

# British Orienteering Code of Conduct

## I. Ethical Philosophy and Foundation

This Code of Conduct is intended to supplement British Orienteering's overarching [Code of Ethics & Behaviour](#). The Code of Ethics & Behaviour is the ethical philosophy under which the sport operates, setting the expected standards of behaviour for all individuals within UK orienteering.

The Code of Conduct applies to all participants and disciplines in the UK, and to those associated with British Orienteering who are involved in orienteering overseas.

## II. Expected Standards of Behaviour: For Everyone

These standards apply to all individuals involved in orienteering, including participants, officials, volunteers, spectators and parents, from arrival at a training activity or event venue, through to departure and in all associated contact, including social media.

All individuals must, at all times:

**Respect:** the rights, dignity, and worth of others and the environment. Respect decisions of coaches and officials and appeal any judgements in the appropriate manner. Respect the environment and landowners: leave no trace, follow access restrictions, and avoid damage.

**Abuse and Discrimination:** avoid any behaviour that is abusive, discriminatory, intimidating, or bullying, both online and in person. Everyone has a responsibility to protect themselves and others from verbal, physical, or emotional harm and must never engage in or tolerate any form of abuse, neglect, or bullying.

**Safety and Welfare:** Create and maintain an environment which is positive, happy and promotes best safeguarding and welfare practice. Everyone must take reasonable measures to protect their own safety and the safety of others and report any welfare, safety or safeguarding concerns promptly to the Club Welfare Officer, Event Safeguarding Lead or Event Organiser.

**Representation:** Individuals should uphold the positive reputation of orienteering by ensuring all communications, whether spoken or written, shared via social media, messaging or in person, are respectful and appropriate. Every effort must be made to prevent actions or statements that could bring the sport into disrepute

**Fair Play:** Respect the spirit of fairness in orienteering. Condemn cheating, competition manipulation and the use of any form of prohibited substance.

**Boundaries:** Only enter intimate relationships with those with whom there is no power imbalance and neither individual is in a position of trust towards the other. Respect participants' privacy and dignity (especially in situations like medical assistance, changing areas).

**Kindness:** Use kind, positive, and inclusive language, gestures and behaviour, both in person and online. Never use inappropriate, offensive or derogatory language, gestures or behaviour.

### III. Specific Role Expectations

#### A. Officials and Event Volunteers

Officials (e.g. Controllers, Planners, Organisers) and Volunteers and/or Staff are in positions of authority or trust and should lead by example. They must:

**Integrity:** Maintain impartiality and integrity in decision-making (e.g., when adjudicating protests, penalties).

**Prioritise Safety:** Ensure that safety, fairness and participant welfare are core priorities in planning and execution.

**Communication:** Clearly communicate instructions, warnings, and briefings to participants. Be approachable for participant queries, concerns or clarifications.

**Competence:** Only assume responsibility for a role which they are qualified for and never mislead anyone as to their level of qualification or competence. Ensure roles are carried out conscientiously, safely and in line with British Orienteering policies, guidance, and role descriptions.

#### B. Coaches and Support Staff

Those instructing or supporting athletes must act with honesty, integrity, and competence. Coaches must:

**Communication and Transparency:** Communicate openly with participants (and with parents or carers where appropriate), about the nature of orienteering activities, the services offered, any associated costs, and the right of athletes to seek advice from other coaches or experts.



All coaches must sign up to the [British Orienteering Coaches Code of Conduct](#). This Code reinforces the expectation that coaches uphold the highest professional standards, respect participants' rights, and foster a positive, safe, and enjoyable environment.

### C. Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play a vital role in supporting their child's involvement and promoting positive behaviour. Parents/carers must:

**Expectations:** Be realistic in your expectations and focus on enjoyment and personal development, not just results. Never force a child to participate in orienteering or place undue pressure on them.

**Attitude:** Positively reinforce the child's efforts and achievements. Show appreciation for the efforts of coaches, volunteers, officials, and organisers.

**Preparedness:** Ensure the child has appropriate clothing and kit, including protective equipment, as children without essential kit may not be permitted to participate.

### D. Children and Young People

British Orienteering wants every young person to enjoy taking part in a safe, supportive, and positive environment. They must:

**Compliance:** Listen to coaches and team leaders and follow their guidance. Stay in the places you are meant to be and do not leave without telling a responsible adult. Never smoke, vape, or consume alcohol or drugs at events, training or when representing the sport.

**Inclusivity:** Celebrate differences and never behave in a way that excludes or discriminates against anyone. Make new members feel welcome.

**Reporting:** Tell someone you trust if something makes you feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or unhappy. If you see bullying or something that does not feel right, report it to a coach, welfare officer, or trusted adult.

### E. Junior, Talent, Development & Performance Athletes

GB Orienteering athletes represent the sport and country in training, competition, travel and public life. As a role model to others, they must:

**Team Culture:** Contribute to a positive and supportive team environment. Support each other whether or not selected for a particular race, recognising that no individual is bigger than the team or the squad.

**Commitment:** Honour commitments, including training attendance, meeting times, and squad events. Adhere to deadlines and communicate proactively if issues arise.

**Health:** Respect their own health: if injured or unwell, inform coaches and follow agreed return-to-play protocols.

**Integrity and Clean Sport:** Be committed to clean sport and proactively educate themselves on anti-doping regulations. Do not engage in cheating or any activity that could compromise the integrity of competition.

**Representation:** Represent GB proudly and professionally - in competition, in public, and online.

## F. Board of Directors

Directors are entrusted with the stewardship of British Orienteering and must act with integrity, fairness, and transparency at all times. Directors must:

**Leadership:** Act in the best interests of British Orienteering, providing strategic direction, prudent oversight, and effective governance in line with organisational values and legal duties.

**Accountability:** Accept collective responsibility for Board decisions and work and constructively with fellow Directors, staff, and members to promote equality, inclusion and safeguarding.

All Directors must sign and adhere to the [British Orienteering Directors' Code of Conduct](#), confirming their commitment to act with integrity, diligence, and good faith.

## IV. Dealing with Breaches

Any person who breaches this Code may be subject to action by the event organisers, relevant club and/or Association or British Orienteering. Decisions regarding consequences will be taken in line with British Orienteering's disciplinary and safeguarding policies.