



# **GB National Development Squad Information Pack Coaches**

*This policy may be amended by the BMC at its absolute discretion at any time. This policy should be read together with your contract and your obligations of confidentiality that are contained therein.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) is the national governing body in respect of competition climbing. Competition climbing is the sport of climbing in all its various forms and disciplines including lead, bouldering and speed, which takes place on purpose-built climbing walls (the sport).

The BMC is establishing a new department to manage and operate all aspects of the sport. The department will operate under the name GB Climbing. The department will be overseen by a sub-committee of the BMC Board of Directors – the Competition Climbing Performance Group (CCPG).

The following policies and procedures are for the coaches and the BMC in order to ensure the success of GB Climbing. Any reference to 'you', 'your' or 'yourself' is to a Coac.

The following policies and procedures are set out in this document:

Code of Conduct (A)

Breach of Code of Conduct/Complaint Against You (B)

Whistleblowing Policy (C)

Complaints Procedure (D)

## **A. CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **1. General**

- 1.1. As a GB National Development Squad Coach you will;
  - 1.1.1. respect and champion the rights, dignity and worth of every athlete, coach, technical official and others involved in climbing and treat everyone equally,
  - 1.1.2. uphold the values of sportsmanship,
  - 1.1.3. cooperate fully with others involved in the sport such as other coaches, technical officials, team managers, doctors, physiotherapists, sport scientists and representatives of the BMC,

- 1.1.4. only repeat or disclose non-confidential personal or professional information about athletes or coaches to other people that has a) come from an official source such as the BMC or the coaching team, or b) that is already in the public domain. It is not appropriate to disclose any other types of information (unsubstantiated claims or rumours, personal, or professional) to anyone else including coaches, athletes, or the wider community. Failure to follow this can damage morale, the reputation of the BMC, the GB Climbing Team, coaches and athletes, and creates an unprofessional, hostile environment.
- 1.1.5. 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.
- 1.1.6. anticipate and be responsible for your own needs including being organised, ensuring you have the appropriate equipment, and being punctual,
- 1.1.7. assist in creating a competitive environment in which everybody can participate, everyone is free of fear of harassment,
- 1.1.8. recognise the rights of the athletes to be treated as individuals including their rights to confer with other coaches and experts,
- 1.1.9. promote the concept of a balanced lifestyle, supporting the well-being of those being coached in sport and in life.
- 1.2. Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct, may result in sanctions as set out in the Disciplinary Procedure below.

## **2. Professional Standards**

- 2.1. As a Coach you have the responsibility to maximise benefits and minimise risks to those you are coaching.
- 2.2. You must attain and monitor high levels of competency through qualifications and experience and commit to continued professional development to ensure safe, fun and efficient practice.
- 2.3. Your duty is to create a safe, fun and productive environment by:
  - 2.3.1. minimising any risks,
  - 2.3.2. maximising the benefits,
  - 2.3.3. ensuring those you are coaching have the optimum opportunity to reach their desired goals, and

- 2.3.4. adhering to child protection and adult at risk standards and guidelines.
- 2.4. While coaching, either during coached sessions or outside the coached activity you should attempt to empower those you are coaching to take ownership and responsibility for their own development and progress.
- 2.5. You should communicate and cooperate with all those concerned with the best interest of those you are coaching, regardless of any consequence to yourself as a Coach.
- 2.6. If you offer training sessions to athletes outside of training days you must make it clear to the athlete that your own qualifications, insurance, policies, fee structure and terms and conditions will apply to those training sessions.

### **3. Personal Standards**

- 3.1. As a Coach you:
  - 3.1.1. have the responsibility to demonstrate high standards of personal behaviour and conduct at all times.
  - 3.1.2. must be professional in your approach to your work, always arrive early and allow sufficient set-up time to ensure each event is safe and productive. Be fully prepared for each session, with planned activities for specific outcomes.
  - 3.1.3. must demonstrate equity in your coaching, be fair, honest and considerate to all involved in the sport and recognise the differences in ability and provide activities to suit both individual and group needs.
  - 3.1.4. should be a positive role model for athletes and other coaches, be well presented, clean and tidy for events and wear event uniform where provided.

