
Codes of Conduct

Introduction

At the British Mountaineering Council, our mission is to safeguard the future of hill walking, climbing, and mountaineering, allowing individuals to experience adventure today and for generations to follow.

From rugged peaks to coastal cliffs, the BMC works diligently to preserve and restore our natural landscapes, partners with others to maintain open access for all, and offer competitive opportunities for anyone who wishes to participate, as well as nurture budding talent into future Olympic champions.

We are firm believers in the liberating power of adventure and are committed to making it accessible to everyone. We embrace challenges in all their forms, whether it's participating, or excelling at the highest level. We believe that embracing challenges enriches lives, fosters mental and physical well-being, and unites our community. Our goal is to inspire as many people as possible to join us in enjoying these exhilarating activities and sports.

The BMC actively supports clubs, community groups, and climbing walls to foster grassroots involvement, provide opportunities for participation, disseminate essential knowledge, and ensure that our sport is inclusive, safe, and welcoming.

As part of ensuring that we establish welcoming, secure, and supportive settings, the BMC has developed Codes of Conduct that are applicable to all individuals engaged in competition climbing events or attending BMC-endorsed events. This includes athletes, participants, instructors, coaches, officials, judges, administrators, route setters, parents/guardians, spectators, and volunteers. We request that everyone adheres to our Codes of Conduct when participating in, attending, or discussing on social media any BMC-approved event or activity.

Examples of BMC events comprise, but are not limited to, YCS competitions, England, Wales, and GB Climbing squad training or trials, or any event approved by the BMC through its event approval process.

The Codes have been created with the aim of proactively assisting and guiding members and other participants towards the desired conduct. As a result, we hope that the sanctions for violating the Codes of Conduct, detailed at the end of this document, will not be necessary.

The Codes of Conduct embody the BMC's core principles, as outlined in our Vision, Purpose, and Values:

Our Vision - To create a better future for climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers.

Our Purpose - To represent the interests of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers and inspire all generations.

Our Values

Community: We are the voice for our diverse community of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers.

Adventure: We believe in the freedom to challenge ourselves, taking personal responsibility for the risks.

Sustainability: We protect our crags and mountains, campaign for improved access and promote environmental sustainability.

Aspiration: We help people improve their skills, confidence and achieve personal ambitions.

Respect: We celebrate the rich variety of British climbing, hill walking and mountaineering; we build inclusive relationships and respect each other.

General Code of Conduct

This General Code of Conduct applies to all individuals attending a BMC Event, which includes members of the BMC, BMC staff, athletes, participants, instructors, coaches, officials, judges, administrators, route setters, parents/guardians, spectators, and volunteers.

- Respect the natural outdoor environment and minimise the environmental impact of their activities.
- Promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. mental and physical health benefits, risk management and fair play. Encourage participants to enjoy and value their performance and not just the outcome).
- Be a positive role model for the activity you are volunteering or participating in.
- Respect the rights, dignities and worth of everyone.
- Encourage two-way communication with all, fostering a pleasant, respectful and friendly atmosphere.
- Take care of your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions or omissions whilst volunteering or participating in BMC activities.
- Do not use illegal drugs at any BMC sanctioned event within and only smoke/vape or consume alcohol if old enough to legally do so and in designated areas.
- Ensure appropriate use of social media/digital communication in line the BMC policy/guidelines.
- Ensure all policies, guidelines and best practice laid down by the BMC are followed.
- Always report concerns you have about safeguarding, bullying, harassment and discrimination or breach of any applicable policy.
- Work together collaboratively to deliver the BMC's strategic aims and, in doing so, benefit the wider public.
- Respect the need for confidentiality whenever you have access to privileged information, including, but not limited to, Committee papers and matters of a personal nature.
- Promote, maintain and uphold the reputation of the BMC and mountaineering at all times. If you disagree with the opinion or decision of the BMC or person e.g. a competition judge, raise the issue through the appropriate channels rather than question their judgement and honesty in public.
- Cooperate fully with the BMC and other relevant authorities when requested to provide any evidence or other information and make a written statement in connection with any investigation by the BMC or other authority.

Code of Conduct for Coaches

In addition to the BMC's General Code of Conduct, the additional standards of conduct are expected to be met by all coaches working (either in a paid or voluntary capacity) at any BMC Event.

