be if someone did not add an appropriate CW or TW to a message but then was asked to apply said warning, and did. This is a good result.

Case 2: Cases Which Stray Towards Intervention

Adam: “oh, like in Townsville!”

Patt: “oh hey, Townsville, I heard blue party leader is from there!”

[several people are typing]

Moderator: “Hi! We generally try to avoid political discussion in this server as laid out by Rule 5 of the Code of Conduct [link], so I’m just popping in to remind everyone before this turns into a political debate. Thank you!”

Patt: “oh, apologies” -> deletes previous message

Sometimes, conversation will end up straying towards matters that break a rule - for example, an indirect mention of a political situation. In these times, it may help to remind members of the relevant rule. This might also be useful if a conversation begins to move towards territory that may suit a CW or TW, or if a conversation gets heated.

That being said, use your discretion. As has been mentioned, you should not solely be aloof and only arrive when incidents occur. Intervention is likely best if you are already part of the

conversation - similar to asking the people involved in some conversation to move to a different channel because of how the topic has shifted.

If, in your attempt to defuse the conversation, it gets worse, consider some of the methods discussed in [Part 3.4.2](#).

Case 3: Cases Where Mod Communication Is Needed

Patt: "Honestly, Catan is garbage and anyone who likes it probably doesn't even like board games and is an idiot."

Adam: "Whoa there, could you dial it back a bit? There's no need to attack people over what board games they like."

Patt: "I'm not attacking anyone, are you deaf?"

Adam: -> messages an admin "hey uh. Can someone look at #channel? Patt is getting a bit aggro. I tried to nudge them about it, but nope."

...

(altered from part of <https://nisei.net/about/code-of-conduct/#admin-case>)

There can be cases where individual(s) end up arguing or saying something more severe that, if left unmoderated, could lead to people being hurt. This is by far the most difficult case to deal with, and as such we discuss it in much more detail in the next section.

Case 4: Cases Which Warrant Instant Removal

KKKFan: "Hi, I am a literal actual nazi and I think white supremacists are quite fashionable."

Patt: "NOOOOPE. OH NOPE NOPE."

Adam: "WHOA NO. NOPE." -> messages an admin "nope nope nope @ #channel"

MxAdmin1: "👁️👁️ Nope. NOPE NOPE NOPE. 🔥"

KKKFan has been deactivated

(altered from <https://nisei.net/about/code-of-conduct/#nope-case>)

Any situations which involve overt discrimination, antagonistic spamming or any other clear intentional rules violations (whether ours or Discord's) should simply be met by banning the offenders.

When banning someone, you can and should report the offending messages - if needed, mute them first, delete the offending messages with the "Report to Discord's Trust and Safety Team" toggle switched on, and then ban the offender. If there is a raid (many spam accounts joining at once), focus on banning while a few messages are deleted and reported.

Please note that some situations that fall under this case will not be as dramatically obvious as the above example. Please also note that this is hopefully a situation you will never have to experience - we are a fairly small server and a close-knit community, so messages that fit the above description are more likely to come from trolls joining the server specifically to wreak havoc. If someone who normally does not act like this suddenly does this, consider muting them and trying to work out what happened first, rather than immediately banning - their account may have been hacked or phone stolen, for example. A member banned through this process can always appeal to be allowed back into the server (see [Part 3.5](#)).

Part 3.4.2: Cases Where Mod Communication Is Needed

When dealing with a difficult case, the moderators will need to use their discretion to work out what to do. That being said, we now look at a set of steps for dealing with these cases, aimed to minimise harm to those in the server, and to make sure that the (possible) offender is treated fairly during the process.

Remember: this is a small community server, where the people involved generally know each other and get along - so the assumption that *harm was not meant* is a key one to make.

You may want to read this section alongside the rest of [DMA202](#) (mentioned earlier at the beginning of [Part 3.4.1](#)).

1. Immediate Response

On seeing a message which breaks the rules, or receiving a report of such rule-breaking, **screenshot the message, put it into #mod-communications** and use @moderator to alert all moderators of the situation. You should apply a relevant CW/TW to that screenshot, since the mods may also not want exposure to something they find particularly distressing.

As mentioned earlier, you should try to de-escalate first - for ongoing small incidents (such as shown in the first case earlier) you can ask people to think about their wording, to add CW/TWs, to not continue discussing a topic and so on. That being said, **if the offending message(s) could cause distress to anyone coming across them, you should delete said messages**. The rules exist to keep the server a safe and welcoming place, and as such anything that breaks the rules will likely detract from that and thus should be deleted.