### **4. Relationships**

- 4.1. You must develop relationships based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.
- 4.2. You must not engage in any type of abuse or bullying behaviour or physical, emotional, sexual, neglect or any combination of these types of abuse.
- 4.3. You are a person in a 'position of trust' and therefore you must not engage in any type of sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18. As a person in a 'position of trust'

you are in a position of power and therefore such a relationship could constitute an abuse of this position. The law as it stands says sexual activity involving children under 16 is illegal and when the adult is in a position of trust, sexual activity and relationships involving a child under 18 is illegal. Currently staff working in a sporting environment are not covered by the position of trust law, although it would be a disciplinary matter.

- 4.4. You must take action if you have a concern about the behaviour of an adult towards a child or an adult at risk<sup>1</sup>.
- 4.5. You must safeguard yourself and the BMC against false accusation by ensuring good practice according to child protection policy.
- 4.6. You must to the best of your ability, recognise your duty of care and protect those in your care.

## 5. **Competitions, Meets and Events** (such as GB National Development Squad Meets, GB Senior Training Events, Paraclimbing Training Events)

- 5.1. As a responsible Coach at competitions, meets and events you will:
  - 5.1.1. act with dignity and display courtesy and good manners towards others,
  - 5.1.2. treat athletes, coaches, officials and others with respect and consideration,
  - 5.1.3. avoid swearing, abusive language, irresponsible behaviour (including behaviour that is dangerous to yourself or others), acts of violence, bullying, harassment and physical and sexual abuse,
  - 5.1.4. challenge inappropriate behaviour and language by others,
  - 5.1.5. never engage in any inappropriate or illegal behaviour,
  - 5.1.6. avoid destructive behaviour and leave climbing and other venues as you find them,
  - 5.1.7. not carry alcohol, nor consume it to excess and not carry or consume illegal substances,
  - 5.1.8. avoid carrying any items that could be dangerous to yourself or others excluding equipment used in the course of your role,

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<sup>1</sup> A party who has needs for care and support; and is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and because of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect

- 5.1.9. not make inappropriate references, criticism or derogatory remarks about BMC employees, athletes or other people connected to the BMC and GB Climbing including any connected third parties or other individual(s) associated with the BMC and GB Climbing,
- 5.1.10. not criticise or make fun of officials, competitors or any other individuals or bodies connected with the sport,
- 5.1.11. not make comments or jokes which could be offensive to protected groups or communities. This includes content relating to the following: gender (including transgender), race or ethnicity, religions and beliefs (including lack of belief), sexuality, disability, and other conditions

You should be vigilant regarding the areas listed above, and report any suspicions of behaviour in breach of the areas listed above to the Competitions Program Manager – [zoe@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:zoe@thebmc.co.uk)

- 5.2. In addition to the above, at competitions, meets and events, as a responsible Coach you will:
  - 5.2.1. arrive on time and be dressed in team kit,
  - 5.2.2. be ready and prepare to coach,
  - 5.2.3. attend all training events, unless absence is previously agreed with the event organiser,
  - 5.2.4. apply your professional knowledge and provide training instruction and guidance to prepare athletes for competitions and their personal climbing development
  - 5.2.5. strive to divide your time equitably between athletes as much as possible, bearing in mind the coach:athlete ratio and the varying needs of the team as a whole,
  - 5.2.6. identify areas for athletes to work on and refer athletes to further sources of support outside of training days as necessary,
  - 5.2.7. be open to feedback and constructive criticism and understand that this is delivered in the spirit of improvement and development
  - 5.2.8. provide feedback and constructive criticism in a considerate and respectful manner, delivered with the intention of athlete development,
  - 5.2.9. ensure athletes are aware of the itinerary for all competition related activities.