- Always consider the wellbeing and safety of participants as paramount.
- Promote the concept of a balanced lifestyle, supporting the health and well-being of all, in both the sport and in life.
- Follow the advice or guidance given by a physician (or other medically qualified specialist) in determining when an injured or ill (including mental ill health) athlete/climber is ready to recommence training or competition.
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants based on mutual trust and respect.
- Hold appropriate, valid qualifications and insurance cover.
- Never assume responsibility for any role for which you are not qualified, prepared for, or that is beyond the scope of your expertise.
- Never abuse or misuse any relationship of trust or position of power or influence.
- Ensure all activities are planned, risk assessed and that participants are suitably prepared both mentally and physically.
- Never engage in practices which are known to be harmful to the physical or psychological wellbeing of an athlete, e.g. inappropriate or excessive weighing of athletes, restricting or encouraging the restriction of food and/or fluids.
- Always inform the BMC if you are concerned about the health or wellbeing of an athlete or participant.
- Never victimise, attempt to victimise, encourage or ignore the victimisation of any individual (or their parents/carers) for raising concerns or making a complaint.
- Recognise the differences in ability and provide activity to suit both individual and group needs.
- Hold an up-to-date DBS or home country equivalent – you must inform the BMC if you have been arrested for, or charged with a criminal offence, or have any criminal conviction, caution or warning issued by the police that is not noted on the BDS.
- Never discuss the performance of an athlete in a derogatory manner during a competition within the earshot of any coach, athlete or member of the public.
- Never seek to poach or otherwise unfairly or unethically acquire an athlete.
- Ensure compliance to any rules or regulations relating to the practice of the sport, for example (but not limited to) the rules and regulations of the BMC, International Federation of Sports Climbers (IFSC), or International Olympic Committee (IOC).

- Ensure that any conflicts of interest are declared prior to or at the event.
- Do not consume alcohol or smoke/vape whilst coaching.
- Never bet on the outcome of a competition you are in any way involved with.
- Never instruct, encourage or facilitate any other party to bet on a competition you are involved with.
- Never give or receive any gift, payment or other benefit, that might reasonably be expected to bring the BMC or GB Climbing into disrepute.
- Always inform a BMC or GB Climbing representative if you are approached or hear anything suspicious about fixing any part of a competition.
- Never share sensitive information you have access to that is not available to the public.

Code of Conduct for Officials (volunteers)

In addition to the BMC's General Code of Conduct, the additional standards of conduct are expected to be met by any officials working (either in a paid or voluntary capacity) at any BMC Event.

- Always consider the wellbeing and safety of participants as paramount.
- Follow the advice or guidance given by a physician (or other medically qualified specialist) in determining whether an injured or ill (including mentally ill) athlete/climber is ready to participate in competition.
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants based on mutual trust and respect.
- Hold appropriate, valid qualifications and insurance cover.
- Ensure all activities are planned, risk assessed and that participants are suitably prepared mentally and physically.
- Never victimise, attempt to victimise or encourage the victimisation of any individual (or their parents, guardians or dependents) for raising concerns or making a complaint.
- If they hold a DBS or home countries equivalent inform the BMC if they are arrested for or charged with a criminal offence.
- Where a DBS is required, hold an up-to-date DBS or home country equivalent – you must inform the BMC if you have been arrested for, or charged with a criminal offence, or have any criminal conviction, caution or warning issued by the police that is not noted on the BDS.
- Never discuss the performance of an athlete in a derogatory/insulting manner during a competition within the earshot of any coach, athlete or member of the public.
- Never seek to poach or otherwise unfairly or unethically acquire an athlete into any group or club that you may be involved in.

- Never assume responsibility for any role for which you are not qualified, prepared for, or that is beyond the scope of your expertise.
- Ensure compliance to any rules or regulations relating to the practice of the sport or activity, for example (but not limited to) the rules and regulations of the BMC, International Federation of Sports Climbers (IFSC), or International Olympic Committee (IOC).
- Never bet on the outcome of a competition you are in any way involved with.
- Never instruct, encourage, or facilitate any other party, to bet on a competition that you are involved with.
- Never give or receive any gift, payment or other benefit that might reasonably be expected to influence either your, or the recipient's, judgment or otherwise bring the BMC or GB Climbing into disrepute.
- Never share sensitive information you have access to that is not available to the public.
- Always inform a BMC or GB Climbing representative if you are approached or hear anything suspicious about fixing any part of a competition.

Code of Conduct for adult athlete/climber

In addition to the BMC's General Code of Conduct, the additional standards of conduct are expected to be met by all adult athletes/climbers at any BMC Competition.

