

The Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK)

Codes of Conduct

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RLSS UK Codes of Conduct

Introduction

The revised RLSS UK Codes of Conduct, 2017 are grounded on the principles of integrity, fair play, equality and respect for others. They replace the Codes of Ethics and Conduct in all previous versions of the RLSS UK Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

What are the Codes of Conduct?

These Codes of Conduct set out what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable. They require the highest standards of conduct from everyone involved in RLSS UK activity to ensure their behaviour and actions are exemplary and follow good practice, procedures and standards at all times.

The Codes of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the RLSS UK Safeguarding Policy, 2017 and its procedures and guidelines. It reflects the importance the Organisation attaches to the respect of everyone involved with RLSS UK. Although clubs and affiliated bodies may have their own internal policies, however it is mandatory that they comply with the standards set within the RLSS UK Safeguarding Policy and its procedures, guidelines and codes of conduct and relevant guidance.

RLSS UK Safeguarding Policy Statement

RLSS UK is committed to ensuring that children and adults at risk who participate in its activities including lifesaving, lifeguarding, community awards, education, sports, competitions or any other event have a safe, positive and enjoyable experience.

Equality and Diversity

RLSS UK is committed to equality and diversity and will promote measures to prevent discrimination, in whatever form, from which it is being expressed. Everyone whatever their age, gender, language, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic status and culture has the right to live in safety, free from harm and abuse.

Scope of Application

The Codes of Conduct applies to everyone involved with RLSS UK at every level including staff, volunteers, self-employed people (where they have to personally perform the work or on other work basis), club members, participants, coaches, instructors, trainers, assessors, administrators, club officials, event organisers, parents/carers and spectators/visitors.

This is not an exhaustive list and may change from time to time.

Breach of the Codes of Conduct

Everyone is expected to be aware of the Codes of Conduct particularly those applicable to them and adhere to the principles of good practice and other relevant policies and procedures, guidelines, standards and codes of conduct set out by RLSS UK in their approach to working with everyone, especially, children and adults at risk.

Failure to comply with the Codes of Conduct will be investigated and necessary action taken through the relevant organisational disciplinary and complaints procedures. Additionally, breach of the Codes of Conduct could result in your involvement or membership being suspended or withdrawn at any time.

General Principles

Everyone involved in RLSS UK activities accept that children and adults at risks have the following basic rights:

- To be valued as a person.
- To be kept safe.

- To be treated with dignity and respect.
- To be cared for as a child or an adult at risk, recognising additional risks to abuse and the need for safeguarding and protection from abuse.

Awareness of increased risk to abuse

Everyone involved with RLSS UK, needs to be aware that some people for example children and adults at risk may have special needs including disabilities, challenging behaviour and other difficulties which may require additional support to ensure that they participate in an enjoyable and safe environment free from abuse and harm. Awareness of other factors such as religion and faith, gender, culture and minority ethnic groups must also be recognised and addressed to make a valuable contribution to the individual's enjoyment and safe participation in RLSS UK activities.

Humanity

Everyone involved with RLSS UK activities including lifesaving, lifeguarding, community awards, competition, sports or any other event has the right to be treated equally and fairly, respecting their dignity and worth.

Complaints Procedure

Any individual or organisation wishing to make a complaint that is related to safeguarding concerns within the context of the Codes of Conduct should follow the Complaints Procedure set out in the RLSS UK Safeguarding Policy.

Note: All other allegations not within the ambit of the RLSS UK Safeguarding Policy should be addressed by the internal policies and procedures.

Responsibilities

The Codes of Conduct set out in this document are expected to be followed by everyone whatever their role, whether at a national or local level or in an event organised on behalf of RLSS UK or its affiliated clubs.

Code of Conduct for Coach/ Instructor / Trainer/Assessor

Coaches, instructors, trainers or assessors have a responsibility to support and promote good practice and acceptable standards of behaviour to everyone including, staff, volunteers, club members, participants, parents/carers and spectators in conjunction with RLSS UK Safeguarding Policy and all other organisational trainer and training policies, procedures and codes. Additionally, they must uphold the standards of discipline, training and competency expected of them.