## **6. National Competitions**

- 6.1. GB Climbing and BMC Coaches are not obliged to attend BMC National Series Events. If you do choose to attend, you do so in a personal rather than professional capacity and you are not obliged to provide coaching or support to athletes in attendance.
- 6.2. If you are attending the BMC National Series Events in support of GB Climbing and wearing team kit, this Code of Conduct will apply.

## **7. International Competitions**

- 7.1. As a Coach at an international competition, in addition to the above, you will:
  - 7.1.1. when wearing team kit conduct yourself in a professional manner,
  - 7.1.2. behave in a way that upholds respect for the GB Climbing Teams, the BMC and Mountaineering Scotland,
  - 7.1.3. work with athletes to ensure they have the best opportunity to warm up and prepare for their routes,
  - 7.1.4. help athletes to route read (as per competition rules),
  - 7.1.5. help athletes with any last minute nerves and ensure they are in the best possible psychological state for performance where possible,
  - 7.1.6. troubleshoot any issues that arise with competition officials on behalf of athletes, and
  - 7.1.7. ensure that athletes know where and when they are expected to compete.

## **8. Other Events** (such as BMC outreach, fundraising, social events and any other official meetings)

- 8.1. In addition to the above code of conduct you will represent the BMC, GB Climbing and Mountaineering Scotland in a professional and friendly manner.

## **9. Social Media**

- 9.1. As a Coach you are encouraged to embrace and respect the power and opportunity which social media offers. This policy is designed to help you protect yourselves, the

sport and the BMC when you are using social media in respect of your role as a GB National Development Squad Coach.

- 9.2. Social media means any medium of personal online communication. Social media is constantly evolving and this policy or guidance covers well-established digital communication applications, as well as new ones, which may arise in future.
- 9.3. When you choose to use social media you're acting as a public ambassador of the sport and the BMC) and you are responsible for your own reputation, the reputation of the BMC, and the reputation of the sport. We've created these social media guidelines to help you understand your responsibilities and look after yourself, the sport, and the BMC when you are using social media in respect of your role as a GB National Development Coach.
- 9.4. As a Coach please ensure that when you post anything to social media in connection with the sport that the posts:
  - 9.4.1. do not contain confidential and/or commercially sensitive information relating to the GB Climbing Teams or the BMC. Confidential information can include: contractual or financial information, images, videos or information taken exclusively, commercially sensitive information relating to sponsors or other partners, internal communications and communications.
  - 9.4.2. respect the rights and privacy of others. Images, videos or information which reveal private moments, or private information about other persons within the BMC and the GB Climbing Teams must not be posted on social media.
  - 9.4.3. do not bring the sport, the GB Climbing Teams or the BMC into disrepute. This includes inappropriate references, criticism or derogatory remarks about BMC employees, athletes or other people connected to the GB Climbing Teams, the BMC, Mountaineering Scotland, or any connected third parties or other individual(s) associated with the GB Climbing Teams, the BMC and Mountaineering Scotland.
  - 9.4.4. do not criticise or make fun of officials, competitors or any other individuals or bodies connected with the sport.
  - 9.4.5. do treat everyone you interact with online with respect
  - 9.4.6. do not contain comments, videos or photographs which are likely to upset, offend or otherwise cause harm to others

- 9.4.7. do not contain comments or jokes or any content which could be offensive. This includes content relating to, gender, including transgender , race or ethnicity, religions and beliefs, including lack of belief, sexuality, disability and other conditions
- 9.4.8. unless otherwise expressly agreed in advance with the BMC do not express personal opinions on controversial matters such as politics on any account which is designed solely for the purpose of promoting the sport, the GB Climbing Teams or the BMC.
- 9.5. Please be aware that in a social media environment there will be different sensitivities and life views. Content which isn't intended to be offensive can cause distress or offence to others.
- 9.6. Online abuse will not be tolerated. If any form of abuse is received online the BMC recommend not responding to the abuser but instead you seek the help and support of the BMC . A screenshot should be taken of any abuse received and then reported to the BMC Safeguarding Officer – [safeguarding@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@thebmc.co.uk)
- 9.7. Please be aware that there are many third-party programmes and other ways that can download your material without the individual knowing.

