British Wrestling

Code Of Conduct

Version 2
Effective from 1 June 2025

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Scope

This introductory section sets out the aim of this Code of Conduct, who must comply with it and the consequences of non-compliance.

1. This Code of Conduct ("the Code") is issued by the British Wrestling Association ("British Wrestling") as the National Governing Body for the sport of wrestling in the United Kingdom. An affiliate Home Country Association may adopt its own standards of conduct, provided that they also comply with this Code.

2. The Code applies to and binds anyone participating or seeking to participate in the sport of wrestling in the United Kingdom in any way, directly or indirectly, and at any level ("Participants"), including Board members, staff, administrators, volunteers, contractors, service providers, recreational wrestlers, competitors, match and competition/event officials, coaches and assistants, club officials, supporters and any others in attendance at competitions/events or coaching/training sessions. It applies to behaviour in or outside the UK. All individuals participating or seeking to participate in the sport of wrestling in the UK shall be deemed to have agreed to comply with and to be subject to this Code, even if and when they cease to be involved in wrestling.

3. The purpose of the Code is to set out standards of behaviour required of all Participants. It is set out in sections. The first section (General Rules of Conduct) sets out rules of behaviour that apply to all Participants: the following sections set out additional rules of behaviour that apply to particular categories of Participant.

4. If a Participant does not comply with or otherwise breaches the Code, then that may result in British Wrestling bringing disciplinary proceedings under the British Wrestling Disciplinary Code, or the taking or instigating of other action, against the Participant.

5. This Code will take effect from 1 January 2024 and will apply to all conduct and behaviour from then. The British Wrestling Board may in its discretion amend this Code, and such amendments will take effect from the date the Board prescribes.

6. This Code and any dispute/proceedings under it shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of England.

General Rules of Conduct

This section sets out the rules and standards of behaviour required of all Participants.

7. You are responsible for your own conduct; and, at all times, you must conduct yourself in accordance with the highest standards of behaviour and sportsmanship, and in the best interests of the sport of wrestling.

8. You must acquaint yourself and comply with all British Wrestling, Policies and Guidance, including this Code, the British Wrestling Anti-Doping Rules, the British Wrestling Safeguarding Policy and the British Wrestling Disciplinary Code.

9. If you are an adult, in addition, you must be particularly aware of the power imbalances between you and any children and/or adults at risk involved in the sport. You must not force any child or adult at risk to participate in wrestling. At all times, you must act in the best interests of children and adults at risk and ensure that their safety, welfare and well-being is the paramount consideration.

10. You must not bring British Wrestling or the sport of wrestling into disrepute.

11. You must act with honesty, integrity and in a sporting manner.

12. You must act as a positive role model by maintaining high standards of discipline and sporting behaviour.

13. You must treat all other participants fairly and with respect.

14. You must accept and respect the authority and decisions of officials.

15. You must help create a safe, inclusive, accessible and welcoming environment at British Wrestling events, training and competitions.

16. You must not participate in wrestling whilst under the influence of alcohol, any drug (except for any drug required for legitimate medical purposes which do not impair your ability to wrestle safely and in accordance with the rules)) or any illegal substance of any kind.

17. You must take care of the equipment and premises owned or under the control of British Wrestling.

18. You must value diversity; and must not unlawfully discriminate against anyone or treat anyone less favourably because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race (including colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origins), religion, belief (including religious, philosophical or lack of belief), sex or sexual orientation.

19. You must respect any rights to confidentiality, and the privacy of those engaged in the sport (e.g. when they are changing).

20. You must not take any photographs of any child or adult at risk at any British Wrestling training, events or competitions, unless in accordance with the British Wrestling Safeguarding Policy.

21. You must not commit a criminal offence or engage in any criminal conduct.

22. You must not act violently, dangerously, in anger, or intend to cause harm or damage to any other person including any other Participant.

23. You must not engage in behaviour that is violent, threatening, intimidating, offensive or harassing – or in verbal, physical or emotional abuse of any kind, including written or spoken – to any person including any other Participant.

24. You must not use foul, sexist, racist or otherwise discriminatory or inappropriate language in any form including verbal or in social media or otherwise on-line.

25. You must not engage in conduct or make any statement in any form (including verbal or on social media or otherwise online) which is unsporting, insulting, or intended or likely to offend or humiliate any other person.

26. You must comply with the spirit and purpose of the standards set out in this Code.

27. You must not take part in, support or encourage a competition, exhibition or demonstration involving someone whom you know to be under suspension by British Wrestling or another member of United World Wrestling ("UWW") (the relevant International Governing Body).

28. You must promptly report to British Wrestling any matter, relating to yourself or any other Participant, which may constitute a breach of:

    (i) this Code;

    (ii) the British Wrestling Safeguarding Policy;

    (iii) the British Wrestling Anti-Doping Rules;

    (iv) a prohibition against participation and/or period of ineligibility imposed in accordance with the British Wrestling Anti-Doping Rules; or

    (v) any suspension, prohibition, restriction, sanction or other order (including payment of a fine) made or recognised under the British Wrestling Disciplinary Code.

