

BRITISH FENCING CODE OF CONDUCT

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1. PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This document is the British Fencing Code of Conduct for all BF Members, Persons and Organisations involved in fencing activity in the UK. Breaches of this code of conduct fall to be dealt with under the British Fencing Disciplinary Code.

2. DEFINITIONS

Adult at Risk	An individual aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; or who is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or exploitation
Child/Children	An individual under the age of 18
Club	A club affiliated to British Fencing
Member	An individual or organisation holding membership of British Fencing
Organisations	Organisations responsible for or associated with fencing activity in the UK including Home Nation Bodies, Regions, Counties and Clubs.
Person	Any individual associated with fencing activity in the UK including a fencer, parent, spectator, supporter, trainer, mentor, referee, organiser, coach, selector, armourer, medical officer, physiotherapist or any other individual who is or has been at any time involved in the Sport, or in the organisation, administration or promotion of the Sport. This includes participation and association with all UK representative fencing activity wherever this might take place.
Sport	The sport of fencing

3. PRINCIPLES

This Code of Conduct is issued by British Fencing, the governing body of the sport of fencing in the UK.

- 3.1 **Who is covered by this Code of Conduct?** This Code of Conduct applies to all Organisations and Persons participating and associated in fencing activity. 'Person' means a fencer, parent, spectator, supporter, trainer, mentor, referee, organiser, coach, selector, armourer, medical officer, physiotherapist or any other individual who is or has been at any time involved in the Sport, or in the organisation, administration or promotion of the Sport. This includes participation and association with all UK representative fencing activity wherever this might take place.
- 3.2 **What is the purpose of this Code of Conduct?** The purpose is to set out the standards of conduct that are expected and required of all those involved in

fencing. It recognises the additional duty of care that exists towards persons under the age of 18 ('Children') and Adults at Risk (as defined in The Care Act 2014). These standards reflect BF's vision to create a strong, successful and sustainable fencing community and our mission to grow fencing by inspiring and enabling people to start, stay and succeed in fencing, as well as reflecting generally recognised standards of discipline and good sporting behaviour. These standards also reflect BF's commitment to creating environments free from harassment and abuse.

- 3.3 **What behaviours are covered by this Code of Conduct?** All behaviours are covered, conduct whether in person, in writing or using any form of electronic and social media communication channels.
- 3.4 **Which standards apply to me?** This Code of Conduct is arranged so that the standards which apply to every Person (irrespective of their role or participation in fencing) are set out first and then, for certain groups, additional more specific standards are set out which are applicable to that particular group. Not being aware of a standard will not be an acceptable reason for not complying.
- 3.5 **What are the consequences of not complying?** If you do not comply with any one or more of the standards set out in this Code of Conduct, then it may result in British Fencing bringing disciplinary and/or safeguarding proceedings under the BF Disciplinary Code or taking other action against you. You may also face disciplinary proceedings from other organisations including but not limited to International Governing Bodies (FIE/EFC), Home Nations, Clubs.

4. CODE FOR ALL PERSONS & ORGANISATIONS

All Home Nations, Regions, Counties, Clubs and Persons **must**:

- 4.1 Ensure that the Sport is always conducted in a disciplined and sporting manner and acknowledge that it is not sufficient to rely solely upon the organisers to maintain those principles.
- 4.2 Co-operate in ensuring that the spirit of the rules of the Sport and fair play are upheld.
- 4.3 Act in accordance with the British Fencing Bye-Laws, Regulations, Rules and Policies.
- 4.4 Accept and observe the authority and decisions of referees, organisers and all other fencing disciplinary bodies including British Fencing and in cases of dispute use the appropriate mechanisms for complaints and appeal.
- 4.5 Promote the reputation of the Sport and take all possible steps to prevent it from being brought into disrepute.
- 4.6 Respect and maintain the duty of care that they have towards all other participants.
- 4.7 Respect and maintain the duty of care that they have towards opponents during fencing and adapt their behaviour to that which is reasonable and appropriate to score, at all times avoiding brutality.
- 4.8 Respect and maintain the enhanced duty of care that they have towards Children and Adults at Risk.
- 4.9 Follow the principles of good safeguarding for Children and Adults at Risk.
- 4.10 Accept and act on the positive obligation to report safeguarding concerns through the appropriate British Fencing channels.
- 4.11 Cooperate with disciplinary, safeguarding and other sport integrity investigations.

