

Hong Kong, China Rowing Association Coaching Code of Ethics (HKCRA CCE)

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

The following five principles which all HKCRA coaches strive to embody in their professional roles, form the framework for the establishment of the consensus Ethical Standards which all HKCRA coaches consistently observe.

A: Competence

Coaches strive to maintain high standards of excellence in their work. They recognize the boundaries of their particular competencies and the limitations of their expertise. They provide only those services and use only those techniques for which they are qualified by education, training, or experience. In those areas in which recognized professional standards do not yet exist, coaches exercise careful judgment and take appropriate precautions to protect the welfare of those with whom they work. They maintain knowledge of relevant scientific and professional information related to the services they render, and they recognize the need for ongoing education. Coaches make appropriate use of scientific, professional, technical, and administrative resources.

B: Integrity

Coaches seek to promote integrity in the practice of coaching. Coaches are honest, fair, and respectful of others. In describing or reporting their qualifications, services, and methods, they do not make statements that are false, misleading, or deceptive. Coaches strive to be aware of their own belief systems, values, needs and limitations and the effect of these on their work. To the extent feasible, they attempt to clarify for relevant parties the roles they are performing and to function appropriately in accordance with those roles.

C: Professional Responsibility

Coaches uphold professional standards of conduct, clarify their professional roles and obligations, accept appropriate responsibility for their behavior, and adapt their methods to the needs of different athletes. Coaches consult with, refer to, or cooperate with other professionals and institutions to the extent needed to serve the best interest of their athletes. Coaches' ethical standards and conduct are personal matters to the same degree as is true for any other person, except when coaches' conduct may compromise their professional responsibilities or reduce the public's trust in the coaching profession and coaches. Coaches are concerned about the ethical compliance of their colleagues' professional conduct. When appropriate, they consult with colleagues in order to prevent or avoid unethical conduct.

D: Respect and Dignity

Coaches respect the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all participants. Coaches are aware of cultural, individual, and role differences, including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, family status, and socioeconomic status. Coaches try to eliminate the effect on their work of biases based on those factors, and they do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

E: Concern for Others' Welfare

Coaches seek to contribute to the welfare of those with whom they interact professionally. In their professional actions, coaches consider the welfare and rights of their athletes and other participants. When conflicts occur among coaches' obligations or concerns, they attempt to resolve these conflicts and to perform their roles in a responsible fashion that avoids or minimizes harm. Coaches are sensitive to differences in power between themselves and others, and they do not exploit or mislead other people during or after professional relationships.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

The following five categories of Ethical Standards list the consensus, mandatory activities which embody the HKCRA Coaches' Ethical Principles. While many aspects of personal behavior and private activities may not seem closely connected with the official duties of coaching, all coaches should be sensitive to their position as role models for their athletes. Private activities perceived as unethical or illegal negatively influence the coaching environment.

1. General Standards

These General standards apply to the professional activities of all coaches.

1.1 Boundaries of Competence (Principle A)

- (a) Coaches provide services only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, or appropriate professional experience.
- (b) Coaches provide services involving new techniques only after first undertaking appropriate study, training, supervision, and/or consultation from persons who are competent in those techniques.
- (c) In those emerging areas in which generally recognized standards for training do not yet exist, coaches nevertheless take reasonable steps to ensure the competence of their work and to protect athletes and other participants from harm.

1.2 Maintaining Expertise (Principle A)

Coaches maintain awareness of current scientific and professional information in their fields of activity, and undertake ongoing efforts to maintain competence in the skills they use.

1.3 Basis for Professional Judgments (Principle A)

Coaches rely on scientifically and professionally derived knowledge when making professional judgments or when engaging in professional activities.

1.4 Describing the Nature and Results of Coaching Services (Principles B, C)

When coaches provide coaching services to an individual, a group, or an organization, they provide, using language that is reasonably understandable to the recipient of those services, appropriate information beforehand about the nature of such services and appropriate information later about results and conclusions.

1.5 Respecting Others (Principle B, D, E)

Coaches respect the rights of others to hold values, attitudes and opinions that differ from their own. However, as athlete mentors, coaches recognize the importance of imparting ethical values and attitudes to athletes as part of their development.

1.6 Preventing Discrimination (Principles B, C, D, E)

Discrimination is a legal term referring to treating a person less favorably, because of a particular individual characteristic which is protected by law. There are two types of discrimination,-- direct and indirect, and under Hong Kong law, they include discriminations on the basis of sex, disability, family status (includes marital status and pregnancy), and race.

- (i) Direct Discrimination refers to treating a person less favourably, than another person of different sex, family status, race and/ or with disability.
- (ii) Indirect Discrimination occurs when a condition or requirement, which is not justifiable, is applied to everyone but in practice adversely affects persons of a particular sex, family status, race, and/or with disability.

Coaches do not engage in actions which discriminate on any basis whether proscribed by law or not. This includes discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, languages, marital and family status, or socioeconomic status.