## **10. Anti-competition, Fixing and Gambling**

- 10.1. As a Coach you must:
  - 10.1.1. never bet on the outcome of a competition. If betting has occurred the BMC must be informed;
  - 10.1.2. never instruct, encourage or facilitate any other party to bet on sports you are involved with;
  - 10.1.3. never ensure the occurrence of a particular incident, which is the subject of a bet and for which you expect to receive or have received any reward, and never give or receive any gift, payment or other benefit in circumstances that might reasonably be expected to bring the BMC or the GB Climbing Teams into disrepute;
  - 10.1.4. never share sensitive information you have access to that is not available to the public, e.g. knowing that a competitor is injured, route details prior to competitions. This is considered sensitive, privileged or inside information. This

information could be sought by people who would then use that knowledge to secure an unfair advantage to make a financial gain;

10.1.5. not make any attempt to adversely influence the natural course of an event or competition, or part of an event or competition.

10.1.6. not let yourself be manipulated— unscrupulous individuals might try to develop a relationship with you built on favours or fears that they will then try to exploit for their benefit in possibly fixing an event.

10.1.7. inform the BMC if you are approached, or if you hear something suspicious or if anyone approaches you to ask about fixing any part of a competition. Any threats or suspicions of corrupt behaviour should always be reported to the Competitions Program Manager – [zoe@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:zoe@thebmc.co.uk)

## **B. Disciplinary Process**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The BMC wishes to ensure high standards from athletes. This policy enables the BMC to take appropriate action against you if a complaint is received about you or the Code of Conduct above is breached (together referred to as a Disciplinary Matter).
- 1.2. This policy and procedure set out how the BMC will deal with any Disciplinary Matter.
- 1.3. If the issue relates to a Coach who is under 18 or an adult at risk<sup>2</sup>, the designated safeguarding lead must be informed at the start. Matters that might be criminal, legal/safeguarding advice must be taken and the matter referred to the statutory authorities before proceeding further.
- 1.4. Coaches under the age of 18 or classified as an adult at risk should be supported by their parents or legal guardians, who shall act on their behalf.
- 1.5. The wellbeing of all parties during this process is paramount and they must be supported by representatives who are not involved in the process, especially during any period of suspension.

### **2. Purpose and Scope**

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistent and fair treatment of Disciplinary Matters and to encourage appropriate standards of conduct. All persons this policy applies to should have a good understanding of these procedures.
- 2.2. This policy does not confer contractual rights on individuals and will be reviewed in line with any legislative changes. The policy may be changed or amended at the BMC's discretion.
- 2.3. The BMC may at its discretion appoint external parties to conduct investigations and disciplinary hearings. This may be because of: conflicts of interest; availability of resources; complexity; or specialist knowledge of the issues. The BMC's discretion is not limited by these examples.

### **3. Principles**

- 3.1. The principles governing the policy and its application are:

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<sup>2</sup> A party who has needs for care and support; and is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and because of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect

- 3.1.1. any Disciplinary Matter will be fully investigated and no sanctions will be imposed until parties have been informed of the nature of the Disciplinary Matter and, if the Disciplinary Matter is deemed serious, given the opportunity to make representations at a disciplinary meeting.
- 3.1.2. Parties will always have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative of their choice at any disciplinary or appeal meeting (a companion).
- 3.1.3. Whilst the BMC will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that parties are present at any disciplinary hearing, in case of absence exceeding seven days then the BMC may hold the hearing in the party's absence, in which case the party may make written representations.
- 3.1.4. Wherever possible the BMC will use its best endeavours to keep all details relating to any disciplinary investigation or procedure confidential.
- 3.1.5. The BMC processes personal data collected during the investigation stage and any subsequent stages of disciplinary action in accordance with its Data Protection Policy. Data collected as part of the investigation and subsequent sanctions is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the disciplinary procedure. Inappropriate access or disclosure of such data constitutes a data breach and should be immediately reported in accordance with the BMC's Data Protection Policy. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under this disciplinary procedure.