29. You must comply with and cooperate fully with any British Wrestling investigation, which includes providing accurate and honest information and complying with any direction from British Wrestling in relation to an investigation.

Wrestlers

This section sets out the rules and standards of behaviour required of all wrestlers, over and above those set out above which apply to all Participants.

30. You must know and abide by the rules and spirit of wrestling.

31. You must never use illegal or dangerous holds or tactics, or any banned technique.

32. You must not use any Prohibited Substance or Prohibited Method set out in the Prohibited List International Standard issued by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

33. You must not take part in a competition, exhibition or demonstration involving someone whom you know to be under suspension by British Wrestling or another member of UWW.

34. You must exercise self-control at all times. You must accept success and failure, victory and defeat alike, with humility and dignity, and without excessive emotional display.

35. You must treat your teammates and opponents, coaches, club and officials with respect and consideration at all times, as you yourself would like to be treated.

36. You must be a good sport, applauding all good performance, whether by a team member, opponent or otherwise.

37. You must respect officials, and listen to and comply with their directions, at all times.

38. You must accept the decisions of officials without question or complaint. You must let your team manager or coach pursue any necessary questions or complaints in the appropriate way.

39. You must abide by the instructions of the coach and club officials provided they do not contradict the spirit of this Code.

40. At the end of the competition, you should thank the officials.

41. If you are a child, you must not wander off or leave training or a competition, without telling your coach (and anyone else in a similar role) and/or an official.

Coaches

This section sets out the rules and standards of behaviour required of all coaches, over and above those set out above which apply to all Participants.

42. You must be licensed as a coach by British Wrestling.

43. You must be fully acquainted with and comply with the British Wrestling Safeguarding Policy. It is especially important that you, as a coach, maintain appropriate boundaries and relationships between you and any children and/or adults at risk involved in the sport (which includes online, social media platforms and other messaging or means of communication). You must ensure that any physical contact is appropriate and necessary for the sport (except in a medical emergency) and with the consent of the wrestler (if over 18 years of age) or, as appropriate, their parent, guardian or other carer (if a child or adult at risk). You must avoid being alone with a child or an adult at risk (including for travel).

44. You must exercise reasonable care and skill.

45. You must engage in the relevant training and have the necessary competence to train or assist in training.

46. You must be aware of and comply with any guidance on coaching published by British Wrestling and any other relevant body.

Club Coaches in Competitions/Events

This section sets out the rules and standards of behaviour required of club coaches, over and above those set out above which apply to all Participants and to coaches at all times.

47. As a club coach in competitions/events, you must be especially aware of your obligations and responsibilities under the British Wrestling Safeguarding Policy.

48. Any coach involved in hosting or an overnight stay with a child or adult at risk should ensure they are also fully acquainted with and comply with the Safe Sports Events, Activities and Competitions Guide published by the Children in Sport Unit/NSPCC (notably, Sections F and G).

49. You should ensure competition entries have been submitted to the Competition Organiser in accordance with the time specified.

50. It is the sole responsibility of the Head Coach of member clubs to ensure that wrestlers are of an adequate standard commensurate to the competition.

51. The Head Coach should ensure that they have access to the Personal Information/Consent Forms for all competing wrestlers.

52. A Club Coach should always accompany wrestlers under the age of 18 to the weigh-in. No such individual wrestler will be allowed in the weigh-in room on their own.

53. If you accompany competitors during the actual period of competition, you must be attired in suitable tracksuit and appropriate sportswear.

54. Only one coach is allowed in the corner during actual competition, but (subject to competition/event rules) a second coach may join the wrestler during the break.

55. You should ensure that wrestlers are ready when called to the mat, i.e. wearing appropriate competition wear, boot laces are taped or covered, long hair tied back and that nails are short. For those wrestlers who wish to wear ear protectors, a coach must ensure they are approved by UWW and must not contain any metal or have hard shells.

56. You should ensure that a towel is provided for the convenience of their wrestler during actual competition.

57. You should ensure that the footwear of your wrestlers is clean at all times particularly where a wrestler has been allowed to go outside the venue.

58. You must ensure good behaviour and discipline of your wrestlers during the course of the competition, including when not involved in competition.

59. You should ensure that where child wrestlers are permitted to go outside the competition venue they are accompanied by an appropriate adult.

Officials

This section sets out the rules and standards of behaviour required of all officials in respect of any competition, over and above those set out above which apply to all Participants.

60. You must be objective and impartial when refereeing a bout or other event or competition.

61. You must not operate in any other capacity, such as coach or wrestler, at a competition when acting as an official at that competition.

62. You must engage in the relevant training and have the necessary competence to be an official at the relevant British Wrestling competition/event.

63. You must disclose any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest before any competition.

64. After a competition, you must not discuss the decisions you took during a bout with anyone, online or offline, except if you are communicating with British Wrestling.

65. You must not consume any alcohol or other drugs (except drugs for legitimate medical purposes which do not impair decision-making or your ability to ensure that the sport is being undertaken safely and in accordance with the rules) immediately before or during any competition at which you are officiating.

