

## Position of Trust legislation change statement

British Orienteering are fully committed to the recent legislation change in England, Wales and Northern Ireland relating to Positions of Trust.

On the 28 June 2022, there was a significant change in the legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland relating to Positions of Trust. This has been part of a long-standing campaign by the NSPCC and sports organisations and means that all coaches (including assistant coaches) are now considered in a position of trust under criminal law and therefore come within the scope of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

### What has been changed?

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the law now states that those in positions of trust within sports organisations cannot legally have a sexual relationship with young people ages 16-17 years old. Previously this only applied to those under 15. This brings coaches in line with other position of trust roles such as teachers.

### What is a Position of Trust?

Someone in a position of trust is a person in a position of authority or responsibility over another person. Those in positions of trust have a considerable amount of power and influence on a young persons' life. For example, a young person may be dependent on their coach for their sporting development, success, or position in a club or national team.

### What about Scotland?

Currently this change in the law does not apply in Scotland. However, in line with Scottish Orienteering's policies and Child Protection code of conduct, it is considered unacceptable if a person coaching or supervising children forms an inappropriate relationship with a child.

Please see supporting document from Children 1<sup>st</sup> for further guidance.

### What should I do if I am concerned about a possible abuse of a position of trust?

If you suspect that an abuse of a position of trust has occurred, is occurring or may occur or for any other safeguarding concern, you should report this via the appropriate channels below:

England and Wales: <https://www.britishorienteering.org.uk/safeguardingandsafety>

Scotland: <https://www.scottish-orienteering.org/child-protection/>

Northern Ireland: <https://www.niorienteering.org.uk/safeguarding-children-and-vulnerable-adults/>

If you think that someone is at immediate risk of harm, you must report it to the police or children's social care.

### Further information

- NSPCC: [Protecting children from abuse by someone in a position of trust or authority](#)
- [Gov.uk website update](#)
- [CPSU Positions of Trust FAQ's](#)