#### **4. Serious Breach of the Code of Conduct/Gross Misconduct**

- 4.1. Serious breaches of the Code of Conduct will be considered on a case by case basis.
- 4.2. The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples that if reported to the BMC, the BMC will regard as being a serious Disciplinary Matter as they are normally regarded as gross misconduct:
  - 4.2.1. theft, fraud, deliberate falsification of records,
  - 4.2.2. physical violence including fighting and assault on another person,
  - 4.2.3. deliberate damage to BMC property or property belonging to any party,
  - 4.2.4. serious incapability through alcohol,
  - 4.2.5. abuse of drugs,
  - 4.2.6. refusal to undergo a medical examination at the BMC's request,
  - 4.2.7. negligence which causes significant loss, damage or injury,
  - 4.2.8. a serious act of insubordination,

- 4.2.9. discrimination, harassment or victimization related to age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex or sexual orientation,
- 4.2.10. sexual harassment or sexual misconduct,
- 4.2.11. disclosure of confidential information,
- 4.2.12. dishonest use of the BMC property or 'GB Climbing Team' name,
- 4.2.13. bringing the GB Climbing Teams and/or the BMC into disrepute,
- 4.2.14. offering a bribe with the intention of getting a third party to act improperly or to reward a third party for acting improperly, and
- 4.2.15. accepting a bribe from a third party as an inducement or reward for acting improperly.

## **5. Informal Procedure and Resolution**

- 5.1. If the Disciplinary Matter is not deemed serious, the following informal resolution procedure will be followed:
  - 5.1.1. the Competitions Program Manager will discuss the matter with all parties involved within 3 weeks of the Disciplinary Matter being received, notes will be taken of the discussions and held on a file for a period of 12 months. The discussion with you will be to find out if there are any problems, reiterate the required standards and provide any help and support that may be needed;
  - 5.1.2. the Competitions Program Manager will then decide upon the appropriate course of action. This may take the form of seeking an improvement in your conduct/behaviour, or informal counselling, guidance and instruction;
  - 5.1.3. the Competitions Program Manager will then email all those involved with the outcome and any actions they are required to undertake.

## **6. Formal Procedure and Resolution**

- 6.1. If there has been a serious Disciplinary Matter, or you have within the preceding 12 months been the subject of an informal Disciplinary Matter, the following procedure will be followed :
  - 6.1.1. the Head of the BMC GB Climbing Department will investigate the Disciplinary Matter by interviewing the parties involved, and if necessary, obtaining witness statements from any witnesses within 3 weeks of the Disciplinary Matter.
  - 6.1.2. the Head of GB Climbing will then call a formal meeting with you to discuss the Disciplinary Matter. You will have the right to be accompanied by a companion.

- 6.1.3. five working days from the date of the meeting above, the Head of GB Climbing will write to you setting out their findings and the action to be taken by the BMC.
- 6.2. The following are the stages of resolution/sanctions to be used for a serious Disciplinary Matter:
  - 6.2.1. Stage 1: Verbal warning - if conduct has been unsatisfactory, you will normally be given a formal verbal warning. You will be informed of the reason for the warning. A note of the verbal warning will be kept on file but will be considered 'spent' for disciplinary purposes after a period of six months, unless otherwise specified.
  - 6.2.2. Stage 2: Written warning - if a serious Disciplinary Matter occurs or if there has been a failure to improve following a previous formal verbal warning, you will be given a formal written warning. The written warning will give details of the Disciplinary Matter, the improvement required from you and the period in which it must be achieved. It will also warn that a final written warning may be issued if there is no satisfactory improvement within the required period and will advise of the right to appeal. A note of the warning will be kept on file but will be considered 'spent' for disciplinary purposes after 12 months, unless otherwise specified.
  - 6.2.3. Stage 3: Final written warning - if there is insufficient improvement following a formal written warning or if the BMC deem the Disciplinary Matter is serious enough to warrant only one written warning, a final written warning may be given to you. This will give details of the Disciplinary Matter and will warn that you may be dismissed as a Coach. If there is no satisfactory improvement within a period specified in the final written warning. It will also advise of the right to appeal. A note of the warning will be kept on file but will normally be considered 'spent' for disciplinary purposes after a period of 12 months, unless otherwise specified.
  - 6.2.4. Stage 4: Dismissal as a Coach - if you fail to meet the standards required of you as set out in a final written warning, or if the BMC deem that the Disciplinary Matter is so serious that the preceding stages are not appropriate sanctions, dismissal will normally result. If the BMC is considering this course of action you will be given a written statement prior to the formal disciplinary meeting, setting out the reasons for the proposed course of action. The issues will be fully discussed at the meeting and you will be informed in writing of the outcome. You will also be informed of your right to appeal.
- 6.3. It is recommended that for any serious disciplinary issues and/or disciplinary appeals, consideration should be given as to whether or not the investigation is conducted by an independent investigator, to prevent any potential conflict of interest.
- 6.4. All warning letters issued under this policy are to be approved by the BMC HR Department to ensure consistency and that appropriate records are maintained.