If moderation action is taken (deletion of messages, muting, putting a channel into slowmode), you need to **inform everyone involved in the situation**. This needs to be done immediately, to make it clear to all involved what is happening - that the situation is being investigated (if it is indeed being investigated) and that the following immediate actions have been taken. If no investigation is needed, you may skip saying that is being investigated (and you can skip the following deliberation section) and immediately report on the full action being taken.

Two messages should be sent, which are as follows. Remember that you should approach this with friendliness and understanding - we are a close-knit community, and as such we should not assume malice.

- **One message to the offender(s)**. This is to explain that their message(s) have been deleted, and that said messages are being looked into as to whether they break the rules (if an investigation is taking place). You should also mention that the mods are open to continuing discussion about said messages, and that it should take no longer than an hour to decide exactly how to resolve the situation.
- **One message to the public channel**. This is to explain that message(s) have been deleted and are being looked into (if an investigation is taking place). This is to reassure members that it is being investigated and that everything is okay. (You may

have already done this earlier to stop a continuing conversation.) You may also need to remind members to let moderators **alone** handle an issue, rather than ending up with dogpiling.

2. Deliberation By Mods

The mods should discuss what happened and whether the rules were broken. This should be done in [#mod-communications](#) between all mods present. As mentioned already, this should take no longer than an hour.

Once this is done, you should directly communicate the results of your deliberation to the offender if you have not already done so.

3. Resolution After The Infraction

If it has been decided that the offender has done wrong, there are two ways they could act in response.

The first of these is that they could accept the judgement, understand why they did wrong and apologise. They may also resolve this directly with anyone directly affected by the situation, but only if the hurt individual(s) feel comfortable about this. As a moderator, you will have to make the call as to whether this is genuine or not - given the people that you are likely to be working with, it will hopefully be genuine.

You may want to be more skeptical if this is a repeat offence - however, you should work with the offender to work out why these offences keep happening. It may be that they genuinely find things difficult to understand, or find communicating tone online very tough, for example, rather than being malicious. Note that we explicitly do **not** talk about an “x strikes and you’re out” system, and you should not apply such a system.

The other way they could respond is by not accepting the judgement, possibly getting angry or frustrated. In that case, you should give them some time to cool off - mute them on the server if you have not already, and offer the chance to communicate more once they have cooled off.

You should give the ensuing discussion a week to resolve, although you may use your discretion to decide that more time is needed. During this time, the offender should be given the chance to talk to the mod that they are directly in communication with and any other mods at their request (this is not escalating the issue to other mods, just asking for someone that they might feel safer talking to). You may change the mod that they are directly in communication with if needed (for example, if some mod will not be available for a few days), but you should avoid a big conversation between multiple moderators.

If, during that time, the offender accepts the judgement, you can unmute them and return things to normal. If they do not, then you can ban them - they do not want to follow our rules and as such should not be in our server. They can still appeal this decision (see [Part 3.5](#)) if they feel unfairly treated.

Regardless of the result, you may want to further update the public channel of these results, as to reassure those hurt by the situation. For the most part, you should avoid this for two reasons:

- 1) The offender may not have intended to hurt people, so to bring up the situation again may make them feel like they are being made an example of. Repeatedly telling someone that they are wrong will not make them want to learn to be better - in fact, it will likely have the opposite effect.
- 2) Bringing up the situation again may hurt those already hurt before, or otherwise make the server a less friendly place.

That being said, use your discretion - after a particularly severe incident, or after a repeat offender is banned, people in the server may want reassurance that action has been taken.