Relationships

Coaches/instructors/trainers/assessors must be concerned with:

- The safety, well-being and protection of all individuals in their charge, ensuring that all training and competing demands are not detrimental to the social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs of the individual.
- Encouraging independence through guiding participants to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance within training and competition.
- Ensuring their behaviour is not misinterpreted or open to allegations of favouritism, misconduct or impropriety, particularly where physical contact with the participant is necessary within appropriate contexts.
- Ensuring participants and relevant people are aware of their qualifications and experience.
- Refraining from public criticism of other colleagues and professionals– the definition of public in this instance means criticism expressed outside of the appropriate reporting process in place before, during or after an activity should concerns about practice arise.

Integrity

Coaches/instructors/trainers/assessors must:

- Abide by the RLSS UK rules and regulations and those made from time to time by relevant governing or accredited bodies as they apply to them.
- Follow fair play and ethical guidelines.
- Ensure that they do not compromise any participant by encouraging methods which could constitute unfair advantage or put at risk the safety or wellbeing of the participants.
- Promote the prevention and educate participants on the misuse of performance enhancing drugs and illegal substances, always abiding by the World Anti-Doping Agency Anti-Doping Code.
- Upon request present and show proof of the details of their training, qualifications and services.
- Ensure that where they are claiming an affiliation, sponsorship or accreditation with any organisation, they do so in truthful and accurate manner.
- Ensure all practices are suitable and relevant dependent on age, maturity and ability for all participants.
- Declare to the appropriate body, any criminal convictions and submit to safeguarding checks and criminal record checks as required.

Confidentiality

The coach/instructor/trainer/assessor and the participant must reach an agreement about what is regarded as confidential information. Confidentiality is defined in detail in Section 9 in the RLSS UK Safeguarding Policy. Confidentiality does not necessarily include disclosure of information to persons who can be judged to have a right to know. For example:

- Evaluation for selection purposes.
- Recommendations for employment.

- In matters of discipline within the RLSS UK activities e.g. sport, competition or events.
- In matters of disciplinary action by a sports organisation or governing body against one of its members.
- Legal, procedural or medical requirements.
- Recommendations to parents/family where the health and safety of participants might be at risk.
- In pursuit of action to protect children, young people or adults at risk from abuse.

Personal Standards

Coaches/instructors/trainers/assessors within the training or competing environment must not attempt to exert undue influences and pressures in order to obtain personal benefit or reward. They must display high personal standards representing a favourable image of RLSS UK and their affiliated Clubs including:

- Good personal appearance that projects an image of health, cleanliness and functional efficiency.
- Not smoking or drinking whilst delivering training or an activity or whilst they have a responsibility to care for children, young people and adults at risk.

Competence

All coaches/instructors/trainers/assessor:

- Have a responsibility to themselves and their participants to maintain their effectiveness in their work and delivery of services.
- Should be able to recognise and accept when to refer or recommend participants to other structures/organisations, colleagues or training providers and clubs.
- Is responsible for verifying the competence of participants.
- Should plan and prepare for sessions and deliver an appropriate and progressive programme.
- Will co-operate with colleagues from own and other professions.

Safety

As far as is reasonably possible, coaches/instructors/trainers/assessors and have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard and protect participants from all forms of abuse as set out in the RLSS UK Safeguarding Policy.
- Support and promote discipline and maintain standards of conduct with due respect to the governing body.
- Establish and maintain a safe working place including in their training, assessing, competition and other work environment.
- Ensure as far as possible the safety of the participants with whom they work.
- Ensure that they attend training in safeguarding and child protection and ongoing continuous development to keep themselves up-to-date.
- Ensure that participants are aware of their personal responsibility to keep themselves and others safe.
- Ensure that all activities and training take into account the age, maturity, experience, disability, special needs, increased risk to abuse e.g. minority ethnic groups, religion and faith, gender and other considerations that may affect the ability of the participants to participate safely. A detailed guidance on the **Awareness to Increased Risk** is set out in **Section 5 of RLSS UK Safeguarding Policy**.
- Work together with other colleagues, professionals and specialists in the field including registered medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their participants' medical and psychological needs.