Spectators

This section sets out the rules and standards of behaviour required of all spectators (including parents, family, friends and other supporters of a specific wrestler and/or club) over and above those set out above which apply to all Participants.

66. You must not, on any account, enter the field of play without being expressly authorised by an official to do so.

67. You must be on good behaviour. You must show respect for – and must not abuse, in any form including verbally or in your behaviour – wrestlers, coaches, volunteers and/or officials. You must not use foul, sexist, racist or otherwise discriminatory or inappropriate language. You must never ridicule or humiliate wrestlers who (e.g.) make mistakes. You should acknowledge good performance and fair play by opponents as well as by your own wrestler, team or club. You should not overemphasise the importance of winning.

Parents, Guardians and Other Responsible Adults

This section sets out the rules and standards of behaviour required of all parents, guardians and other responsible adults of child wrestlers, over and above those set out above which apply to all Participants and, where they are spectators, those set out above for all spectators.

68. Teach your child to treat everyone equally and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin or cultural background.

69. Do not force an unwilling child to take part in wrestling.

70. Encourage your child always to play by rules and to respect match officials.

71. Never ridicule, humiliate or shout at your child for making a mistake or losing a match.

72. Teach your child that effort is as important as victory, so that the result of each match is accepted without undue disappointment.

73. Support all efforts to remove verbal, physical and racist abuse from wrestling.

74. Turn defeat into victory by helping young people towards skill improvement and good sportsmanship.

75. Remember that young people learn best by example.

76. Do not publicly question the judgment or decisions of match officials; and, other than by way of formal complaint under the Disciplinary Code, never question their honesty.

77. Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches and administrators – they give their time, energy and resources to provide recreational activities for your child.

78. Insist on fair and disciplined wrestling – do not tolerate foul play, cheating, foul, sexist or racist language.

79. You must never enter the field of play unless expressly authorised by an official to do so.

Board Members and Nation/Region Committee Members

In addition to the above, British Wrestling Board Members and Nation/Region Committee Members must also be committed to the following, and comply with this section.

Respecting Rights in Wrestling

80. You must

(i) respect and support the rights of every individual to take part in wrestling;

(ii) help create an environment of enjoyment in wrestling which is free of fear, discrimination or harassment;

(iii) treat, and encourage others to treat, all people fairly and providing equality of opportunity irrespective of age, gender, ability, race, religion, ethnic origin, creed, colour, social status or sexual orientation; and

(iv) subject to any safeguarding or other similar obligations, respect confidences; and always be discreet in the handling of any information about people engaged in wrestling.

Respecting Relationships in Wrestling

81. You must

(i) not engage in any behaviour which constitutes any form of abuse (physical, sexual or emotional), neglect or bullying – you must actively discourage such behaviour;

(ii) promote the welfare of participants and, in the case of children, promote discussion with the child, their parents, guardian or other responsible adults the potential impact of wrestling on the child;

(iii) take action if you have any safety or welfare concerns about any child or adult at risk, by following the appropriate procedures;

(iv) encourage people to take responsibility for their own development; and

(v) communicate fully with people (and, in the case of children, particularly parent, guardians and other responsible adults) about the nature of the wrestling programme and costs involved.

Personal Standards

82. You must

(i) be fair, considerate and honest in their dealings with everyone:

(ii) promote healthy lifestyle whilst participating or volunteering in wrestling;

(iii) display high standards of language and behaviour;

(iv) be a positive role model for others; and

(v) promote sustainability and respect for the environment.

Professional Standards

83. You must

(i) follow and comply with all Codes, Policies and Guidance of British Wrestling;

(ii) be Full Members of British Wrestling; and

(iii) act in accordance with your legal duties, and in the best interests of British Wrestling and the sport of wrestling as a whole.

(iv) decline any bribe, including any "facilitation" or "grease" payment;

(v) ensure that the British Wrestling's agents and other intermediaries, joint ventures and consortia, contractors and suppliers do not make or receive any such bribe;

(vi) decline any offer or receipt of gifts, hospitality or expenses whenever they could affect or be perceived to affect your integrity or the integrity and reputation of British Wrestling or the sport of wrestling; and

(vii) not make direct or indirect contributions to political parties, organisations or individuals engaged in politics, as a way of obtaining advantage in business transactions.

Definitions

84. As a result of devolved legislation, the definitions of "child" and "adult at risk" vary between the Home Nations. For the purposes of this Code, "child" means any person under 18 years of age; and "adult at risk" means a person aged over 18 years who is suffering or at risk of suffering abuse or neglect because of their needs for care or support and, as a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves from that actual or potential abuse or neglect. The risk may be general or may arise from particular circumstances in which that person finds themselves.

85. In this Code, words denoting any gender include reference to any other gender; and words denoting the singular include the plural and vice versa. In particular, where the context requires, the word "they" and its derivatives refer to the singular.

86. In line with the British Wrestling Anti-Doping Policy, British Wrestling has adopted the UK Anti-Doping Rules 2021 (as amended from time-to-time) as its Anti-Doping Rules; and references to "British Wrestling Anti-Doping Rules" should be construed as a reference to "the UK Anti-Doping Rules 2021 as amended from time-to-time" as so adopted.