All Home Nations, Regions, Counties, Clubs and Persons **must never**:

- 4.12 Abuse (physically or verbally), threaten or intimidate another Person whether on or off the piste.
- 4.13 Use crude or abusive language or gestures towards another Person.
- 4.14 Do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, harass, insult or humiliate any other Person.
- 4.15 Discriminate against any other Person on the ground of their protected characteristics including religion, race, colour or national or ethnic origin.
- 4.16 Do anything which adversely affects the reputation of the Sport of Fencing, British Fencing, any Member or any commercial or funding partner of the Sport. This includes the publishing of defamatory or libelous statements.
- 4.17 Publish or cause to be published criticism of the manner in which a referee handled a fight.
- 4.18 Publish, cause or attempt to be published criticism of the manner in which British Fencing or any other body is handling/handled/resolved any dispute, safeguarding case, disciplinary or other sport integrity matter resulting from a breach of this Code of Conduct.
- 4.19 Engage in any conduct or any activity on or off the piste that may impair public confidence in the honest and orderly conduct of a fight, competition, Championship or Series or in the integrity and good character of any Person;
- 4.20 Commit a Doping Offence as defined in the FIE/British Fencing/UKAD Anti doping regulations.
- 4.21 Retaliate or discriminate against, bully, harass, undermine, embarrass or victimise any Person involved in raising a complaint or concern or participating in an investigation into a complaint or concern, including taking any action with the intent of it having such effect and encouraging or facilitating any other person to do so.
- 4.22 Interfere with, obfuscate or obstruct any disciplinary, safeguarding and other sport integrity investigations, including taking any action with the intent of having such effect or encouraging or facilitating any other person to do so.

5. COACHES, REFEREES, VOLUNTEERS, OTHER OFFICIALS AND PERSONS IN POSITIONS OF TRUST

All coaches, referees, volunteers and other officials and persons in positions of trust (including mentors, personal development providers), in addition to Section 3. **must:**

- 5.1 Respect every Person particularly Children and Adults at Risk in their care as individuals and treat them equitably and with dignity at all times.
- 5.2 Discharge their responsibilities in a manner free from any sort of harassment or abuse (emotional, physical, sexual, bullying, neglect etc).
- 5.3 Recognise their additional responsibilities and duty of care towards Children and Adults at Risk.
- 5.4 Recognise their individual and collective responsibility to create environments where all fencers can perform/compete free from harassment and abuse.
- 5.5 Work with others to deliver environments which ensure the safety and enjoyment of all participants.
- 5.6 Be positive role models displaying and promoting high standards of personal behaviour.
- 5.7 Ensure that all activities they deliver (e.g training, officiating) comply with the current guidance and policies issued by British Fencing
- 5.8 Work within their own competency and qualifications, undertaking appropriate personal development and/or training to ensure standards are met.
- 5.9 Have the appropriate criminal record checks necessary for the level and/or frequency of activity they are engaging in.
- 5.10 Respect the privacy and confidentiality of the Person(s)
- 5.11 Report all incidents/concerns (including safeguarding, code of conduct breaches, accidents) in line with the relevant BF reporting procedures.

