



Coach Code of Conduct

Summary

Durham Dragons coaches must always conduct themselves as ambassadors for the club and sport, always performing their duties with the utmost of regard to athlete safety and what is in the long-term best interests of all athletes. Coaches must recognize that they are in a position of trust and power and that such a position must not be abused.

The coach-athlete relationship is a privileged one. Coaches play a critical role in the personal, as well as athletic development of the athletes they coach. They must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it. Coaches must also recognize that they are conduits through which the values and goals of a sport organization are channeled. Thus, how an athlete regards his/her sport is often dependent on the behavior of the coach. The following code of conduct has been developed to aid coaches in achieving a level of behavior which will allow them to assist their athletes in becoming well-rounded, self-confident, and productive human beings.

Policy review

Durham Dragons Athletics board members will review this policy on an annual basis.

Code of conduct signing

This code of conduct must be signed by all coaches every two years.

Coaches have a responsibility to:

1. **Treat everyone fairly within the context of athletics, regardless of gender, place of origin, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political belief or economic status.**
2. **Respect the athletes' dignity and ensure the safety of the physical and emotional athletes with whom they work. This includes:**
 - a) Refraining from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of coaching duties. Verbal or physical behaviors that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable. Please refer to the Athletics Ontario SafeSport manual.
 - b) Directing comments or constructive criticism at the performance rather than the athlete.



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- c) Refraining from talking about an athlete's poor performance and/or training to anyone other than the athlete themselves (in a constructive manner) and/or their parents/legal guardians.
- d) Immediately addressing disagreements amongst athletes that may occur at practice and/or meets.
- e) Being aware of the academic pressures placed on student-athletes and conduct practices and participation in competitions in a manner to allow academic success.

3. Athlete health & safety

- a) Ensure that the activity being undertaken is suitable for the age, experience, ability and fitness level of the athletes and educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment.
- b) Communicate and cooperate with registered medical practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their athletes' medical and psychological problems. Consider the athletes' future health and well-being as foremost when making decisions regarding an injured athletes' ability to continue playing or training.
- c) Recognize and accept when to refer athletes to other coaches and sport specialists. Allow athletes' goals to take precedence over those of the coach.

4. Consistently display high personal standards and project a favorable image of Durham Dragons Athletics. This includes:

- a) Treating fellow coaches, athletes and officials with due respect, both in victory and defeat and encourage athletes to act accordingly. Actively encourage athletes to uphold the rules of athletics and the spirit of such rules.
- b) Refraining from public criticism of fellow coaches, athletes and athletic clubs, especially when using social media, speaking to the media or recruiting athletes.
- c) Abstaining from the use of alcohol, tobacco, recreational marijuana and/or vaping products while in the presence of athletes and discourage its use.
- d) Abstaining from drinking alcoholic beverages or use of nonmedical prescription drugs when working with athletes.
- e) Never provide under-age athletes with alcohol or advocate or condone the use of drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances, classes or methods.



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5. Supervision

- a) Observe the 'two deep' rule, ensuring there are always two coaches or one coach and one associate* present at practices and meets to manage the number of athletes practicing and/or competing. (Note: *An associate is defined as any active club member who is in good standing with the club, has cleared a criminal reference check and completed the following training modules: Respect in Sport and NCCP 'SafeSport'.)
- b) Certify that any one-to-one contact with athletes is done in an "open, observable and interruptible" setting that is open to others, observable by others, and can be interrupted by others.
- c) Refrain from:
 - i. Transporting vulnerable individuals (athletes under 18) without another adult present. (Note: Exemptions can be made if requests are submitted and approved by the SafeSport Committee, for example: athlete's parents are unable to consistently bring them to practice and coach can/is willing to transport them to/from.)
 - ii. Assuming legal guardianship of vulnerable individuals (athletes under 18).
 - iii. Sharing overnight accommodations with any athletes, regardless of age.

6. Communication

- a) Include parents/guardians in all communication (e.g., electronic, telephonic) with vulnerable individuals (athletes under 18). (Note: Exemptions can be extended for extenuating circumstances, e.g., athletes lost or requiring immediate help during a meet, practice or other team event.)
- b) Ensuring that parents/guardians are aware that some non-personal communication between coaches and vulnerable individuals (e.g., coaches and athletes under 18) may take place electronically (e.g., by texting) and that this type of communication is now considered to be commonplace by Athletics Ontario.

7. Parent/legal guardian relationship

- a) In the case of minors (athletes less than 18), communicate and cooperate with the athlete's parents or legal guardians, involving them in management decisions pertaining to their athlete's development.
- b) Always speak to an athlete's parent/legal guardian about an athlete's poor performance and/or training in a constructive manner.
- c) Immediately raise concerns with an athlete's parent/legal guardian should concerns arise about their mental health, physical health and or behaviour (e.g. breach of athlete code of conduct). (Note: Coaches are encouraged to engage with the SafeSport committee for support if required.)



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Coaches must:

1. Follow Athletics Ontario SafeSport policies as listed in the [Athletics Ontario SafeSport manual](#). Including, at no time become intimately and/or sexually involved with the athletes they coach. This includes requests for sexual favours or threats of reprisal for the rejection or such requests.
2. Abide by requirements set out in Durham Dragon's policies (as applicable).
3. Provide the SafeSport committee with a copy of their vulnerable sector criminal record check and proof of completion of the following training modules: Respect in Sport, NCCP 'SafeSport', and NCCP Rule of Two modules. (Note: Costs associated with completing these requirements will be paid for by Durham Dragon Athletics so long as the coach remains active with the club for a minimum of one calendar year. If the coach chooses to leave prior to that time they will reimburse the club a prorated amount equal to the number of months not fulfilled.)
4. Seek ways of increasing professional development and self-awareness.

In the case of any dispute regarding this policy or the terms of which, or any disciplinary default whereby a coach acts outside this code the dispute will be brought to the attention of the Durham Dragons Athletics SafeSport committee with the intent to be resolved amicably at the discretion of the committee and the Board of Directors (as appropriate).

I have read and understand the above statements and agree to conduct myself in a manner that demonstrates the standards established. Failure to adhere to this code of conduct may result in disciplinary discussion, disciplinary action and sanctions up to and including removal from the team.