Codes of Conduct for Participants

As a Participant I will:

- Read and keep to this Code at all times.
- Treat everyone equally and do not discriminate on the grounds of age, religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes, lack of ability or any other consideration.
- Be a positive role model and a good ambassador for my Club and act in a way that displays the values of RLSS UK.
- Be responsible for my actions and conduct myself in an appropriate manner and display courtesy and good manners to others.
- Respect and cooperate with everyone and never engage in abusive peer behaviour e.g. take unfair advantage of others, pick on or make fun of each other including displaying bullying, offensive, discriminatory or aggressive/inappropriate behaviour or language.
- Not abuse or misuse any relationship of trust or position of power, or influence held by me.
- Report any concerns about myself or others especially, children or adults at risk to the Club Welfare Officer, Branch Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Case Officer at RLSS UK HQ.
- Promote clubs rules, policies, procedures, guidance and codes of conduct to other participants especially those new to the club.
- Play fairly within the rules of the sport, competition or event and never deliberately cheat or be dishonest.
- Be responsible for informing my club or event organisers about any known medical condition, previous injuries, illness, disability or additional support needs that may affect my participation in activities, sports, competition and events.
- Not participate under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- Not improve individual performance with the use of banned substances or banned techniques.
- Not do and say nothing that will bring RLSS UK and the Club into disrepute for e.g. making an inappropriate comment or communication about a fellow participant, club official, event organisers, volunteer, staff or coach/instructor/trainer/assessor including but not exclusive of social media, email, direct or physical communication.
- Accept the decisions of Officials without question or complaint. If I have a complaint, I will let the person responsible for the activity e.g. the Event Organiser, Team Captain, Trainer or Coach, to ask the necessary questions and avoid words or conduct which may mislead an Official.
- Give maximum effort and strive for the best performance during a training session, competition or an event.
- Hold the correct qualifications for the level of competition or event I am participating in.
- Learn to accept success and failure, victory and defeat with humility and dignity and without excessive emotional displays.
- Abide and follow the instructions given by the person responsible for the activity or event provided it does not contradict the Codes of Conduct.
- Applaud good performance of other participants regardless of the team they play for.
- Abide by disciplinary sanctions that might be imposed on me.
- Always remember that the aim of participating in RLSS UK activity including lifesaving is to improve my skills, it is not about the results.

Code of Conduct for Club Officials

As a Club Official I will:

- Read and keep to this Code at all times.
- Treat everyone equally and not discriminate on the grounds of age, religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes, lack of ability or any other consideration.
- Be a positive role model and set a good example of behaviour and act in a way that displays and promotes the values of the Club and RLSS UK all times.
- Respect everyone and never engage in abusive peer behaviour e.g. take unfair advantage of others, pick on or make fun of each other including displaying bullying, offensive, discriminatory or aggressive/inappropriate behaviour or language.
- Not abuse or misuse any relationship of trust or position of power, or influence held by me, especially when a person is under 18 years of age. Any person responsible for an RLSS UK activity must refrain from engaging in inappropriate personal or sexual relationships but should explain the ethical reasons for it and discourage any attempt by others and participants from initiating personal or sexual relationship.
- Report any safeguarding concerns about participants especially, children or adults at risk to the Club Welfare Officer, Branch Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Case Officer at RLSS UK HQ.
- Ensure my Club is aware of and follows best practice guidelines to safeguard children and adults at risk from harm and abuse.
- Ensure that proper supervision is provided by suitably qualified coaches/instructors/trainers/assessors or officials who are capable of promoting good behaviour and good technical skills.
- Insist on fair and disciplined play- do not accept foul play, cheating or any consideration whatsoever with a view to influence activities e.g. sport or competition outcomes for personal benefit or for my club.
- Ensure all equipment and facilities meet safety standards.
- Not improve individual performance with the use of banned substances or banned techniques.
- Avoid words or actions, which may mislead an Official and accept their decisions.

Code of Conduct for Officials

As an Official I will:

- Read and keep to this Code at all times.
- Treat everyone equally and do not discriminate on the grounds of age, religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes, lack of ability or any other consideration.
- Not travel alone with children or adults at risk in a car or any other vehicle on journeys, however short unless I have another adult to accompany me.
- Respect everyone and never engage in abusive peer behaviour e.g. take unfair advantage of others, pick on or make fun of each other including displaying bullying, offensive, discriminatory or aggressive/inappropriate behaviour or language.
- Not abuse or misuse any relationship of trust or position of power, or influence held by me.
- Report any concerns about others, especially, children or adults at risk to the Club Welfare Officer, Branch Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Case Officer at RLSS UK HQ.
- Always conduct myself in an appropriate manner and display courtesy and good manners to others.
- Uphold and enforce an appropriate boundary between myself and all participants including children and adults at risk.
- Not abuse or misuse any relationship of trust or position of power, or influence held by me, especially when a person is under 18 years of age. Any person responsible for an RLSS UK activity must refrain from engaging in inappropriate personal or sexual relationships but should explain the ethical reasons for it and discourage any attempt by others and participants from initiating personal or sexual relationship.
- Promote the clubs rules and code of conduct to other participants especially those new to the club.
- Abide by disciplinary sanctions that might be imposed on me.
- Cooperate with everyone involved in RLSS UK activity.
- Be a positive role model and a good ambassador for RLSS UK and the Club and act in a way that displays the values of lifesaving.
- Remember that activities e.g. lifesaving, competition or sport is for the participants. Always exercise fairness, impartiality and control the activity in a manner that will provide positive experience and enjoyment for all participants.
- Compliment all competitors on good performance whenever the opportunity arises.
- Always have a duty to declare any potential conflict of interest.
- Not participate under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- Keep up to date with the latest rules and practices published by governing body e.g. International Lifesaving including undertaking training and other professional development opportunities on an ongoing basis.
- Always remain calm when confronted with emotional reactions from participants, coaches, parents/guardians/carers or spectators.
- Always communicate with participants in an appropriate manner and ensure they understand instructions or request.
- Always make decisions with confidence and apply the rules in a consistent, objective, impartial and courteous manner.
- Decline to be appointed to an activity, competition or sporting event if not mentally and physical fit for whatever reasons.
- Wear an appropriate kit for the activity, competition or sport event as agreed with activity or event organisers.

- Not give advice or improve individual performance on the use of banned substances or banned techniques.
- Not engage in any communication to bring the name of the Organisation and my profession into disrepute or make an inappropriate comment about a fellow participant, club official, event organisers, volunteer, staff or coach/instructor/trainer/assessor including but not exclusive of social media, email, direct or physical communication.
- Not behave in a way that would disrespect or harm anyone involved in RLSS UK.
- Insist on fair and disciplined play- do not accept foul play, cheating or any consideration whatsoever with a view to influence activities e.g. sport or competition outcomes.
- Abide by the decisions of the Chief Judge and/or Jury made within their authority.

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

As members of staff and volunteers, we will,

- Treat everyone equally and do not discriminate on the grounds of age, religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes and lack of ability or any other consideration: this includes co-volunteers, staff, club members, participants, visitors and all those we interact with at RLSS UK.
- Respect everyone and never engage in appropriate physical or verbal contact with others or abusive peer behaviour or take unfair advantage of others, pick on or make fun of each other including displaying offensive, discriminatory or aggressive/inappropriate behaviour or language.
- Remember that actions, words and gestures can sometimes be misinterpreted, regardless of their good intentions.
- Ensure the safety of participants by providing effective supervision and proper planning of organised activities- activities should involve more than one person being present, or at least in sight or hearing of others.
- Not exaggerate or trivialise abuse, bullying, harassment or victimisation of others.
- Report any safeguarding concerns about participants especially, children or adults at risk to the Club Welfare Officer, Branch Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Case Officer at RLSS UK HQ and statutory agencies where appropriate.
- Ensure that safeguarding incidents and accidents are recorded in line with the RLSS UK's Safeguarding procedures.
- Be a positive role model and set a good example of behaviour for RLSS UK and the Club and act in a way that displays the values of lifesaving and promote objectives of the Club at all times.
- Appreciate the efforts of all young people and not over-train the young people and never exert undue influence over participants to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Ensure the organisation is aware of and follows best practice guidelines to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk from harm and abuse.
- Administer minor first aid in the presence of others and where required refer more serious incidents to the club, organisation or event "first aider" and contact emergency services if required.
- Work together with others to ensure the safety of participants in their responsibility.
- Not abuse or misuse any relationship of trust or position of power, or influence held by me. I will not engage in a sexual relationship children or adults at risk.
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information.
- Refrain from the consumption of alcohol or illegal substances during activities or events.
- Not condone the violation of rules, rough play or encourage individual performance with the use of banned substances or banned techniques.
- Dress to the required standard when carrying out our roles.
- Not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children or adults at risk unless there are exceptional circumstances or the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with the Club Welfare Officer, Branch Safeguarding or club management or Safeguarding Designated Lead.
- Not take photos of children or adults at risk without permission.
- Not invite or allow children or adults at risk to go to your home or stay with you unsupervised.
- Not take children or adults at risk in a car on journeys, however short.
- Ensure my own roles and responsibilities, and those of everyone you are responsible for, are clearly outlined and everyone has the information, training and support to carry out.
- Ensure that you have consent from participants before taking or using photos and videos.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance from participants.

