



# Code of Conduct & Grievance and Disciplinary Policy

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## Code of Conduct

When you attend training and events, we expect you, the athlete, to act in a sensible way, be responsible for your own behaviour and do as coaches and officials ask. Hyde Park Harriers is your club and we'd like you to make the most of what we offer, but not at the expense of others.

## Principles

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to uphold standards of ethical behaviour for leaders, coaches and athletes. The components of ethical behaviour are: integrity, responsibility, competence, and confidentiality.

It complements, but does not supersede, the Codes of Conduct and related policies of England Athletics, and the Code of Ethics and related policies of the British Triathlon Federation, and has been written to reflect the particular character of Hyde Park Harriers.

By participating in coached group sessions or receiving personal coaching from the Club's qualified coaches, individuals are deemed to have accepted this Code of Conduct and any related Codes of Conduct and policies referred to above that are relevant to their participation, and to endorse and subscribe to the principles and responsibilities they embody. The Club will encourage and expect its members to formally confirm their agreement to such Codes of Conduct via the portal provided by England Athletics.

The athlete-coach relationship is a two-way relationship where the athlete's well-being comes first. The core of the relationship is a mutual commitment by both the athlete and coach, to the sport in general and to athletics training in particular.

Coaches and athletes agree that participating in, or continuing a training session, is a decision that can only be made by each individual athlete. Coaches will not exert undue pressure on athletes, beyond reasonable encouragement. Bullying, use of critical language and sarcasm, or otherwise undermining any athlete's self-esteem are totally unacceptable.

Coaches will treat everyone whom they are coaching or who is participating in a coached session with equal dignity and respect, irrespective of their ability, gender, age, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or political persuasion.

Athletes and leaders and coaches will treat each other with mutual trust and respect.

The leader/coach may collect personal information about an athlete in order to help them achieve their goals. The leader/coach and athlete must reach agreement on what will be considered confidential and the coach must respect that agreement.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Hyde Park Harriers' leaders and coaches will:**

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every athlete, regardless of background or ability;
- Place the welfare and safety of the athlete above the development of performance;
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour or language by others;
- Never put themselves in a position where exploitation or abuse of vulnerable athletes could occur or could have been thought to have occurred;
- Ensure that they are properly qualified for activities that they lead/coach and update their licence and education as and when required by England Athletics;
- Whilst in a coaching role, strictly observe a clear boundary between friendship and intimacy with athletes;
- Never try to recruit, either covertly or overtly, athletes who are already receiving coaching;
- Turn up in good time for each session and/or ensure that there is adequate cover for each session provided, or adequate notice of cancellation;
- In advance, clarify the content and purpose of a particular session (to the extent it is reasonably possible to do so);
- Lead sessions with enthusiasm and to the best of their abilities, consistently promoting the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. health and social benefits and fair play) and never condoning rule violations or use of prohibited or harmful substances, such as tobacco, narcotics and performance-enhancing drugs;
- Act as a good role model by consistently displaying good standards of behaviour, appearance, and safe training practice in their own training;
- Always ask the athlete's permission and explain the reason why before touching the athlete;

- Cooperate fully with other colleagues (e.g. other coaches, officials, team managers, doctors, physiotherapists, governing bodies) in the best interests of the athlete;
- Listen and be sensitive to athletes' concerns and make them a primary concern when prescribing the training session;
- Make clear the limits of their commitment, and any reasons why they may refuse to coach any particular athlete;
- Ensure that participants in the Club's sessions are made aware of any photography or filming that may take place, including the purpose and use of any resulting media, and give such participants the informed opportunity to avoid or limit their participation in such activities;
- Invite and listen to feedback from the athletes they are coaching;
- Recognise and accept when it is in the athlete's interest to refer athletes to other, more qualified coaches or other specialists for advice; and
- Report any suspected misconduct by other coaches to the appropriate authorities (e.g. the Club's Committee, England Athletics, police).

#### **The athlete will:**

- Accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance in training and in competition;
- Treat others with fairness and respect, showing patience with others and respecting diversity;
- Act in a dignified manner and not bring the sport or the Club into disrepute;
- Avoid swearing, abusive language, and irresponsible behaviour, including behaviour that is dangerous to themselves or others, acts of violence, bullying, harassment and physical or sexual abuse;
- Participate in sessions with enthusiasm and to the best of their abilities;
- Inform their coach of any other coaching they are receiving;
- Follow the leader's and/or coach's instructions, including taking responsibility for reading the briefings and risk assessment for the session;
- Turn up in good time for the start of the session with suitable footwear and gear, and with adequate arrangements for post-training re-hydration and nutrition;
- Let the leader or coach know of any factors liable to have an impact on their ability to train or compete or their long-term health (e.g. wellness or health issues, medication, injury, illness, impending or recent competition, work or home pressures);
- Avoid destructive behaviour and leave athletics venues or training locations as they find them;

- Challenge anyone whose behaviour falls below these standards and those of England Athletic's Welfare policies;
- Report any suspected misconduct by coaches to the Club's Committee in the first instance;
- Give feedback to the coach on how the session felt for them and whether there are any consequential problems;
- Take personal responsibility for warming up before the session and cooling down including stretching after the session;
- Show appreciation to those throughout the Club who help them participate in athletics, including the coaches;
- 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;
- Never place undue pressure on children to perform, participate or compete.

### Violation of the Code

Leaders, coaches or athletes wishing to allege breaches of the code should, in the first instance, contact a member of the Committee.

### Grievance Procedure

We understand that most participants in athletics are volunteers and they participate because they want to. However, there are certain standards of behaviour that we expect from participants in our sessions. Unfortunately, there may be occasions when these behavioural standards are not reached. In these circumstances, we provide below Hyde Park Harriers' Grievance Procedure to ensure that any issues are dealt with fairly and appropriately.

