**Code of Conduct for Coaches**

**As a responsible athletics Coach you will:**

* Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every athlete and others involved in athletics and treat everyone equally.
* Place the welfare and safety of the athlete above the development of performance
* Be appropriately qualified including obtaining DBS clearance, update your licence and education as and when required by UKA and adhere to the terms of the coaching licence
* Ensure that activities you direct or guide are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual athlete
* At the outset clarify with athletes (and where appropriate, with parents or carers) exactly what it is that 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.
* Try to observe a recommended maximum ratio of 1 coach to 12 athletes at a training session or work in partnership with another coach/coaching assistant.
* Cooperate fully with others involved in the sport such as technical officials, team managers, other coaches, doctors, physiotherapists, sport scientists and representatives of the governing body in the best interests of the athlete
* 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
* Encourage and guide athletes to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour
* Develop appropriate working relationships with athletes based on mutual trust and respect, especially with those athletes under 18 years or vulnerable adults
* Do not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward
* A coach **MUST** strictly maintain a clear boundary between friendship and intimacy with athletes and do not conduct inappropriate relationships with athletes. Relationship with athletes can cause significant problems for other team members, raising concerns of favouritism and/or victimisation should the relationship later end.
* In particular, you **MUST NOT** allow an intimate personal relationship to develop between yourself and any athlete aged under **18 years.** Any violation of this could result in a coach licence being withdrawn. It may also be a criminal offence to conduct a relationship with an athlete aged under 18 years.   
  It may also be a violation of your coaching licence to form an intimate personal relationship with a vulnerable adult coached by you.
* It is **strongly recommended** that you do not allow intimate relationships to develop between yourself and athletes coached by you aged over 18 years.

**As a responsible coach, when participating in or attending any athletics activities, including training/coaching sessions and competition events you will:**

* Act with dignity and display courtesy and good manners towards others through all forms of communication, including social media.
* Avoid swearing and abusive language and irresponsible behaviour including behaviour that is dangerous to yourself or others, acts of violence, bullying, harassment and physical and sexual abuse
* Challenge inappropriate behaviour and language by others
* Be aware that your attitude and behaviour directly affects the behaviour of athletes under your supervision
* Never engage in any inappropriate or illegal behaviour
* Avoid destructive behaviour and leave athletics venues as you find them
* Not carry or consume alcohol to excess and/or illegal substances.
* Avoid carrying any items that could be dangerous to yourself or others excluding athletics equipment used in the course of your athletics activity

**In addition, coaches should follow these guidelines on best coaching practice, in particular with young athletes or with vulnerable adults**

* Do not use critical language or actions, such as sarcasm which could undermine an athlete’s self esteem.
* Do not spend time alone with young athletes unless clearly in the view of others to protect both yourself and the young athlete. In special circumstances, for example when coaching elite young athletes, one to one coaching sessions may form part of the required training schedule. In this circumstance, TAC policy is that another coach or over 18 year old must be present, even if not involved in the training session.
* Do not take young (under 18) athletes alone in your car, unless in exceptional circumstances.
* Never invite a young athlete alone into your home
* Never share a bedroom with anyone under the age of 18.
* Avoid touching an athlete. If it is absolutely necessary explain why and ask for consent before touching the athlete).
* Ensure that parents/carers know and have given consent before taking a young athlete away from the usual training venue
* Work in same-sex pairs if supervising changing areas
* Respect the right of young athletes to an independent life outside of athletics.
* Do not engage in contact on a one to one basis with junior athletes. Only engage in messages to a group. If a message is required to a junior athlete always copy in a parent/carer or 2nd coach.
* Report any accidental injury, distress, misunderstanding or misinterpretation to the parents/carers and club Welfare officer as soon as possible.
* Report any suspected misconduct by other coaches or other people involved in athletics to the Club, Regional, National or UKA welfare officer as soon as possible