

# BF CODE OF CONDUCT & ETHICS

## TEAM OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEERS

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### 1. PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This Code covers all events carried out under the auspices of British Fencing (BF).

BF has a duty to provide parameters to guide the actions of its Officials and Volunteers to ensure that all are acting in the best interests of the athletes and other BF stakeholders. All Officials appointed by BF agree to abide by this Code of Conduct and Ethics and must confirm this before they will be permitted to act as an official. Additionally, they will do their best to ensure that the athletes' code of conduct as published on the BF website is complied with.

Appendix 1 has a summary of this code for convenience; the full text prevails however.

This Code is to be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct: Athletes Youth Events; Penalties: Youth Events, British Fencing's Child Protection Policy and all welfare, equality and grievance policies as published by British Fencing. These documents may be revised from time to time and current, dated versions are available on the BF website. This code of Conduct is in addition to (i) any other Codes of Conduct that British Fencing has in place and (ii) BF's Disciplinary, Grievance, Welfare and other rules.

(The term *event* in this document includes any type of activity (including group travel, Youth and GBR activities) involving official BF groups).

For the avoidance of doubt the term Team Officials or Volunteer covers Team Manager; Coach; Referee, or any others who are duly appointed to a position of responsibility and authority as part of any BF group, whether paid staff or volunteers. The Code also applies to personal coaches attending the same events.

The event starts when the appointed person joins at the specified time at the specified place (Entry Point - EP), and likewise ends when they leave at the specified time and/or place (Departure Point - DP).

All members of the BF group or activity are expected to act responsibly in the event of anything that might pose a significant risk to themselves or others. This includes informing a senior member of staff if the risk is due to the behaviour of any other member of the group. If in any doubt, advice should be obtained.

## 2. GENERAL BEHAVIOUR

Officials are expected to act in a responsible and respectful manner to others and project a favourable image of the sport to the athletes, their families, officials, spectators and the general public.

Officials agree to accept the authority of the designated representative of BF, (normally the Lead Performance Team Manager), for the duration of the event and carry out their role conscientiously.

Personal appearance is of importance; Officials will look clean and professional, with an image of functional efficiency at all times. Officials are required to wear relevant squad/ Team kit at all times unless otherwise directed by the Lead Performance Team Manager.

Travel and accommodation arrangements for officials will be as directed by the Lead Performance Team Manager.

## 3. PUNCTUALITY

Officials are required to be punctual and attend any meetings, sessions or other events as directed by the Team Manager. Lateness disrupts the efficient running of the event, and is unfair on those who make the effort to be punctual. Exceptional circumstances must be reported to the Lead Performance Team Manager.

## 4. BULLYING

This will not be tolerated in any form, whether physical, psychological or verbal, or by anybody. Any official who believes they have been subjected to or has seen anyone else being subjected to bullying must inform the Lead Performance Team Manager as soon as possible, whether the bullying is by a fellow official or athlete or anyone else. Wherever possible, confidentiality will be respected.

## 5. EQUITY AND DISCRIMINATION

All officials are required to respect the rights of every person, regardless of age, ethnic origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, cultural background or political affiliation.

Discrimination will not be tolerated in any form or by anybody. Any athlete/official/staff member, who believes they have suffered from discrimination is required to inform the Lead Performance Team Manager as soon as possible. Wherever possible, confidentiality will be respected.

## 6. ALCOHOL

For all Youth events, Officials are not permitted to drink or be in possession of alcohol at any point during the event\*, whether on or off campus, under any circumstances during the period of the event. Any official who believes that an athlete or another official/ staff member is in breach of this term of the Code is required to inform the Lead Performance Team Manager as soon as possible. Wherever possible, confidentiality will be respected.

*\*For the avoidance of doubt, it is understood that Team Officials purchasing alcohol at Duty Free or similar do so understanding that their purchases are sealed and for transportation only. Similarly, where Team Officials are presented with alcohol as a gift, they should inform the Team Manager and seal it until the trip has officially ended.*

For Senior events, Officials must comply with the Lead Official's alcohol policy for the event. Officials are not permitted to drink alcohol whilst on duty during event/competition hours. Officials and volunteers will be responsible for their personal conduct and must remain dutiful ambassadors for the sport and British Fencing at all times.

## 7. SMOKING

Officials are not permitted to smoke cigarettes, tobacco or similar substances in the company or sight of any athlete at any point during a youth event under any circumstances. Any official/member of staff who believes that an athlete or another official/ staff member is in breach of this term of the Code is required to inform the Team Manager as soon as possible. Wherever possible, confidentiality will be respected

## 8. ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS THE TAKING/ADMINISTERING/SUPPLYING OF ANY ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE OF ANY CATEGORY PERMISSIBLE AT ANY TIME.** Any official who has reasonable cause to consider that an athlete or another official/staff member may be in possession of an illegal substance is required to inform the Lead Performance Team Manager as soon as possible. Wherever possible, confidentiality will be respected.

## 9. MEDICATION

Officials requiring to take prescribed drugs during the course of the event should declare this in the personal information provided to the Lead Performance Team Manager.

## 10. GAMBLING

Under no circumstances is gambling allowed during the course of the event. Any official who has reasonable cause to believe that an athlete or another official/staff member may have breached this section of the code is required to inform the Lead Performance Team Manager as soon as possible. Wherever possible, confidentiality will be respected.

