

## The Responsible Athletics Coach Code of Conduct

### As a responsible coach you will:

- \_ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every athlete and treat everyone equally, regardless of background or ability
- \_ Place the welfare and safety of the athlete above the development of performance
- \_ Encourage and guide athletes to accept and take responsibility for their own behaviour and performance
- \_ Be appropriately qualified and update your licence and education as and when required by UK Athletics
- \_ Ensure that the activities you guide or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual athlete
- \_ At the outset, clarify with athletes (and where appropriate their parents or carers) exactly what is expected of them and what athletes are entitled to expect from you
- \_ Never try to recruit, either overtly or covertly, athletes who are already receiving coaching. If approached by an athlete receiving coaching, refer immediately to the coach currently providing coaching support
- \_ Co-operate fully with other colleagues (e.g. other coaches, officials, team managers, sport scientists, doctors, physiotherapists, governing body staff) in the best interests of the athlete
- \_ Consistently promote positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited or age-inappropriate substances
- \_ Consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance

### In addition, as a responsible athletics coach you must:

- \_ Develop appropriate working relationships with athletes (especially under 18s), based on mutual trust and respect. In particular, a coach will not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward;
- \_ Strictly maintain a clear boundary between friendship and intimacy with athletes and not conduct inappropriate relationships with athletes. Relationships with athletes can cause significant problems for other team members and can fracture teams, raising concerns of favouritism, or even of victimisation, should the relationship later end. However, due to the very special relationship between coaches and athletes:
- \_ You must not allow an intimate personal relationship to develop between yourself and any athlete under the age of 18. Any violation of this could result in a coach licence being withdrawn or restrictions being imposed on it under condition 6 below;
- \_ It is also strongly recommended that you do not allow intimate personal relationships to develop between yourself and athletes (coached or supervised by you) who are aged 18 and over.

### In addition to the above Code of Conduct coaches should follow the following guidelines to ensure that they work within the best coaching practice. Coaches should:

- \_ Never do something for an athlete that they can do for themselves
- \_ Avoid critical language or actions, such as sarcasm, that undermine an athlete's self-esteem
- \_ Not spend time alone with a young athlete unless clearly in view of others
- \_ Avoid taking a young athlete alone in your car
- \_ Never invite a young athlete alone to your home
- \_ Never share a bedroom with a child
- \_ Always explain why and ask for consent before touching an athlete
- \_ Work in same-sex pairs when supervising changing areas
- \_ Ensure that parents/carers know about and have approved in advance if taking a young athlete away from the usual training venue
- \_ Respect the right of young athletes to an independent life outside athletics
- \_ Challenge inappropriate behaviour or language by others
- \_ Report any accidental injury, distress or misunderstanding or misinterpretation. A brief written report of such incidents should be submitted to the WO as soon as possible, and parents/carers notified.
- \_ Report any suspected misconduct by other coaches or athletics personnel