

# Welsh Fencing Ltd

## Minimum Standards of Behaviour and Conduct

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# Welsh Fencing Code of Conduct Policy

## 1 Introduction

Welsh Fencing is responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout the sport at every level within Wales. This code is supplementary to the BFA Code of Conduct, which continues to apply.

The purpose of the Welsh Fencing Code of Conduct at Competitions policy is to set clear expectations of behaviour at our closed events for anyone in attendance in any role or capacity. Everyone involved in the sport should promote equality of access and opportunity, fairness and respect. All those involved in fencing have a responsibility to act according to the highest standards of integrity, and to ensure that the reputation of the sport is, and remains, high.

The Welsh Closed Events (Youth, BYC Qualifiers, teams and Senior Nationals) are considered development events for all – fencers, referees, coaches and organisers. They are a chance to learn and prepare for national level competitions for each role. Our aim is to create an environment where each person feels they can thrive in their capacity, and ensuring a positive experience for all.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to:

1. Establish the code of behaviour and expected minimum standards of behaviour for all involved with the sport
2. Provide information on reporting and disciplinary procedures.

The document references 'At Competitions', but applies equally outside of the competition environment – effectively at all times.

## 2 Terminology

For the purpose of clarification some specific terms are explained here:

- The 'fencing family' incorporates everyone involved with the sport of fencing in Wales, including all individuals, affiliated bodies, clubs, associations and all other organisations involved in any capacity, whether paying members of Welsh Fencing or not. For the avoidance of doubt this includes all fencers, and anyone attending the competition (paid or voluntary, spectators or staff) including all coaches, referees and all other officials.
- Conflicts and Declarations of Interest – If you have several interests, you are advised to declare such interests when accepting appointments and then to conduct yourself professionally, never allowing such interests to cause a conflict to the role in hand (for example, a referee declaring their club to DT)
- Young People – for the sake of clarity, when referring to 'young people' in this document, it is to persons under the age of 18. It is important to recognise that our senior events and teams also include many young people.
- Expected minimum standards. Any examples given in this policy are examples of behaviour that is or is not acceptable, and not exhaustive.
- DT – this is the 'Directoire Technique' and is the group of people responsible for organising an event

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- BYC – is the British Youth Championships, and event organised each year by BFA, qualification for which is managed through events at each of the Regions, including Wales

## 3 How to Use this Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct has a generic element which relates to all within the sport. If you have a voluntary, paid or participant role which is not specifically referred to, or you do not have a specific role within fencing then the Generic Code of Behaviour applies to you.

Some Specific roles have added guidance.

Your role: to find the specific section that applies to you. If you have multiple roles you should use the respective Codes of Behaviour for each role.

### 3.1 Generic Code of Behaviour

The content of this code of behaviour applies to all involved with the sport of fencing in Wales.

In order to protect the reputation of fencing in Wales, the code also applies to all those associated with Welsh Fencing, who are involved with fencing outside of Wales.

### 3.2 Expected Minimum Standards of Behaviour and Conduct

All individuals involved in Fencing will, at all times:

- Respect the spirit of fair play. This is more than keeping within the rules – it also incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always participating with the right spirit.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others
- Conduct themselves in a manner that takes all reasonable measures to protect their own safety, and the safety of others.
- Never use inappropriate language or gestures
- Promote a good reputation of the sport and take all possible steps to avoid it being brought into disrepute
- Abide by the Welsh Fencing and British Fencing Safeguarding policy
- Abide by Welsh Fencing and British Fencing Equality policy
- Abide by British Fencing Anti-doping policy
- Take personal responsibility to ensure they are suitably insured for their activities by having an up to date British Fencing Membership.
- Cooperate with any Code-compliant anti-doping investigation or proceedings
- Must not commit an act of misconduct related to anti-doping which does not amount to an Anti-Doping Rule Violation, with appropriate action taken where necessary

### 3.3 UK Bribery Act Awareness

Individuals need to be aware of, and comply with, the requirements of the UK Bribery Act 2010, which has two general offences:

- The offering, promising, and giving of an advantage, and
- The requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting of an advantage

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It is an offence under the act for a person to corruptly accept any gift, or consideration as an inducement or reward for doing, or refrain from doing, anything in their official capacity, or showing favour or disfavour to any person in their official capacity.

## 3.4 Fencers

The content of this code of behaviour applies to fencers involved with Welsh Fencing. This is as well as the General Code of Behaviour set out above.