## **7. Provide the opportunity to appeal**

- 7.1. You have the right to appeal against any warning, suspension or dismissal within five working days. You will be informed in writing of the date of any appeal and will be entitled to bring a representative with you to the appeal hearing. The BMC may decide the matter at the hearing or adjourn the hearing for further investigation or for further consideration. You will be informed of the outcome.
- 7.2. An appeal against a formal written warning should be heard by a member of the BMC's senior management team who has not previously been involved in the case.
- 7.3. An appeal against dismissal will be referred by the BMC to an independent panel facilitated by Sport Resolutions UK.
- 7.4. An independent appeal is final and concludes the BMC's appeal procedure.

## **8. Suspension**

- 8.1. The BMC reserves the right to suspend you if you are suspected of gross misconduct and it is considered to be in the interest of you and/or the BMC to do so. Suspension in these circumstances is to:
  - 8.1.1. ensure an unhindered investigation to take place; or
  - 8.1.2. safeguard other parties in the BMC and GB Development Squad.
- 8.2. Suspension is not a sanction in respect of a Disciplinary Matter and will be for as short a time as possible.
- 8.3. Any decision to suspend an athlete on a UK Sport funded program must be agreed by the Sport Integrity Manager (UK Sport) before it is confirmed.
- 8.4. Any decision to suspend will be confirmed to you in writing within five working days and such written confirmation will state that the nature of the suspension is precautionary, not disciplinary, pending the outcome of the investigation and any subsequent disciplinary proceedings. Suspension will not normally affect an APA, except for Anti-Doping Regulation violations.

## **9. Criminal Offences**

- 9.1. Where allegations are made that may be of a criminal nature the BMC will co-operate fully with any police investigations. Where these issues are related to your potential conduct whilst overseas, it should be noted that the legal jurisdiction of England and Wales does not cover overseas training events and competitions and will, therefore,

be subject to the legislation and legal proceedings of the country in which the alleged offence occurred.

- 9.2. If you are charged with, or convicted of a criminal offence, the BMC will give consideration to what effect this has on your eligibility to receive public funding or publicly funded benefits, in accordance with the relevant policies.

## **10. Confidentiality**

- 10.1. You should only discuss Disciplinary Matters with the BMC staff involved in the process and your companion. Breaching confidentiality may result in further sanctions being applied.
- 10.2. The outcome of a Disciplinary Matter will remain confidential to the parties involved. Disclosure may be made in accordance with the BMC's legal, contractual or regulatory obligations.

## **11. Time limits**

- 11.1. In cases where it is not practical to implement the procedure fully and expeditiously, for example in the absence of the relevant BMC staff, the Disciplinary Matter will be dealt with as closely as possible in accordance with this procedure.
- 11.2. Under normal circumstances the Disciplinary Matter process should be concluded in no more than 2 months. However, it is recognised that more complex cases could take up to 6 months. When any Disciplinary Matter process takes more than 30 working days, the BMC staff conducting the process shall provide a written update to all parties at the 30 working day point, and every 30 working days thereafter until the process is concluded.