1.7 Preventing Sexual Harassment (Principles B, C, D, E)

In general, sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which is perceived by the victim, or a bystander, to be offensive, humiliating or intimidating. Sexual harassment can consist of or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts or a single intense or severe act. Under the law, there are two types of sexual harassment:

- (i) Misuse of authority. This refers to demanding sexual favours in return for access to resources, promotion, team selection, etc.
- (ii) Hostile Environment. This refers to unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature (physical, verbal or non-verbal) which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.
 - a) Coaches do not engage in sexual harassment towards any individual or group.
 - b) Coaches always treat sexual-harassment complainants and respondents with dignity and respect.
 - c) Coaches do not deny an athlete the right to participate based on the athlete having made, or being the subject of, sexual harassment allegations.

1.8 Preventing Other Forms of Harassment (Principles B, C, D, E)

(a) Coaches do not engage in behavior that is harassing, demeaning, or disrespectful to persons with whom they interact in their work based on factors such as those persons' age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, family status, or socioeconomic status.

(b) Physical contact between a coach and an athlete is sometimes necessary during the coaching process, and coaches should ensure that no action on their part could be misconstrued or experienced as inappropriate, and that any NSA guidelines on this matter are followed. Particularly, the needs of athletes with disabilities and others who may be vulnerable must be taken into account.

1.9 Avoiding Harm (Principles A, C, E)

It is a primary responsibility of coaches to ensure a safe training environment.

Coaches take reasonable steps to avoid harming their athletes or other participants, and to minimize harm where it is foreseeable and unavoidable.

1.10 Prioritizing Child Welfare (Principles A, C, E)

The HKCRA has a duty of care to safeguard all children (young people under the age of 18) training under its elite training system. All children have the right to be completely safe all the time, and the needs of children with disabilities and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

The HKCRA recognizes that child abuse is a problem in all societies and children training at the HKCRA may experience abuse at home, at school or in the sporting environment. Sport can play a crucial role in the child's recovery from such abuse, by providing a place of safety, where the child's self esteem, and confidence can be nurtured.

(a) Coaches take all reasonable steps to provide children with appropriate psychological and physical safety and protection while in the care of the HKCRA.

(b) Coaches report directly to the Chief Executive any evidence of poor practice, or suspicious behaviour which may harm children.

1.11 Avoiding Conflicts of Interest (Principles B, C, E)

Because coaches' professional judgments and actions may affect others, they are alert to guard against personal, financial, social, organizational, or political factors that might lead to misuse of their influence.

1.12 Personal Data Privacy (Principles B, C, E)

Coaches take all reasonable steps to protect personal data of athletes, in accordance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance

1.13 Avoiding Multiple Relationships (Principles B, C, E)

- a) A coach refrains from promising or entering into another personal, professional, financial, or other relationship or obligation with athletes, or their parents/guardians if it appears likely that such a relationship might reasonably impair the coach's objectivity or otherwise interfere with the coach's effectively performing his or her functions as a coach, or might harm or exploit the athlete.
- b) If a coach finds that, due to unforeseen factors, a potentially harmful multiple relationship has arisen, the coach attempts to resolve it with due regard for the best interest of the affected person and maximal compliance with the HKCRA CCE.
- c) As soon as it becomes apparent that the coach may be called on to perform potentially conflicting roles, the coach clarifies and adjusts, or withdraws from such roles appropriately.

1.14 Avoiding Exploitative Relationships (Principles B, C, E)

- a) Coaches do not exploit athletes and/or other participants over whom they have supervisory, evaluative, or other authority.
- b) Coaches do not engage in sexual/romantic relationships with athletes or other participants over whom the coach has evaluative, direct, or indirect authority, because such relationships are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative, and create a perception of unfairness among team members (See also Section 2.3).

1.15 Delegation to and Supervision of Subordinates (Principles A, B, C, E)

- a) Supervising coaches delegate to their supervisees, and assistants only those responsibilities that such persons can reasonably be expected to perform competently, on the basis of their education, training, or experience, either independently or with the level of supervision being provided.
- b) Coaches provide proper training and supervision to their supervisees and take reasonable steps to see that such persons perform services responsibly, competently, and ethically.

1.16 Media Presentation (Principles A, B, C)

When coaches provide advice or comment by means of public lectures, demonstration, radio or television programs, prerecorded tapes, printed articles, mailed material, or other media, they take reasonable precautions to ensure that the content and presentation is consistent with the HKCRA CCE.

2. Training Athletes**2.1 Structuring the Relationship (Principles A, B, C)**

- (a) Coaches discuss with athletes as early as is feasible, to inform them about

appropriate issues, such as the nature and structure of training, athlete goals and expectations, performance monitoring systems and all other training related considerations.

(b) Coaches make reasonable efforts to answer athletes' questions and to avoid misunderstandings about training. Whenever possible, coaches provide oral and/or written information, using language that is understandable to the athlete.

2.2 Relationship Boundaries with Athletes (Principles A, B, C, D, E)

In elite sports training systems, athletes are at the centre of a system of relationships focused on helping them to achieve their sport potential. These relationships require that a significant amount of time be spent together in the emotionally intense environment of competitive sport. The coach is placed in a position of trust, guardianship and authority over the athletes. All Coaches must be aware of their professional roles, responsibilities and appropriate relationship boundaries with athletes. The responsibility to maintain ethical, professional boundaries in relationships with athletes lies completely with the coach.