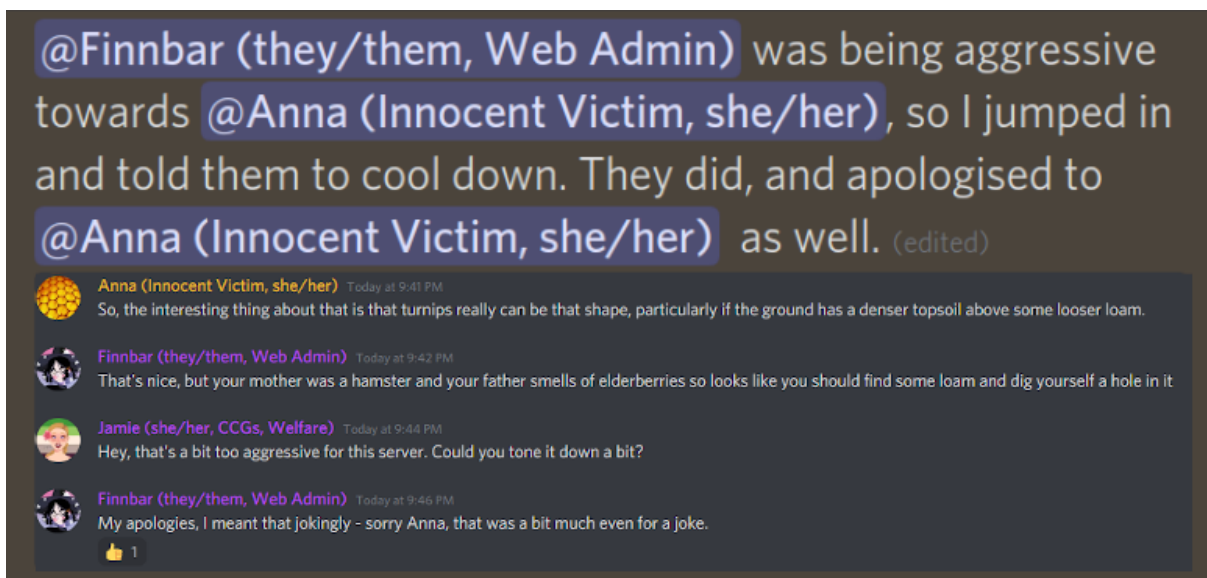
You may still want to inform those directly affected privately of any results.

Part 3.4.3: Logging Infractions

Infractions should be logged after their resolution in the [#mod-log](#) channel, which keeps track of past infractions by members for two purposes:

1. First, it allows mods to keep track of how they resolved past incidents - both for information on how to deal with similar future ones, and also for learning from past mistakes.
2. Second, it allows mods to keep track of repeat infractions, as to identify problems that the offender may have.

The important details to keep track of are the offender(s), screenshot of what happened, reason that it is considered an infraction, and the resolution that happened - both immediate (e.g. message deletion) and after later discussion with mods (e.g. acceptance of mistakes). An example (which is very much faked, since including real data from [#mod-log](#) would be unfair to an offender) is given below.



An infraction should only be considered active for two years. Past this, they should not be held against a person and should be kept purely for learning purposes - people change in that amount of time, and if someone has done something really worth remembering, they would have likely been banned.

Note that this process of logging infractions is one of the ones recommended by [DMA202](#) (the Informing Staff subsection). Since the logs stick around, and thus will be readable by future moderators, the logs must be an unbiased and factual retelling of the infraction and nothing more.

Part 3.4.4: Severe Infractions

The society Discord is an extension of our in-person spaces and thus follows the same rules (the Code of Conduct) as those in-person spaces. This leads to the topic of banning people from the society - you would ban someone if they did something terrible in our in-person

spaces, or repeatedly made people feel unwelcome and uncomfortable while not responding to intervention. The same should apply in our online spaces.

We do not outline a specific process for banning a member from the society (rather than just Discord), because it will be extremely specific to the situation at hand and may change in the years to come.

The first port of call is to contact the SU for advice on how to deal with this - they may suggest banning as an option in particularly severe circumstances. I would recommend that you assemble a small committee of exec (likely President, Welfare and ED&I if possible) to discuss the situation alongside the SU, keeping any victim reports solely between yourselves. In the end though, I hope that you never have to deal with this, and you should never really have to deal with this - this section only exists as a worst-case.

Part 3.4.5: Moderator/Exec Infractions

Moderators and exec are not expected to be perfect, and may therefore commit infractions like any other member. However, they should still be held to a higher standard - exec are expected to represent the society, and moderators are expected to be a representation of how members should behave in our online spaces.

In the case where a moderator or exec would be banned from the server, this should be discussed in an exec meeting. You may consider unappointing a moderator or starting a no-confidence vote against such an exec. Again, you will hopefully never have to deal with this.

Part 3.5: Appeals and How to Contact Mods Outside of Discord

When a member has been banned, they may wish to appeal the ban - whether it's because they feel they were treated unfairly (see [Part 1.3](#)), or because they believe they have changed enough since the ban to be allowed back into the server.

