



# Scottish Rowing Code of Conduct for Coaches

Approved by Executive January 2009

Coaches play a crucial role in the development of any sport and in the lives of the athletes they coach. Good coaches ensure that individuals in sport have positive experiences and are therefore more likely to continue in their sport and achieve their potential.

Coaching, as an emerging profession, must demonstrate at all levels a high degree of honesty, integrity and competence. The need for coaches to understand and act on their responsibilities is of critical importance to sport, as is the need to protect the key concept of participation for fun and enjoyment as well as achievement. This is implicit within good coaching practice and promotes a professional image of the good practitioner.

The following code of conduct was written by *sports coach UK* ([www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)) and defines all that is best in good coaching practice.

It is incorporated into Scottish Rowing's governance documents.

It is a constituent part of Scottish Rowing's policy and procedure for dealing with allegations and complaints.

It will be used as the definitive guide and benchmark measure of coaching practice in determining any need for sanctions against a coach.

It is fully incorporated into Scottish Rowing's coach education processes.

It will be supported by appropriate training and resources.

Coaches in breach of this Code will be liable to disciplinary action by Scottish Rowing in line with the published Disciplinary Procedures.

Good coaching practice needs to reflect the following key principles:

## Rights

### **Coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport.**

In order to achieve this objective, coaches should

- assist in the creation of an environment where every individual has the opportunity to participate in a sport or activity of their choice,
- create and maintain an environment free of fear and harassment,
- recognise the rights of all athletes to be treated as individuals,
- recognise the rights of athletes to confer with other coaches and experts,
- promote the concept of a balanced lifestyle, supporting the well-being of the athlete both in and out of the sport.

This requires the following actions.

- Treat all individuals in sport with respect at all times.
- Do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, colour, disability, sexuality, age, occupation, religion or political opinion.
- Do not condone or allow to go unchallenged any form of discrimination.
- Do not publicly criticise or engage in demeaning descriptions of others.
- Be discrete in any conversations about athletes, coaches or any other individuals.
- Communicate with and provide feedback to athletes in a manner which reflects respect and care.

## Relationships

**Coaches must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.**

In order to achieve this objective, coaches

- must not engage in behaviour that constitutes any form of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, bullying),
- should promote the welfare and best interests of their athletes,
- must avoid sexual intimacy with athletes either while coaching them or in the period of time immediately following the end of the coaching relationship,
- must take action if they have a concern about the behaviour of an adult towards a child,
- should empower athletes to be responsible for their own actions,

This requires the following actions.

- Be aware of the physical needs of athletes, especially those still growing, and ensure that training loads and intensities are appropriate.
- Ensure that physical contact is appropriate and necessary and is carried out within recommended guidelines with the athlete's full consent and approval.
- Do not engage in any form of sexually related contact with an under age athlete. This is strictly forbidden as is sexual innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms.
- Inform parents immediately if you are at all concerned about the welfare of a child.
- Discuss with parents and other interested parties the potential impact of the programme on the athlete.
- Arrange to transfer an athlete to another coach if it is clear that an intimate relationship is developing.
- Know and understand the relevant Scottish Rowing and club policies and procedures in this regard.
- Follow the reporting procedures laid down by Scottish Rowing and club if you have a concern - non-action is unacceptable.
- Respect athletes' opinions when making decisions about their participation in rowing.
- Encourage athletes to take responsibility for their own development and actions.
- Allow athletes to discuss and participate in the decision-making process.

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- should clarify the nature of the coaching services being offered to athletes,
- should communicate and co-operate with other organisations and individuals in the best interests of athletes.
- Discuss and agree with athletes what information is confidential.
- Inform athletes or their parents of the requirements of rowing.
- Inform athletes or their parents of any potential costs involved in accessing the coaching services on offer.
- Be aware of, and communicate on, any conflict of interest as soon as it becomes apparent.
- Do not work with any other coach's athletes without first discussing or agreeing it with the coach and the athlete involved.
- In addition, in the case of an athlete under the age of 18, parental agreement must be obtained **before** any approach is made to coach or athlete, and the originating Club Captain (or teacher in charge of rowing) should be involved in these discussions.
- Identify and agree with athletes which other experts or organisations could offer appropriate services.

## **Responsibilities - Personal Standards**

**Coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times.**

In order to achieve this objective, coaches

- must be fair, honest and considerate to athletes and others in rowing,
- should project an image of health, cleanliness and functional efficiency,
- must be positive role models for athletes at all times.

This requires the following actions.

- Operate within the rules and spirit of rowing.
- Educate athletes on issues relating to the use of performance-enhancing drugs in sport and co-operate fully with UK sport and Scottish Rowing policies.
- Maintain the same level of interest and support when an athlete is sick or injured.
- Display high standards in the use of language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation.
- Encourage athletes to display the same qualities.
- Do not smoke, drink alcohol or use recreational drugs before or while coaching. This reflects a negative image and could compromise the safety of your athletes.
- Display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved in rowing.

## **Responsibilities - Professional Standards**

**To maximise benefits and minimise the risks to athletes, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice.**

In order to achieve this objective, coaches will

- provide a safe environment that maximises benefits and minimises risks to athletes in achieving their goals,
- promote the execution of safe and correct practice,
- be professional and accept responsibility for their actions,
- make a commitment to providing a quality service to their athletes,
- actively promote the positive benefits to society of participation in sport,

This requires the following actions.

- Follow the guidelines of Scottish Rowing or club.
- Only allow participation if there is no risk to the athlete.
- Plan all sessions so they meet the needs of the athletes and are progressive and appropriate.
- Maintain appropriate records of your athletes.
- Recognise and accept when it is appropriate to refer an athlete to another coach or specialist.
- Seek to achieve the highest level of qualification available.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of technical developments in rowing.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge and understanding of other issues that might impact on both you and your athletes.
- Be aware of the social issues and how rowing can contribute to local, regional or national initiatives.
- Actively participate in recruitment and education opportunities in rowing.

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- contribute to the development of coaching as a profession by exchanging knowledge and ideas with others,
- gain SCOTTISH ROWING/ARA coaching qualifications appropriate to the level at which they coach.
- Actively contribute to local, regional and national initiatives to improve the standards and quality of coaching both in rowing and sport in general.
- Practise in an open and transparent fashion that encourages other coaches to contribute to or learn from your knowledge and experience.
- Engage in self-analysis and reflection to identify your professional needs.
- Seek continuous professional development opportunities to develop your coaching skills and update your knowledge.
- Manage your lifestyle and coaching commitments to avoid burnout that might impair your performance.
- Do not assume responsibility for any role for which you are not qualified or prepared.
- Do not misrepresent your level of qualification.