This applies to the whole time at the event, whilst fencing or not.

- Fencers are expected to wear the correct equipment, and follow basic safety guidelines to ensure the wellbeing of those around them.
- A fencer is permitted to ask a referee to rephrase a point, or ask for an explanation of the rules, but is not permitted to dispute the referee's decision. If a fencer is deemed to be acting in an unreasonable manner, fair warning will be given, followed by a yellow card refusal to obey referee (penalty sheet 1<sup>st</sup> group) or a red card for disturbing the order on the piste (penalty sheet, 3<sup>rd</sup> group).
- Fencers are expected to show good sportsmanship and salute at the start and end of the bout, and shake hands with their opponent and referee. Win or defeat should be accepted with dignity.

## 3.5 Referees

The content of this code of behaviour applies to all referees involved with Welsh Fencing. This is as well as the General Code of Behaviour set out above.

This applies at all times during an event, whilst active on a piste or not.

- Referees are expected to be honest in applying the rules.
- Referees are expected to be fair and clear with their decisions. They are expected to follow the rules of the game, whilst using appropriate discretion on the enforcement of penalties depending on the age and experience of fencers. These events are for learning and developing knowledge and experience, and more often a "next time make sure..." approach is more appropriate than a card.
- U16 referees, and any inexperienced referee, will be given a mentor who will stand piste-side. This mentor will be a qualified referee who is there to support the referee in charge of any bout. The mentor will have the authority to speak to, and if absolutely necessary, give cards to, anyone they feel is behaving outside of the spirit of this policy. They will also be there to offer help and advice for the personal development of the referees.

## 3.6 Coaches

The content of this code of behaviour applies to coaches involved with Welsh Fencing. This is as well as the General Code of Behaviour set out above.

- Coaches are expected to lead by example, for the fencers and for parents. They are responsible for showing how to behave at events to those who may be new to the competition scene.
- If a coach wishes to raise something with a referee, they are to do so in a polite and respectful manor. At no point is it acceptable to criticise the referee in front of fencers. If the referee has a mentor, they are to approach the mentor rather than the referee.
- Coaches can give support during breaks within the bout, and whilst their fencer is returning to their line as is accepted in higher level competitions. They are not to coach while fencing is happening, or give any indication to the piste position of the fencer.

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## 3.7 Parents/Spectators

The content of this code of behaviour applies to all parents involved with Welsh Fencing. This is as well as the General Code of Behaviour set out above.

This involves all spectators at all times.

- Parents/Spectators are expected to be encouraging and respectful to all fencers, coaches and referees, regardless of club affiliation. Parents must follow the requests of referees/officials when asked to step back or move away in the interest of safety.
- Any questions or concerns are to be directed to the event organisers, referee mentors, or welfare officer. Parents/spectators are not permitted to approach a referee in charge of a bout.

## 3.8 Organisers/Staff

The content of this code of behaviour applies to all staff involved with Welsh Fencing. This is as well as the General Code of Behaviour set out above.

This refers to, but is not limited to, Team Managers, Welfare Officers, Support Staff, event organisers, Referee Mentors, Volunteers, any paid roles to do with Welsh Fencing.

- Organisers/Staff are to make themselves known at the beginning of the competition so attendees are aware of who they can approach. An event manager and welfare officer are to be identified clearly.
- The format of the competition is to be announced at the beginning of the event, and referee mentors identified.
- Organisers will listen to both sides of any disputes and record appropriately, whilst making sure any minors feel safe and are directed away from any confrontation. Inappropriate behaviour towards minors is to be reported to the WF Welfare officer.
- Organisers reserve the right to report any inappropriate behaviour by any attendee to the event to the Board of WF for sanctions (as listed below) to be considered

## 4 Welsh Fencing Run Events

By attending a Welsh Fencing Closed event you are agreeing to abide by this policy. Failure to do so may lead to sanctions, including:

- You may be asked to leave the hall; this applies equally to coaches, parents and fencers. If a fencing parent is asked to leave the Hall, their fencer will also be removed from the event
- You may be denied entry into future events.
- This may also harm any future selection for Wales as a coach/staff member/fencer.
- In severe cases, membership may be revoked.

Any reports of unacceptable behaviour will also be passed to British Fencing in order to go through the appropriate disciplinary paths.

## 5 Summary

A 'one-page' summary of this document will be prepared and made available at Welsh events, outlining the key points of this Code of Conduct.

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Updated 8/12/21 – 2 additional points in section 3.2 relating to anti-doping assurance framework