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All coaches, referees, volunteers and other officials **should never**:

- 5.12 Abuse their position of power or trust.
- 5.13 Embarrass, humiliate, bully or undermine any individual (or encourage/allow others to do so)
- 5.14 Neglect their responsibility for any Child or Adult at Risk under their care at any time.
- 5.15 Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching, eg hitting, slapping, kicking.
- 5.16 Circumvent or attempt to circumvent procedures put in place to protect Children and Adults at Risk.
- 5.17 Use exercise as a form of punishment.
- 5.18 Engage or attempt to engage in sexual activity (contact and non-contact, including online activity) with a Child or Person for whom they are responsible, where they hold a position of trust or imbalance of authority.
- 5.19 Encourage or allow a Child or Adult at Risk to attend a non-public premises (eg a private home), hotel room or secluded place when they will be alone with that person.
- 5.20 Share a bedroom with a Child (other than their own child).
- 5.21 Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- 5.22 Make sexually suggestive remarks to children even in fun.
- 5.23 Do things of a personal nature for another person that they can do for themselves unless specifically requested to do so and then with the utmost discretion.
- 5.24 Allow the use of inappropriate language or behaviour to go unchallenged.
- 5.25 Allow safeguarding allegations to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- 5.26 Purchase for or provide any Child with alcohol or facilitate the consumption of alcohol by a Child.
- 5.27 Avoid creating exploitative relationships or unhealthy dependencies with anyone involved with fencing or their families and close associates.
- 5.28 Purport to be or act as a coach, welfare officers or other registered workforce unless registered on the relevant published BF workforce register.
- 5.29 Allow any form of bribery, favouritism or pressure to influence the outcome of a decision.
- 5.30 Discharge their duties under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

6. PARENTS, CARERS, GUARDIANS

In addition to the code laid out in Section 3 and in relation to the fencer that they support, parents, carers and guardians **should**:

- 6.1 Support their involvement, recognising and rewarding efforts as well as achievements and help them to enjoy their sport.
- 6.2 Encourage and guide them to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and development in the sport.
- 6.3 Encourage them to learn the rules and play within them, encouraging fair play and appropriate interactions with officials in accordance with the Rules of Fencing and this Code of Conduct.
- 6.4 Never force them to take part in training and competitions against their will and/or that they are not prepared (emotionally, physically, technically) for.
- 6.5 Never verbally or physically abuse them for failure.
- 6.6 Set a good example by being a good role model, recognising fair play, accepting official's judgements and applauding efforts of all.
- 6.7 Use correct and proper language at all times.
- 6.8 Respect the role of coaches/team managers and other officials in relation to managing participation in competition; do not approach other Children without appropriate permissions.

7. TRAINING & COMPETITION ORGANISERS - ADDITIONAL CODES

In addition to Section 3 and Section 4 above, training (including affiliated club session, camps etc) and competition organisers **must**:

- 7.1 Ensure all activities are run in accordance with BF Policies.
- 7.2 Appoint a Welfare Officer with responsibility for promoting the BF Code of Conduct and dealing with any concerns according to BF procedures.
- 7.3 Communicate the Welfare Officer's details to all participants.
- 7.4 For U14 age groups competitions (and below) promote the BF Fair Play Code of Conduct.
- 7.5 Report breaches of this Code of Conduct to BF.
- 7.6 Ensure safe dispersal of all Persons before vacating the venue(s).

8. GBR - ADDITIONAL CODES

The codes of conduct listed below apply in addition to this Code of Conduct

- 8.1 Code of Conduct for GBR Athletes – applies to all athletes currently representing GBR in competition (including international competitions)
- 8.2 Code of Conduct for GBR Coaches – applies to all coaches supporting athletes currently representing GBR in competition (including international competitions)
- 8.3 Unacceptable Behaviour Policy – applies to athletes and identified persons individually contracted into a BF Performance Programme funded by UK Sport.

9. AFFILIATED BODIES

Each body affiliated to British Fencing is under an obligation to:

- 9.1 Comply with and ensure that each of its members comply with this Code of Conduct; and
- 9.2 Adopt procedures to monitor compliance with and impose sanctions for breaches of the Code of Conduct by Persons under its jurisdiction.

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