- Participate within the rules and respect, coaches, officials, judges and their decisions.
- Always perform to the best of their ability.
- Always promote fair play.
- Listen and respond positively/respectfully to my coach.
- Allow the coaches to do their job, do not openly criticise.
- Respect all other participants.
- Never condone rule violation or use of prohibited substances.
- Always wear appropriate clothing.
- Be honest with your coach concerning illness, injury and your ability to train and compete fully.
- Always be on time.
- Do not consume alcohol or smoke/vape.
- Never bet on the outcome of a competition you are in any way involved with.

- Never instruct, encourage or facilitate any other party to bet on a competition you are involved with
- Never give or receive any gift, payment or other benefit that might reasonably be expected to bring the BMC or GB Climbing into disrepute.
- Never share sensitive information you have access to that is not available to the public.
- Always inform a BMC or GB Climbing representative if you are approached or hear anything suspicious about fixing any part of a competition.

Code of Conduct for young athlete/climbers (Under 18)

In addition to the BMC's General Code of Conduct, these additional standards of conduct are expected to be met by any young athletes/climbers (under 18) at any BMC Competition.

- Participate within the rules and respect, coaches, officials, judges and their decisions.
- Always perform to the best of your ability.
- Always promote fair play.
- Listen and respond respectfully to your coach.
- Allow the coaches to do their job, do not openly criticise.
- Respect all other athletes/climbers.
- Never condone rule violation or use of prohibited substances.
- Always wear appropriate clothing.
- Be honest with your coach concerning illness, injury and your ability to train and compete fully.
- Do not consume alcohol or smoke/vape.
- Never bet on the outcome of a competition you are in any way involved with.
- Never instruct, encourage or facilitate any other party to bet on a competition you are involved with
- Never give or receive any gift, payment or other benefit that might reasonably be expected to influence either your, or the recipient's, judgment or performance or otherwise bring the BMC or GB Climbing into disrepute.
- Never share sensitive information you have access to that is not available to the public.
- Always inform a BMC or GB Climbing representative if you are approached or hear anything suspicious about fixing any part of a competition.

Code of Conduct for Parents/Carers

In addition to the BMC's General Code of Conduct, these additional standards of conduct are expected to be met by any parents/carers at any BMC Event.

- Encourage your child/children to learn the rules and participate within them.
- Set a good example, applaud effort and performance of all results as well as success.
- Publicly accept officials' judgements.
- Never force your child to take part in the sport.
- Help your child to recognise good performance not just results.
- Share any concerns/complaints about any aspect of the sport through the appropriate channels.
- Never punish or belittle a child for poor performance.
- Support your child's involvement and help them to enjoy their sport.
- Always collect your child promptly at the end of sessions.
- Keep the organisation/club/wall updated with relevant and essential information.
- Ensure your child/children wear appropriate clothing.
- Be honest with your child/children's coach concerning illness, injury and your ability to train and compete fully.
- Listen and respond respectfully to my child/children's coach.

Competition Spectators

In addition to the BMC's General Code of Conduct, these additional standards of conduct are expected to be met by all spectators attending a BMC Competition

- Set a good example, applaud good performance and efforts as well as success.
- Respect and publicly accept officials' judgements.
- Never belittle a participant, judge or official for making mistakes or poor performance.
- Follow the photography guidance at the event/activity.

Sanctions for failure to follow the Codes of Conduct

Our aspiration is for these Codes of Conduct to embody a straightforward and practical approach to creating a safe and positive atmosphere, enabling all participants to get maximum enjoyment from the event they are part of. We believe that they are simple to follow and that the following sanctions will not need to be applied. However, any breach of any of the above Codes of Conduct may result in any or all of the following:

- The withdrawal of any awards, placings, records or other achievements bestowed in any tournaments, competitions, activities or events held or sanctioned by the BMC;
- A fine which will be donated to one of the BMC's charitable campaigns e.g. Mend our Mountains.
- Removal from an event/competition/training.
- Dismissal from future BMC sanctioned events, training, competitions.
- The complete suspension from participation as a competitor, coach, judge, referee, administrator, official, spectator or staff member.
- Completion of remedial education or training at own cost.

Owner	Safeguarding – Helen Murphy
Version number	1.0
Date last modified	May 2023
Modified by	Safeguarding – Helen Murphy
Authorised date	
Authorising authority	N/A
Authorisation information	
Next review date	2024
File location	Confid/safeguarding/policies and procedures 2023