



## **Code of Conduct for Coaches**

The coach's primary role is to facilitate the process of individual development through achievement of athletic potential. This role accepts that the athlete's welfare, safety and long-term interests are of greater importance than the short-term athletic considerations. To fulfil this role, the coach must behave in an ethical manner with respect to the following points:

### **As a responsible athletics Coach you will:**

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every athlete and others involved in athletics and treat everyone equally, regardless of background or ability as set out in the UKA and C&C equity policy. This includes respecting the right for freedom from physical or sexual harassment and advances.
- Place the welfare and safety of the athlete above the development of performance.
- Be appropriately qualified including obtaining DBS clearance, update your licence and education as and when required by UKA and adhere to the terms of the coaching licence.
- Ensure that activities you direct or guide are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual athlete.
- At the outset clarify with athletes (and where appropriate, with parents or carers) exactly what it is that is expected of them and what athletes are entitled to expect from you. Remember that everyone has a right to an independent life outside athletics, including the coach.
- Never try to recruit, either overtly or covertly, athletes who are already receiving coaching. If approached by an athlete receiving coaching refer immediately to the coach currently providing coaching support.
- Try to observe a recommended maximum ratio of 1 coach to 12 athletes at a training session or work in partnership with another coach/coaching assistant.
- Cooperate fully and work openly with others involved in the sport such as technical officials, team managers, other coaches, doctors, physiotherapists, sport scientists and representatives of the governing body in the best interests of the athlete.
- Consistently promote positive aspects of the sport such as fair play and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited or age-inappropriate substances. This should extend to the spirit as well as to the letter of the rules, in both training and competition, to ensure fairness of competitive opportunity between all athletes.
- Encourage and guide athletes to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Develop appropriate working relationships with athletes based on mutual trust and respect, especially with those athletes under 18 years or vulnerable adults.
- Not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Ensure that the practical environment is safe and appropriate, taking into consideration the age, maturity and skill level of the athlete. Before using any venue for coaching, the coach must ascertain that a risk assessment is in place for the appropriate activity (this can be from the stadium or the club).



- Acknowledge other coaches have an equal right to desire the success of the athletes they coach - competing within the rules. Observation, recommendations and criticism of coaching practice should be directed to the appropriate person outside the view or hearing of the public.
- Have a responsibility to upgrade their knowledge by attendance at accredited courses and through practical coaching experience and to share the knowledge and practical experience they gain.
- Have a responsibility to work actively with team managers to ensure the best competitive pathway for those athletes under their charge. The needs of the athlete must be put before the needs of the club.
- Respect the image of the coach and continuously maintain the highest standard of personal conduct, reflected in both the manner of appearance and behaviour.
- Agree to and adhere to Cambridge and Coleridge Social Media Policy.
- Strictly maintain a clear boundary between friendship and intimacy with athletes and do not conduct inappropriate relationships with athletes. Relationship with athletes can cause significant problems for other team members, raising concerns of favouritism and/or victimisation should the relationship later end.
- In particular, you **MUST NOT** allow an intimate personal relationship to develop between yourself and any athlete aged under **18 years**. Any violation of this could result in a coaching licence being withdrawn. It may also be a criminal offence to conduct a relationship with an athlete aged under 16 years. It may also be a violation of your coaching licence to form an intimate personal relationship with a vulnerable adult coached by you.
- It is **strongly recommended** that you do not allow intimate relationships to develop between yourself and athletes coached by you aged over 18 years.

**As a responsible coach, when participating in or attending any athletics activities, including training/coaching sessions and competition events you will:**

- Exhibit an active respect for officials, by accepting the ability of the officials to ensure that competitions are conducted fairly and according to the established rules.
- Act with dignity and display courtesy and good manners towards others.
- Avoid swearing and abusive language and irresponsible behaviour including behaviour that is dangerous to yourself or others, acts of violence, bullying, harassment and physical and sexual abuse.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour and language by others.
- Be aware that your attitude and behaviour directly affects the behaviour of athletes under your supervision.
- Never engage in any inappropriate or illegal behaviour.
- Avoid destructive behaviour and leave athletics venues as you find them.
- Not carry or consume alcohol to excess and/or illegal substances.
- Avoid carrying any items that could be dangerous to yourself or others excluding athletics equipment used in the course of your athletics activity.
- **In addition, coaches should follow these guidelines on best coaching practice, in particular with young athletes or with vulnerable adults**



- Avoid critical language or actions, such as sarcasm which could undermine an athlete's self-esteem.
- Avoid spending time alone with young athletes unless clearly in the view of others to protect both yourself and the young athlete. In special circumstances, for example when coaching elite young athletes, one to one coaching sessions may form part of the required training schedule. In this circumstance, parental/guardian consent must be sought and obtained prior to sessions taking place. The coach must inform the parent/guardian of the venue for training and an emergency contact number should be provided by both the coach and parent/guardian.
- Avoid taking young athletes alone in your car.
- Never invite a young athlete alone into your home.
- Never share a bedroom with a child.
- Always explain why and ask for consent before touching an athlete.
- Ensure that parents/carers know and have given consent before taking a young athlete away from the usual training venue.
- Work in same-sex pairs if supervising changing areas.
- Respect the right of young athletes to an independent life outside of athletics.
- Report any accidental injury, distress, misunderstanding or misinterpretation to the parents/carers and club Welfare officer as soon as possible.
- Report any suspected misconduct by other coaches or other people involved in athletics to the Club, National or UKA welfare officer as soon as possible.

Notes - The code of conduct in the coaches' licence, and the coaches' code of ethics, published by UKA, apply.

- Coaches must be qualified and licensed by UK Athletics (or the delegated athletics organisation), and the licence must be maintained and updated as required.
- All C&C coaches must agree to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check by the licensing body.

*This document is based on the English Athletics Code of Conduct for Coaches.*