#### Step one

If you have a grievance that involves another member (including coaches, volunteers, committee members etc.), you should first of all try to resolve the matter by speaking directly with the other member about the matter, if possible. The discussion should be conducted with courtesy and with the aim to reach a resolution as soon as possible.

#### Step two

If you do not wish to discuss the matter directly with the other member or would like additional assistance, you can contact the Committee in general (via [hello@hydeparkharriers.co.uk](mailto:hello@hydeparkharriers.co.uk)) or the Club's Welfare Officers (via

[welfare@hydeparkharriers.co.uk](mailto:welfare@hydeparkharriers.co.uk) - this inbox is viewed only by the Club's Welfare Officers), who may, if appropriate, investigate and assist in the matter. To the extent that you can, please complete the incident report form on the Club's website so that there is a record of the incident and evidence to investigate further. All communications received by the Committee in respect of grievance or welfare matters will be acknowledged as soon as practicable – such acknowledgement may state that the Committee does not intend to conduct further investigation.

### Step three

If the Committee and/or the Welfare Officers deem it appropriate to investigate the matter further, they will assign an individual to do so as soon as practicable. If the grievance is against an individual, such individual may be invited to respond to the grievance at the earliest opportunity. In seeking to resolve the grievance, the assigned committee member may request more time to investigate, suspend the investigation, or defer the decision if more information is required.

The timescales for an investigation shall be determined by the Committee, the Welfare Officers, and/or the person appointed to conduct such investigation (as appropriate). The following timescales are to be used as guidelines but are not mandated by the Club (it being acknowledged that any assigned investigator is providing their time voluntarily):

- Acknowledgement of communication in respect of the relevant matter – within three days of receipt of the initial communication from the initiating member (i.e. the member who sent the initial communication)
- Identification of an investigator to the initiating member – within one week of receipt of the initial communication
- Follow-up communications with initiating member to the extent required to understand the matter in question – within two weeks of receipt of the initial communication
- Investigation of the matter in question, including seeking a response or further details from relevant members and/or parties – within three weeks of receipt of the initial communication
- Resolution of the investigation of the matter in question – within one month of receipt of the initial communication

Any significant delays or divergence from the above timescales are to be communicated to the relevant members and interested parties as appropriate (including, where it is

reasonable and appropriate to do so, an explanation of the cause of such delay or divergence).

A refusal or failure to co-operate with an investigator's reasonable requests in respect of the investigation by a member or interested party (without reasonable explanation or excuse) may result in the investigation being upheld or concluded without further recourse to such member or interested party.

#### **Step four**

After the investigation is completed, the assigned committee member shall inform you and all relevant parties as soon as practicable on how the matter should be settled, updating the Committee on the matter and related settlement at the next earliest Committee meeting.

If you are dissatisfied with the settlement/resolution provided by the Committee, you may request that the Committee re-review the matter. In the event that the matter involves a person on the Committee, that individual shall excuse themselves from the review process.

If the settlement/resolution involves disciplining or excluding a member from the Club's membership, such a decision must be made in accordance with the Club's Rules on Disciplinary Procedure.

#### **Disciplinary Procedures**

The Club shall not tolerate the physical or mental abuse, harassment, discrimination, or defamation of any of its participants/members during, or subsequent to, the Club's events. Any participants/members may be disciplined or excluded from membership of the Club and/or participation in Club activities if their conduct has been, or is likely to be, prejudicial to the interests of the Club. Exclusion will be agreed by resolution of a majority of at least two thirds of those present and voting at a properly convened Committee Meeting and at which no fewer than three of the total voting members of the Committee shall be present.

Such member shall have one month's clear notice of the Committee Meeting sent to them, together with details of the case against them. The member shall be entitled to attend the meeting and be heard in defence, but shall not be entitled to be present at the voting or take part in the proceedings other than as the Committee shall permit. If the member is a member of the Committee, they shall not be entitled to vote.

Any member disciplined or excluded from the Club for disciplinary reasons may lodge an appeal with the Committee and shall thereupon have the right to demand that the matter be referred to three arbitrators: one chosen by the Committee, one chosen and paid for by

the aggrieved party and one by the two arbitrators. In the event that the first two arbitrators fail to agree on a third, the third arbitrator shall be appointed by England Athletics. Such arbitrators shall have the power by their award to annul the disciplinary action or exclusion, or to annul it subject to the performance of any condition, which the arbitrators may think fit to impose.

## **Communications in respect of Grievance, Disciplinary and Welfare Matters**

All sensitive information relating to grievance, disciplinary, and/or welfare matters is to be treated confidentially by the relevant members and/or interested parties, the Committee, the Welfare Officers, and any investigating individuals, save that the Club and its representatives (including the Committee, the Welfare Officers and any investigating individuals) may notify any relevant authority or agency to the extent relevant to any such matter.

All electronic communications are to be sent via email to the relevant Club email address, being:

- [hello@hydeparkharriers.co.uk](mailto:hello@hydeparkharriers.co.uk) in respect of general matters (accessible by each of the Club's Committee members from time to time);
- [welfare@hydeparkharriers.co.uk](mailto:welfare@hydeparkharriers.co.uk) in respect of welfare matters (accessible solely by the Club's Welfare Officers from time to time); and
- [chair@hydeparkharriers.co.uk](mailto:chair@hydeparkharriers.co.uk) in respect of matters for the Chair's attention (accessible solely by the Club's Chair from time to time) .

All in-person meetings are to be held in appropriate locations as agreed in advance by the relevant parties to such meetings.