

ASA Code of Ethics

Issues of Competence

Teachers/Coaches shall confine themselves to practice in those fields of sport in which they have been trained/educated, and which are recognised by the ASA and ISTC as being valid. Valid areas of expertise are those directly concerned with sports coaching. Training includes the accumulation of knowledge and skills through both formal Teacher/Coach education courses and by experience at a level of competence acceptable for independent teaching/coaching practice. Teachers/Coaches must be able to recognise and accept when to refer performers to other agencies. It is the responsibility of the Teacher/Coach as far as possible, to verify the competence and integrity of the person to whom they refer a performer. Teachers/Coaches should regularly seek ways of increasing their professional development and self awareness. Teachers/Coaches should welcome evaluation of their work by colleagues and be able to account to performers, employers, Governing Bodies and colleagues for their actions. Teachers/Coaches have a responsibility to themselves and their performers to maintain their own effectiveness, resilience and abilities, and to know when their personal resources are so depleted as to make it necessary for them to seek help and/or withdraw from teaching/coaching whether temporarily or permanently.

Violations of this Code

An alleged breach of this Code shall be grounds for making a complaint under ASA Law. This is a formal expression of dissatisfaction with the actions or behaviour of clubs, bodies, organisations or individuals or with alleged unfair practice in connection with the sport and will be dealt with by a Judicial Tribunal.

The procedures for making a complaint are set out in the ASA Judicial Laws which are reproduced in the current edition of Laws of the Sport and the ASA Handbook. Any complaint relating to matters contained in this Code may be referred by the Chairman of the District Judicial Tribunal to an independent investigator to be appointed by the ASA. The terms of reference shall be set by the ASA. Dependent upon the outcome of the investigation the Chairman of the DJT may direct that the matter may not proceed as a complaint under the ASA judicial system. In such a situation the Chief Executive may authorise such other action, for instance the offering of guidance or educational support, or the issue of a warning as to future conduct, as may be appropriate in the circumstances. Thereafter dependant upon the outcome of such other action the Chief Executive may refer the matter back to the Chairman of the DJT for reconsideration as to whether the matter may proceed as a complaint. The Chief Executive of the ASA shall have the power in exceptional circumstances to commence or take over conduct of any complaint made in respect of any breach of any of the provisions of this Code.

Team Staff Appointments Policy

The policy of the Amateur Swimming Association and Amateur Swimming Federation of Great Britain is as follows:

Where one athlete aged below eighteen years of age is travelling they must be accompanied by one member of staff and parental consent obtained with regard to the identity of the staff member. Where there are two or more athletes travelling they must be a minimum of two members of staff accompanying the athletes. Where the group of athletes are of mixed sex, there must be staff members of each sex.

This Code of Ethics was written with specific reference to Teachers and Coaches. However, most aspects of this Code are also applicable to other people involved in the sport. Therefore all Officials, whether ASA qualified or not, should be aware that this Code also applies to them.

The ASA and ISTC acknowledges that a large part of this Code of Ethics has been derived from the code produced by the Industry Lead Body for Sport and Recreation. The Code published below will remain operational unless and until notice of any changes and amendments is given by the ASA.

Teaching/Coaching and Instructing

Even though the NVQ standards focus on and describe work functions, they are based on a number of accepted assumptions and values which underpin good practice in teaching/coaching and instructing. The British Institute of Sports Coaches has articulated these into a Code of Ethics much of which has been incorporated into the following Code of Ethics for Swimming Teachers/Coaches. Throughout the following Code the expression, Teacher/Coach whether used in the singular or the plural shall include all teachers/coaches, assistants and other helpers whose activities are connected with the disciplines regulated by the Amateur Swimming Association (the ASA) and all members of the Institute of Swimming Teachers and Coaches (ISTC). Where the context of the Code admits the expressions Teacher/Coach and Sports Coach this may also include Officials.

The purpose of the Code of Ethics (referred to throughout the remainder of the document as the Code) is to establish and maintain standards for Teachers/Coaches and to inform and protect members of the public using their services. Ethical standards comprise such values as integrity, responsibility competence and confidentiality. Individuals who are members of the ASA/ISTC are deemed to have assented to the Code and as such recognise and adhere to the principles and responsibilities embodied in it.

The Code creates a framework within which Teachers/Coaches, when engaged in sports coaching in the fullest sense of the expression should always work. The code has been written as a series of guidelines rather than a set of instructions. However, violations of the Code may result in complaints being made to a District Judicial Tribunal (DJT) and, in which case, the relevant Tribunal, in determining whether a conduct complained of has brought the sport into disrepute or amounts to a violation of ASA Laws, will consider the Code's provisions when assessing the guilt of individuals against whom complaints have been made and/or the appropriate sanctions to apply.

The Code

Issues of responsibility

Teaching/Coaching is a deliberately undertaken responsibility, and sports Teachers/Coaches are responsible for the observation of the principles embodied in the Code of Ethics.

