Group Analytic Society International (GASi)
Online Abuse Handling & Reporting Policy

1. **Purpose**
   This policy outlines the procedure for reporting and responding to incidents of online abuse, harassment, or inappropriate conduct within our organisation's digital spaces. It applies to all members participating in online meetings, forums, emails, or other digital communications related to the organisation.

2. Guiding Principles

- All members are entitled to a safe and respectful environment—online and offline.
- We are committed to addressing concerns fairly, promptly, and proportionately.
- Wherever possible, informal resolution is encouraged as a first step.

3. What Constitutes Online Abuse

Online abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Harassment, threats, or intimidation
- Offensive, discriminatory, or degrading language
- Repeated unwanted contact or communication
- Breaches of confidentiality or privacy
- Deliberate disruption of meetings or discussions

4. Reporting and Resolution Process

Step 1: Direct Discussion (Informal Resolution)

- If you feel able, raise the concern directly with the person whose behaviour has caused distress.
- This may be done via a private message, email, or a conversation (online or offline), expressing your concern respectfully.
- This step encourages dialogue and understanding, especially where harm was unintended.

Step 2: Escalation to President

- If the issue cannot be resolved informally or you do not feel safe raising it directly, report the matter to the President of the Management Committee.
- Reports should be made in writing and include:
  - A clear description of the incident
  - Date, time, and context
  - Any evidence (e.g. screenshots, emails)

Step 3: Initial Assessment and Resolution Attempt

- The President will review the report and, where appropriate, meet with the parties involved.
- They will attempt to resolve the matter through mediation or guidance, while maintaining confidentiality and fairness.

- The President may consult with other senior members or safeguarding leads if needed.

Step 4: Formal Complaint

- If the issue remains unresolved or is deemed serious, the matter will be escalated to a formal complaint under the organisation's Complaints Procedure.
- This may involve an investigation, recommendations, and, if necessary, disciplinary measures.

5. Confidentiality and Support

- All reports will be treated with discretion and confidentiality.
- Support will be offered to anyone affected by online abuse, including referral to external professional support where appropriate.

6. Legal Compliance

This policy aligns with relevant UK legislation, including:

- **The Equality Act 2010**
- **Protection from Harassment Act 1997**
- **Malicious Communications Act 1988**
- **UK GDPR** (for handling any personal data involved)

In cases involving potential criminal behaviour (e.g., threats of violence or hate speech), the organisation reserves the right to report the matter to the relevant authorities.

7. Responsibilities

- All members are responsible for upholding a respectful online environment.
- The President is responsible for managing this process fairly and consistently.

Policy dated: November 2026
To be reviewed: November 2027