## **12. Note taking and records**

- 12.1. Should an investigation lead to a criminal investigation, all material obtained in the course of an investigation should be considered relevant and be made available to the police and, where applicable, to the party involved.
- 12.2. The BMC will not make an audio recording of any investigations or meetings. You are not permitted to record disciplinary interviews, meetings or hearings without prior consent from the BMC.
- 12.3. The BMC requires 'meeting notes' to be taken at all meetings to record decisions and outcomes. All interviews must have a written record, signed by the interviewer and

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yourself. The interview record must only contain first party evidence and not hearsay or speculation.

- 12.4. You will be sent a copy of the interview or meeting notes produced, which will constitute the BMC's record of proceedings.
- 12.5. All records detailing the nature of any sort of misconduct, your defence or mitigation, the action taken and the reasons for it, whether an appeal was lodged, its outcome and any subsequent developments, will be kept confidentially by GB Climbing. Likewise, the BMC may also keep records relating to your conduct, the implementation of corrective actions and progression of learning.
- 12.6. First party evidence is evidence that the individual saw or heard. Hearsay is evidence that the individual was told by another party or overheard.

## **C. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. As a Coach you are part of the BMC, which encourages a free and open culture and recognises that effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with and the GB Climbing Team's success ensured.
- 1.2. By using the whistleblowing policy - which supports people who raise a serious concern - you help other athletes and participants have a great climbing experience, by making sure we uphold the law, our policies, values and codes of conduct.
- 1.3. Don't be worried about telling someone. Our whistleblowing policy makes sure that you will be listened to with respect and taken seriously. We will take all reasonable steps to treat what you say confidentially. So if you have a serious concern please tell us, don't ignore it.
- 1.4. Please note if you have a complaint about the BMC, or a safeguarding issue, then you should use the grievance procedure below.

### **2. Wrongdoing**

- 2.1. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) sets out how whistleblowers are to be protected. As a Coach you are protected by PIDA.
- 2.2. The disclosure made must be about a serious concern. This means you have information and reasonably believe that one or more of the following matters is happening, has taken place, or is likely to happen in the future:
  - 2.2.1. a criminal offence,
  - 2.2.2. the breach of a legal obligation,
  - 2.2.3. a miscarriage of justice,
  - 2.2.4. a danger to the health and safety of an individual,
  - 2.2.5. damage to the environment,
  - 2.2.6. the deliberate concealment of information showing any of the above.

### **3. Procedure**

- 3.1. If you become aware of any criminal offence or other wrongdoing and you believe it to be in the public interest, you should report it immediately as set out below.

- 3.2. The information you provide must be given to us in good faith. This means that you must believe it to be substantially true and you must not act maliciously or make false allegations or seek any personal gain for yourself.
- 3.3. Upon becoming aware of a wrongdoing, raise your concerns immediately with the Competitions Program Manager ([zoe@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:zoe@thebmc.co.uk)) Please state clearly that you are making a protected disclosure under this policy, and provide the following information
  - 3.3.1. the name of the BMC/GB Climbing staff member/person/contractor/volunteer your concern relates to,
  - 3.3.2. your own name and role,
  - 3.3.3. your concern,
  - 3.3.4. if anyone else knows about the concern,
  - 3.3.5. what impact your concern has on the BMC/GB Climbing,
  - 3.3.6. if you have previously followed the BMC's grievance procedure set out below and if so what the outcome was,
  - 3.3.7. if you have contacted any other organisations e.g. the police, the Health & Safety Executive,
  - 3.3.8. if you give us permission to reveal your identity to the CEO and other BMC directors.
- 3.4. If the concern raised involves the CEO, please contact the Head of GB Climbing.
- 3.5. The BMC will acknowledge your concern within 10 working days.
- 3.6. The deputy will determine if the whistleblowing policy applies or explain if it should be dealt with in line with other policies e.g. grievance or safeguarding.
- 3.7. If this policy applies, the Head of GB Climbing will investigate the matter and they will talk with you asking you to explain the concern in your own words.
- 3.8. The Head of GB Climbing may use the help of people outside of the BMC if appropriate (e.g. in cases where there is a suspicion of criminal activity). They will keep you informed of progress as much as possible depending on the levels of confidentiality required.
- 3.9. They will report findings to the CEO. If there is a case to answer, the CEO will take any necessary action including, if appropriate, reporting the matter to the relevant external authority. Where, because of the nature of the serious concern, it is necessary to take disciplinary action against a member of staff, this will be done in accordance with the BMC's internal disciplinary procedure.
- 3.10. The BMC will inform you of the outcome of the investigation and any actions taken as a result. This information is to be treated confidentially.