How to make an appeal:

Appeals should be delivered to mods via Discord PMs or the messaging functionality available on the [Tabletop Website](#)². If no such mod is available (because you believe the mods are at fault), then the alternative contacts listed in [Part 1.3](#) should be contacted instead.

Response time for an appeal:

Moderators will endeavour to take roughly a week to respond to an appeal. Non-moderators may take longer, as it is not their job to respond to appeals. You should send your appeal to only one person, although if it has been longer than a week you may follow this up with other people.

What an appeal should contain:

An appeal should explain why a member thinks they should be allowed back onto the server. This may consider things such as reasoning behind their actions, what they have since done to learn why they were wrong, and extra context that a moderator may have missed. There is no fixed structure to an appeal - this should be a discussion like any other.

Outcome of an appeal:

After receiving an appeal, it will be discussed and a decision will be made. Moderators reserve the right to block anyone that spams appeals (repeatedly sending an appeal within a short timeframe) or does not make appeals in good faith (e.g. appeals whose only possible purpose is to frustrate the moderators or otherwise provide no content of value).

² You can get daily emails summarising the DMs that you get on the [Tabletop Website](#) by turning them on in [Notification Settings](#). All moderators should do this.

Appendix A - Full Permissions List

This is the full permissions list for the five roles discussed in Part 1.2. This table was originally provided by Anna - thank you! It has since been modified so that the permissions are in order and all present, and have useful descriptions and justification. Please note that this is accurate as of 28/05/2021 - Discord sometimes changes the permissions available, and this table will have to be updated if that happens.

Note: We have kept Threads disabled for everyone until Carl-bot supports them. As such, thread permissions are not listed here.

Perm	Admin	Moderator	Exec	Ex-Exec	Member
Discord Permissions					
View Channels (The ability to see messages in a channel. Note that Exec and moderators have a few private channels.)	All	Public + Moderation Channels	Public + Moderation and Exec Channels	Public + Exec Channels	Public Only
Manage Channel (The ability to create, delete and edit channels. Given to Exec so they can create new games tables or update the names and descriptions of channels. Also allows moderators/exec to enforce slowmode in difficult situations.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Manage Roles (The ability to update roles lower than their own. Also required for creating private channels, so this is given to Exec.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Manage Emoji (The ability to add and remove server-specific emoji.)	Y	Y	N	N	N
View Audit Log (The ability to look at the Audit Log, which details administrative actions taken. Useful for maintaining transparency in administration.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N

View Server Insights (The ability to look at our server statistics, such as member engagement and retention.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Manage Webhooks (The ability to add webhooks, which allow programs to send messages via URL pinging.)	Y	N	N	N	N
Manage Server (The ability to move the region of our server, rename it and update its icon.)	Y	Y	N	N	N
Create Invite (The ability to invite your friends to the server! Although using the invite link we advertise is also an option.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Change Nickname (The ability to change your own nickname. Make it exciting! Add your pronouns! Be a gremlin! The world is nearly your oyster, barring anything that violates the code of conduct.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Manage Nicknames (The ability to change others' nicknames, e.g. for organising exec names into a specific format or changing nicknames that violate the code of conduct.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Kick Member (The ability to kick a member, which removes them from the server but does not prevent them from rejoining.)	Y	Y	N	N	N
Ban Member (The ability to ban a member, which removes them from the server and prevents that specific account ³ from rejoining.)	Y	Y	N	N	N
Send Message (The ability to send a message in a channel. Mostly correlates with View Channels. Notably, you can delete your own messages as much as you like.)	All	Public + Moderation Channels	Public + Moderation and Exec Channels	Public + Exec Channels, excluding Announcement Channels	Public Only, excluding Announcement Channels

³ Note that ban evasion is possible by creating multiple accounts, so you may need to be vigilant.