- a) Coaches do not engage in sexual/romantic relationships with current athletes.
- b) Because sexual intimacies with a former athlete can undermine public confidence in the coaching profession, coaches are strongly advised to not engage in sexual intimacies with former athletes.

2.3 Accuracy and Objectivity in Coaching (Principles A, B, C, D, E)

- a) When engaged in coaching, coaches present information accurately and objectively.
- b) When engaged in coaching, coaches recognize the power they hold over athletes and therefore avoid engaging in conduct that is personally demeaning to athletes and other participants.

2.4 Assessing Athlete Performance (Principles A, B, C)

- a) Coaches establish an appropriate process for providing feedback to athletes.
- b) Coaches formally meet regularly with athletes to assess progress against goals and map out pathways for continuous improvement.
- c) Coaches evaluate athletes on the basis of their performance on relevant and established program requirements.

2.5 Consultation and Referral (Principles B, C)

Coaches recognize their own limitations and proactively consult with other coaches to ensure their athletes are not being held back. Coaches are willing to make referrals when professionally appropriate in order to benefit the athlete's development.

2.6 Honoring Commitments (Principles B)

Coaches take all measures to honor commitments they have made to athletes.

2.7 Team Selection (Principles A, B, C)

Coaches' assessments, reports, and evaluative statements used to recommend team members for selection are based on professional judgment, and information and techniques which provide appropriate and substantive evidence for their recommendations.

2.8 Drug-Free Sport (Principles B, C, E)

Coaches do not tolerate the use of recreational or performance-enhancing drugs and support athletes' efforts to be drug-free.

2.9 Alcohol & Tobacco (Principles C, E)

- a) Coaches discourage the use of alcohol and tobacco in conjunction with athletic events or victory celebrations at playing sites, and forbid use of alcohol by minors.
- b) Coaches do not smoke or drink alcohol while they are coaching.
- c) Coaches do not smoke or drink alcohol while in the presence of their athletes
- d) Coaches forbid HKCRA scholarship athletes smoking or taking any illegal substances and monitor compliance consistently

3. Coach Training and Supervision

3.1 Design of Coach Education/Professional Development (E/PD) Programs (Principles A, B, C,)

Coaches who are responsible for E/PD programs for other coaches seek to ensure that the programs are competently designed, provide the proper professional coaching experiences, and meet the requirements for certification or other goals for which claims are made by the program.

3.2 Descriptions of Coach E/PD Programs (Principles A, B, C,)

- a) Coaches responsible for E/PD programs for other coaches seek to ensure that they provide a current and accurate description of the program content, training goals and objectives, and requirements that must be met for satisfactory completion of the program. This information must be readily available to all interested parties.
- b) Coaches seek to ensure that statements concerning their E/PD programs are accurate and not misleading.

4. Resolving Ethical Issues

4.1 Familiarity With the HKCRA CCE (Principles A, B, C,)

Coaches have an obligation to be familiar with the HKCRA CCE and its application to their work. Lack of awareness, or understanding of an ethical standard is not itself a defense to a charge of unethical conduct.

4.2 Confronting Ethical Issues (Principles B, C)

When a coach is uncertain whether a particular situation or course of action would violate the HKCRA CCE, the coach will consult with other coaches knowledgeable about ethical issues, with the NSA, HKCRA Management, or with other appropriate authorities in order to choose a proper response.

4.3 Conflicts Between Ethics and Organizational Demands (Principles B, C)

If the demands of another organization with which coaches are affiliated conflict with the HKCRA CCE, coaches clarify the nature of the conflict, with both parties and seek to resolve the conflict in a way that permits the fullest adherence to the HKCRA CCE.

4.4 Informal Resolution of Ethical Violations (Principles B, C, E)

When coaches believe that there may have been an ethical violation by another coach, and an athlete's rights are not being violated and/or the athlete is not being put at risk, they may attempt to resolve the issue by bringing it to the attention of that individual in a collegial manner to informally resolve this issue.

4.5 Reporting Ethical Violations (Principles B, C, E)

If an apparent ethical violation is not appropriate for informal resolution under Standard 4.4 or is not resolved properly in that fashion, coaches may file a formal report in writing to the HKCRA Management.

4.6 Cooperating With Ethics Investigations (Principles B, C, E)

Coaches cooperate in ethics investigations, proceedings, and resulting requirements of the HKCRA or the NSA, if appropriate. Failure to cooperate is itself an ethics violation.

4.7 Improper Complaints (Principles B, C, D, E)

Coaches do not file or encourage the filing of ethics complaints that are frivolous and are intended to harm the respondent rather than to protect the public.

5. Process Relating to Violation of Code (Principles C)

- 5.1** Coaches acknowledge that the HKCRA CCE is administered under the authority of the HKCRA and that a violation of this Code subjects the coach to the HKCRA's established processes under the employment contract in the event of disciplinary action.

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