- 3.11. If there is no case to answer, the Head of GB Climbing will inform you, and if you have not acted maliciously and had a genuine concern, no further action will be taken.

#### **4. Appeal**

- 4.1. The BMC will address your concerns fairly, but we cannot guarantee the outcome of our investigations will be the one you want. If you are not happy with how your concern has been handled you should contact the CEO who will review whether appropriate steps have been actioned.

#### **5. Time limits**

- 5.1. In cases where it is not practical to implement the procedure fully and expeditiously, for example in the absence of the relevant BMC staff, the investigation will be dealt with as closely as possible in accordance with this procedure.

## **D. Grievance Procedure**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The BMC takes your grievances seriously and encourages you to raise your concerns at an early stage so that they may be resolved fairly and swiftly. In many cases, it will be possible to resolve such issues informally. However, if you wish to raise a grievance on a more formal basis the formal procedure will be followed.
- 1.2. These procedures have been designed to deal with most concerns that you may have with the BMC, GB Climbing and any of their staff or volunteers.

### **2. Informal Procedure**

- 2.1. You should inform the Competitions Program Manager as soon as you are able with details of your grievance. This can be either over the phone or by way of email.
- 2.2. If your grievance is about a person, the Competitions Program Manager will speak to that person.
- 2.3. If your grievance is not about a person the Competitions Program Manager will talk to you and their line manager about possible solutions.
- 2.4. Once the above conversations have taken place, the Competitions Program manager will inform you of the outcome and of any action taken in order to resolve the matter.

### **3. Formal Procedure**

- 3.1. The Competitions Program Manager is able to decide if your grievance should be dealt with formally. You may also request the matter to be dealt with formally, to do this you must set out your grievance in writing.
- 3.2. The Competitions Program Manager will arrange a formal meeting to take place between you and the Head of GB Climbing to discuss the complaint within 10 working days. You have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at this meeting (a companion).
- 3.3. The Head of GB Climbing will write to you with their response to your grievance within five working days of the meeting. If you are not satisfied that the matter has been adequately resolved, or if the BMC fails to deal with your written grievance, then the right of appeal stage of the procedure will apply.

#### **4. Appeal**

- 4.1. If you feel that your grievance has not been resolved, you may appeal, by writing to the CEO. The CEO will arrange a formal meeting to hear the appeal. You have the right to a companion at this meeting. The meeting will be held within five working days of the CEO receiving your appeal. The CEO will write to the party within five working days of the meeting with their response to your appeal. If it is not possible to contact the party with a response within that time, the party will be given an explanation for the delay and will be informed when a response can be expected. Any decision of the CEO is final.

#### **5. Confidentiality**

- 5.1. Please note that any grievance raised will be received in absolute confidence and the BMC will, as far as possible, keep any details or your complaint confidential, except where your grievance leads to disciplinary action against another party within the BMC and /or GB Climbing Teams. The BMC will promptly investigate and deal with any grievance brought to its attention. If the grievance concerns the Head of GB Climbing you party should raise your grievance in writing to the CEO.
- 5.2. It is recommended that where appropriate, should any serious grievances and/or grievance appeals be received, consideration should be given as to whether or not the investigation is conducted by an independent investigator to prevent any conflict of interest.