## 11. COMMUNICATION

All Officials are expected to act in a sensible and respectful manner when using all forms of communication, including social networking sites and texting, regarding British Fencing generally and, in particular, athletes, their fellow officials and other staff. Normal rules apply to confidentiality and not bringing British Fencing into disrepute.

## 12. MOBILE PHONES

Officials are expected to behave appropriately and turn off mobile phones where circumstances dictate (e.g. in meetings, training sessions, during competitions), setting a good example to the athletes.

## 13. ETHICS

Officials will hold appropriate qualifications, registration and/or licences as required by British Fencing.

Officials are required to set and uphold appropriate boundaries between themselves and the athletes, especially when this involves a young person or vulnerable adult. The relationship between Officials, athletes and their families is a working relationship and one of trust. Officials may build up strong relationships with athletes, travelling and residing with them during the course of events. At no time is an Official to use this privilege to exert influence over athletes to gain personal benefit for themselves or their club.

Officials have a responsibility to protect young people and vulnerable adults from any form of abuse during events and generally whilst in their care.

When the performance process requires physical contact between Official and athlete, Officials must ensure that no action on their part is inappropriate. British Fencing guidelines must be adhered to.

Officials will, in the course of the working relationship, gather much information about athletes. It is important that the appropriate degree of confidentiality is maintained and that personal information is not divulged without the prior permission of the athlete. Officials may be asked to provide relevant information concerning an athlete's performance and development: this is only to be given to relevant and previously agreed persons.

Officials should not be drawn into any informal discussion/speculation with any other official or athlete (GB or otherwise) with regards to historic or current disciplinary cases.

## 14. SAFETY

Officials must be concerned at all times with the safety and wellbeing of the athletes, a sensible balance being maintained between performance demands and their emotional, physical, social and developmental needs. Any activities organised by Officials must be suitable for the age, maturity, strength and ability of the athlete.

Officials have a responsibility to ensure a safe environment is provided and maintained for athletes and colleagues at all times. Officials are required to apply the British Fencing Health and Safety guidelines, including wearing appropriate protective kit when coaching or fencing.

## 15. INSURANCE

Officials are covered under BF's insurance policy (which includes cover for certain approved activities) as members of BF. Officials are responsible for checking and ensuring that their activities are covered or that they have adequate additional insurance in place, including their own travel insurance. For further information please see [www.britishfencing.com/governance/insurance](http://www.britishfencing.com/governance/insurance). If in doubt, contact BF Head Office.

## 16. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints within the context of these guidelines should be made in accordance with the British Fencing Disciplinary and Grievance policies: Disciplinary Rules and General Grievance Rules are available on the BF website and from Head Office. If the matter concerns a minor you must contact the British Fencing Welfare Officer via BF head office.

## 17. ITEMS NOT COVERED

British Fencing and/or its nominated lead officials have the right to make amendments to this code of conduct and to take decisions on any matters not covered. All amendments will be published on the website and dated. Officials will be kept informed of any changes where possible, however it is recommended that a check is made prior to any event.

## 18. DISCIPLINARY CODE AND SANCTIONS

Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct & Ethics will result in the application of British Fencing disciplinary procedures.

The Board of BF has delegated authority to the CEO to administer such matters which have not expressly been reserved to be dealt with under the Disciplinary Code by this Code of Conduct. Notwithstanding such authority, the CEO may, in his or her absolute discretion, determine that an allegation of a breach of Code of Conduct is of a nature that it should properly be dealt with under the Disciplinary Code. In such circumstances, the CEO may refer such a matter to be dealt with under the Disciplinary Code.

**APPENDIX 1: Summary of British Fencing's Code of Conduct and Ethics: Team Officials and Volunteers**

- **GENERAL BEHAVIOUR:** Officials agree to accept the authority of the Lead Performance Team Manager for the duration of the event.
- Officials are expected to act in a responsible and respectful manner to others and project a favourable image of the sport to the athletes, their families, officials, spectators and the general public.
- **PUNCTUALITY:** Officials are required to be punctual and attend any meetings, sessions or other events as directed by the Lead Performance Team Manager.
- **BULLYING:** This will not be tolerated in any form, whether physical, psychological or verbal, or by anybody.
- **EQUITY and DISCRIMINATION:** All athletes and officials are required to respect the rights of every person, regardless of age, ethnic origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, cultural background or political affiliation.
- **ALCOHOL:** Officials are not permitted to drink or be in possession of alcohol at any point during a Youth event. Senior events will apply the policy as determined by the lead official.
- **SMOKING:** Officials are not permitted to smoke cigarettes, tobacco or similar substances in the company or sight of any athlete at any point during a youth event under any circumstances.
- **ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES:** UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS THE ADMINISTERING/SUPPLING/TAKING OF ANY ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE OF ANY CATEGORY PERMISSIBLE AT ANY TIME.
- **GAMBLING:** Under no circumstances is gambling allowed during the course of the training activity/event.
- **COMMUNICATION:** All Officials are expected to use all forms of communication including social networking sites and texting, in a sensible, respectful and confidential manner at all times.
- **MOBILE PHONES:** Officials are expected to behave appropriately and turn off mobile phones where circumstances dictate.
- **ETHICS:** Officials are required to set and uphold appropriate boundaries between themselves and the athletes.
- **SAFETY:** Officials have a responsibility to ensure a safe environment is provided and maintained for athletes and colleagues at all times.