Humanity

Teachers/Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being and their ultimate right to self-determination. Specifically, Teachers/Coaches must treat everyone equally within the context of their activity, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion, disability or political persuasion.

Relationships

The good Teacher/Coach will be concerned primarily with the well being, health and future of the individual performer and only secondarily with the optimisation of performance. A key element in a teacher/coach relationship is the development of independence. Performers must be encouraged to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance in training, in competition, and in their social life. Teachers/Coaches are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with their performers. This is particularly important when the coach and performer are of opposite sex and/or when the performer is a young person. The Teacher/Coach must realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted, not only by the performer, but by outsiders motivated by jealousy, dislike or mistrust and could lead to allegations of sexual misconduct or impropriety. The relationship between coach and performer relies heavily on mutual trust and respect. In detail this means that the performer should be aware of the Teachers'/Coaches' qualifications and experience and must be given the opportunity to consent to or decline proposals for training and performance.

Commitment

Teachers/Coaches should clarify in advance with performers and/or employer the number of sessions, fees (if any) and method of payment. They should also explore with performers and/or employers the expectation of the outcome of teaching/coaching. Teachers/Coaches have a responsibility to declare to their performers and/or employer any other current teaching/coaching commitments. Teachers/Coaches should also find out if any prospective client is currently receiving guidance from another Teacher/Coach. If so, that teacher/coach should be contacted to discuss the situation.

Teachers/Coaches who become aware of a conflict between their obligation to their performers and their obligation to their Governing Body or other organisation employing them must make explicit the nature of conflict, and the loyalties and responsibilities involved, to all parties concerned.

Co-operation

Teachers/Coaches should communicate and co-operate with other sports and allied professions in the best interest of their performers. An example of such contact would be the seeking of educational and career advice/counselling for young performers whose training impinges upon the performance of their studies. Teachers/Coaches must communicate and co-operate with medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their performers' medical and psychological problems.

Advertising

Advertising by sports teachers/coaches in respect of qualifications and/or services shall be accurate and professionally restrained.

Teachers/Coaches shall not display any affiliation with an organisation in a manner that falsely implies sponsorship or accreditation by that organisation.

Integrity

Teachers/Coaches should refrain from public criticism of fellow Teachers/Coaches. Differences of opinion should be dealt with on a personal basis and more serious disputes should be referred to the Governing Body. (ASA) or to the ISTC. Teachers/Coaches must not encourage performers to violate the rules of their sport and should actively seek to discourage such action. Furthermore, teachers/coaches should encourage performers to obey the spirit of such rules.

Teachers/Coaches must not compromise their performers by advocating measures which could be deemed to constitute seeking to gain an unfair advantage. Above all, teachers/coaches must never advocate the use of proscribed drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances. Teachers/Coaches must treat opponents and officials with due respect, both in victory and defeat and should encourage their performer to act in a similar manner. Teachers/Coaches must accept responsibility for the conduct of their performers insofar as they will undertake to discourage inappropriate behaviour.

Confidentiality

Teachers/Coaches inevitably gather a great deal of personal information about performers in the course of a working relationship. Teacher/Coach and performers must reach agreement as to what is regarded as confidential information, i.e. not divulged to a third party without the express approval of the performer. Confidentiality does not preclude the disclosure of information, to persons who can be judged to have a right to know, relating to performers when relevant to the following:

- evaluation of the performer within the sport for competitive selection purposes and recommendations concerning performers for professional purposes;
- pursuit of disciplinary action involving performers within the sport;
- pursuit of disciplinary action by the ASA and/or ISTC involving fellow coaches in alleged breaches of this Code of Ethics and Conduct.

Abuse of Privilege

The Teacher/Coach is privileged, on occasion, to have contact with performers and to travel and reside with performers in the course of teaching/coaching and competitive practice. Consequently, a Teacher/Coach must not attempt to exert undue influence over the performer in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.

Personal Standards

The Teacher/Coach must consistently display high personal standards and project a favourable image of their sport and of teaching/coaching - to performers, other teachers/coaches, officials, spectators, the media and the general public. Personal appearance is a matter of individual taste but the sports teacher/coach has an obligation to project an image of health, cleanliness and functional efficiency. The Teacher/Coach should never smoke when teaching/coaching. Teachers/Coaches should not drink alcohol so soon before teaching/coaching that their judgement may be impaired and the smell will still be on their breath when working with performers.

Safety

Teachers/Coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the performers with whom they work as far as possible within the limits of their control. All reasonable steps should be taken to establish a safe working environment. The work done and the manner in which it is done should be in keeping with regular and approved practice within that sport. The activity being undertaken should be suitable for the age, experience and ability of the performers. Performers should have been systematically prepared for the activity being undertaken and made aware of their personal responsibilities in terms of safety.