Embed Links (The ability to embed a link in a message.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Attach Files (The ability to attach a file to a message.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Add Reactions (The ability to react to a message.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Use External Emoji (The ability to, if you have Nitro, use emoji from outside of this server in messages.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mention @everyone, @here and All Roles (The ability to directly ping the aforementioned roles, which alerts the relevant people. This should be used sparingly.)	Y (please be careful)	Announcement Channels Only	Announcement Channels Only	N	N
Manage Messages (The ability to delete and pin messages. This is available to Exec so that they can pin important announcements, and quickly delete messages when no moderators are present.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Manage Threads (The ability to delete, rename, archive/unarchive and turn on slow mode for threads).	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Read Message History (The ability to see messages in the past. Limited to the channels you can see.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Send Text-to-Speech Messages (The ability to send a message that reads itself out to everyone currently online. Please don't do this.)	Y (please don't)	N	N	N	N
Use Application Commands (The ability to use slash commands and other application commands, which some bots support.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Connect (The ability to enter a public voice channel.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Speak (The ability to speak in an entered voice channel.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Video (The ability to broadcast video in a voice channel, whether it is from webcam or screen share.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Use Voice Activity (The ability to continuously broadcast your voice rather than using push to talk. Please be mindful when not using push to talk.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Priority Speaker (The ability to automatically reduce the volume of everyone else in the call when you speak. Should generally be avoided.)	Y	N	N	N	N
Mute Members (The ability to mute someone else in the call, preventing them from speaking. Note that you can mute yourself without this permission.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Deafen Members (The ability to deafen someone else in the call, preventing them from hearing. Note that you can deafen yourself without this permission.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Move Members (The ability to move someone between voice calls.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Request to Speak (The ability to ask to speak in a Stage Channel.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Moderation Bot Permissions					
[Text] Mute Members (The ability to prevent members from sending messages in the server. Useful for non-destructively dealing with possible incidents.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N

Access to #x-log (The ability to read the log to which a moderation bot records actions.)	Y	Y	Y	N	N
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TIMELINE

Finish 1st draft of this document

- Will involve at least one more big discussion amongst people to sort infractions section

Send document out for proofreading (exec + membership)

Implement anything good

Have a pseudo AGM-style meeting about the document

Finalise document

Appoint mods

Week 5-6: write lots

Week 7: exec/moderators meeting to write the infractions section

Week 8: finish 1st draft

Week 9: proofreading (allows us this week to sort Tabletop Radio while others proof read)

Week 10: implementation of changes

Week 11: AGM style meeting

Appointment:

- Open applications middle of July, leave open for 1 week. 1 week to make decisions.
- New mods should be able to take on their duties at start of August

Ultimate deadline: late August (results day), so we're ready for the influx of new members

NOTES FOR 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.3 (FROM MEETING)

- A step by step guide of what moderators should do in each infraction case
 - Per severity of case i.e. what constitutes a certain severity, and what action is appropriate (warning, mute, ban etc etc)
 - Cases that resolve themselves. (also, cases where CW/TW would be appropriate and haven't been immediately rectified)
 - To investigate: cases where message deletion is not necessary, but a warning may still be. (Maybe stuff which gets close to rule breaking? But that'd be a generally posted warning of "be careful".)
 - Cases where mod communication is needed (bonus note: when CW/TW needed but also hasn't been applied for a bit, so deleted for people's safety)
 - Cases where someone should just immediately be banned (overt discrimination)
 - Guide to logging infractions
- How many infractions can someone build up before being kicked? (for cases where mod comms are needed)

NOTES FROM MEETING OF MODERATION PROCESS:

Default response where mod comms are needed:

1. See the message / report
2. Screenshot message and put it in mod communications
3. Delete message (RESEARCH VIA DISCORD MOD GUIDELINES), and possibly mute the person (is this continual discussion?). Immediately, **direct communication to the offender** (not necessary “you did this bad thing because x” but just “we’re investigating, things are ongoing and we are continually open to discussion during this period”). Message the public channel mentioning how investigation is being done.
4. Mods discuss and use judgement (this will take an hour at most)
5. **Direct communication to the offender** about why this happened (“x was y, please don’t do this again, thank you for your understanding”)
 - a. Understanding that they did wrong - all good, resolve with reporter. May want to discuss repeat offences.
 - b. Nope I was right and you can’t persuade me otherwise - give some time to cool off (via mute on main server, most likely), offer the chance to talk things through. Nominally give a week for discussion after the second notification (in which mods should reply reasonably promptly), starting immediately and with communication opened immediately. The offender can contact other mods during the process - to clarify, this isn’t an escalation. (Mods should always be discussing this even if there is only one person in direct communication.)
 - i. If this is resolved nicely between both parties, then unmute and all sorted. (They are muted during the process.)
 - ii. If not, then you can apply more severe penalties.
6. Public channel resolution (what happened? Why are some of the messages deleted?)