Code of Conduct for Parents/Carers

As a Parent/ Carer, I will:

- Read and keep to this Code at all times.
- Teach my child, young person or adult at risk in my care, to treat everyone equally and not to discriminate on the grounds of age, religious beliefs, care, gender, social classes, lack of ability or any other consideration.
- Report any concerns about a child or an adult at risks welfare to the Club Welfare Officer, Branch Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Case Officer at RLSS UK HQ.
- Report any suspected misconduct by anyone involved in RLSS UK.
- Always conduct myself in an appropriate manner and display courtesy and good manners to others and act as a positive role model for children and adults at risk.
- Promote the clubs rules and code of conduct to others especially those new to the club and RLSS UK activities.
- Ensure that my child or adult at risk are on time for all activities and events.
- Focus on the participant's efforts rather than winning or losing.
- Abide by the sanctions that might be imposed on me.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal, physical and racist abuse from RLSS UK and its clubs.
- Not force an unwilling child or adult participant to take part in RLSS UK activities.
- Encourage everyone to play by the rules and respect officials, event organisers or any other person responsible for an activity.
- Turn defeat into victory by helping children or adults at risk to improve their skills and demonstrate good sport person behaviour.
- Never ridicule or shout at a participant for making a mistake or losing at an event or competition.
- Remember that participants are involved in RLSS UK activity for their enjoyment-**NOT MINE**.
- Be responsible for informing the club or event organisers about any medical condition, illness, disability or additional support needs of the child or adult at risk.
- Refrain from publicly questioning the judgement or honesty of officials. If I have a complaint, I will let the person responsible for the activity e.g. the event organiser, team captain, trainer or coach, to ask the necessary questions and avoid words or conduct which may be inappropriate or mislead an Official.
- Respect the decision of coaches, instructors, trainers, assessors, staff, volunteers, officials and event organisers, they know about RLSS UK activities including lifesaving, sport or competition and the ability and capability of participants.
- Recognise the value and importance of staff and volunteers. They give their time, energy, and resources to provide recreational activities for others including my child.
- Be a good example by recognising fair play and applauding good performances including your team or competitor.
- Not engage in any communication to bring the name of organisation and the club into disrepute or make an inappropriate comment about a fellow participant, club official, event organisers, volunteer, staff or coach/instructor/trainer/assessor including but not exclusive of social media, email, direct or physical communication.
- Not behave in a way that would disrespect or harm anyone involved in RLSS UK.
- Insist on fair and disciplined play- do not accept foul play, cheating or any consideration whatsoever with a view to influence activities e.g. sport or competition outcomes.

Code of Conduct for Spectators/Visitors

As a Spectator or Visitor I will:

- Read and keep to this Code at all times.
- Treat everyone equally and not discriminate on the grounds of age, religious beliefs, care, gender, social classes, lack of ability or any other consideration.
- Remain in the designated area for spectators or viewing areas (where provided).
- Encourage good performance and fair play by all participants irrespective of their ability.
- Never ridicule any individual participant regardless of the team they play for.
- Always conduct myself in an appropriate manner and display courtesy and good manners to others.
- I will act a positive role model for everyone involved in RLSS UK activities.
- Promote the clubs internal rules and code of conduct to other participants especially those new to the club and RLSS UK activities.
- Abide by the sanctions that might be imposed on me.
- Insist on fair and disciplined play- do not accept foul play, cheating or any consideration whatsoever with a view to influence activities e.g. sport or competition outcomes.
- Respect the decision of coaches, instructors, trainers, assessors, staff, volunteers, officials and event organisers, they know about RLSS UK activities including lifesaving, sport or competition and the ability and capability of participants.
- Refrain from publicly questioning the judgement or honesty of officials. If I have a complaint, I will let the person responsible for the activity or event to ask the necessary questions and avoid words or conduct which may be inappropriate or mislead an Official.
- Not attend activities e.g. events, competition or sport under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- Not engage in any communication to bring the name of RLSS UK and my club into disrepute or make an inappropriate comment about a fellow participant, club official, event organisers, volunteer, staff or coach/instructor/trainer/assessor including but not exclusive of social media, email, direct or physical communication.
- Not behave in a way that would disrespect or harm anyone involved in RLSS UK.
- Do not distract anyone involved in an activity in any way at all.
- Remember that participants are involved in RLSS UK activity for their personal enjoyment- not mine.