
THE UNITED KINGDOM MINIFOOTBALL ASSOCIATION*

CODE OF ETHICS

February 2016

Initial Approval Date: 4th February 2016

Subsequent Amendment Date: 4th February 2017

The United Kingdom Minifootball Association
272 Kensington High Street
London
W8 6ND

Telephone: 0871 250 0131
Email: office@ukminifootball.co.uk

*UK Minifootball is a trading name of Treacle and Swiss Limited



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0.1 Introduction

The United Kingdom Minifootball Association (UKMA) wants to ensure that children and adults are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff, coaches and/or volunteers. We will do this by requiring all of our staff, coaches and volunteers to operate under this general Sport and Recreation Code of Ethics.

0.2 Coaching, Teaching and Instruction

Even though these standards focus on and describe work functions, they are based on a number of accepted assumptions and values that underpin good practice in coaching, teaching and instructing.

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to establish and maintain standards for sports coaches to inform and protect members of the public using their services.

Ethical standards comprise such values as integrity, responsibility, competence and confidentiality. Members of the UKMA, in assenting to this Code, accept their responsibility to participants, colleagues, the UKMA and to society. In pursuit of these principles, sports coaches subscribe to standards in the following areas:

1. Issues of responsibility.
2. Issues of competence.

This Code of Ethics is a framework within which to work. It is a series of guidelines rather than a set of instructions.

1. Issues of Responsibility

Sports coaching is a deliberately undertaken responsibility, and coaches are responsible for the observation of the principles embodied in this Code of Ethics.

1.1. Humanity

1.1.1 Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being and their ultimate right to self-determination. Specifically, coaches must treat everyone equally, within the context of their activity, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or political persuasion.

1.2 Relationships

- 1.2.1 A good coach will be concerned primarily with the well-being, health and future of the individual participant and only secondarily with the optimisation of performance.
- 1.2.2 A key element in a coaching relationship is the development of independence. Participants must be encouraged to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance in training/participation, in competition, and in their social life.
- 1.2.3 Coaches are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with their participants. The coach must understand and realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted, not only by the participant but also by outsiders, and could lead to allegations of sexual misconduct or impropriety.
- 1.2.4 The relationship between coach and participant relies heavily on mutual trust and respect. This means that the participant should be made aware of the coach's qualifications and experience and must be given the opportunity to consent or decline proposals for training and performance.

1.3 Commitment

- 1.3.1 Coaches should clarify in advance with participants and/or employers the number of session fees (if any) and method of payment. They should also explore with participants and/or employers the expectation of the outcome(s) of coaching.
- 1.3.2 Coaches have a responsibility to declare to their participants and/or employers any other current coaching commitments.
- 1.3.3 Coaches who become aware of a conflict between their obligation to the UKMA or other organisations employing them must make explicit the nature of the conflict, and the loyalty and responsibilities involved, to all parties concerned.

1.4 Co-operation

- 1.4.1 Coaches should communicate and co-operate with other sports and allied professions in the best interests of their participants. An example of such contact could be the seeking of educational and career advice/counselling for young small-sided football players whose participation in the sport could affect or impinge upon the performance of their studies.
- 1.4.2 Coaches must communicate and co-operate with registered medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment and management of their participant's medical and psychological problems.

1.5 Advertising

- 1.5.1 Advertising by coaches in respect of qualifications and/or services should be accurate and professionally restrained. Coaches are required to present evidence of their qualification upon request by the UKMA, any other national governing body, and/or the small-sided football participants.
- 1.5.2 Coaches shall not display any affiliation with an organisation in a manner that falsely implies sponsorship or accreditation by that organisation.

1.6 Integrity

- 1.6.1 Coaches should refrain from public criticism of other coaches. Differences of opinion should be dealt with on a personal basis and more serious disputes should be referred to the UKMA under the provisions of the UKMA complaints, grievances, disputes, disciplinary rules and internal appeals procedures.
- 1.6.2 Coaches must not encourage small-sided football players to violate the rules of small-sided football and should actively seek to discourage such action. Coaches should encourage participants to obey the spirit of such rules.
- 1.6.3 Coaches must not compromise their players by advocating measures, which could be deemed to constitute seeking to gain an unfair advantage. Coaches must never advocate the use of prescribed drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances.
- 1.6.4 Coaches must treat opponents and officials with respect and should encourage their small-sided football players to act in a similar manner.
- 1.6.5 Coaches must accept responsibility for the conduct of their small-sided football players insofar that they will undertake to discourage inappropriate behaviour.

1.7 Confidentiality

- 1.7.1 Coaches inevitably gather a great deal of personal information about small-sided football players in the course of a working relationship. Coaches and small-sided football players must reach an agreement as to what is to be regarded as confidential information.
- 1.7.2 Confidentiality does not preclude the disclosure of information, to persons who can be judged to have a 'right to know', relating to the small-sided football player when relevant to the following:
- i. Evaluation of a small-sided football player within the sport for competitive selection purposes;
 - ii. Recommendations concerning small-sided football players for professional purposes;
 - iii. Pursuit of disciplinary action involving small-sided football players within the sport;
 - iv. Recommendation to the parents/guardians of a small-sided football player where the health and safety of a player may be at risk;
 - v. Pursuit of action to protect children from abuse.
 - vi. Pursuit of disciplinary action by the UKMA involving fellow coaches in alleged breaches of this Code of Ethics and Conduct.

1.8 Abuse of Privilege

- 1.8.1 The sports coach is privileged, on occasion, to have contacts with small-sided football players and to travel and reside with players in the course of coaching and competitive practice. However, the coach must not attempt to exert any undue influence over the player in order to gain a personal benefit or reward.
- 1.8.2 However, in the case of a young person (under the age of 18), on no occasion is the coach permitted to take young people alone in car journeys however short, take the young person to their home where they will be alone with them or share a room with a young person.

1.9 Personal Standards

- 1.9.1 The coach must consistently display high personal standards and project a favourable image of small-sided football and of coaching.
- 1.9.2 The coach has an obligation to project an image of health, cleanliness and functional efficiency. In the case of UKMA operated small-sided football games, competitions and events, coaches are required to wear their assigned UKMA tracksuit or uniform during the game, competition and/or event.
- 1.9.3 Coaches should never smoke when coaching or in sight of participants before sessions.
- 1.9.4 Coaches should not drink alcohol before coaching.

1.10 Safety

- 1.10.1 Coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of their small-sided football players who they work with as far as possible within the limits of their control.
- 1.10.2 All reasonable steps should be taken to establish a safe working environment.
- 1.10.3 The coaching and the manner in which it is done should be in keeping with regular and approved UKMA practises within the sport.
- 1.10.4 The activity being undertaken should be suitable for the age, experience and ability of the small-sided football players.
- 1.10.5 The small-sided football players should have been systematically prepared for the activity being undertaken and made aware of their personal responsibilities in terms of safety.

2. Issues of Competence

- 2.1 Coaches shall confine themselves to practise in the fields of sport in which they have been trained and educated and which has been recognised by the UKMA to be valid. Valid areas of expertise are those directly concerned with small-sided football.
- 2.2 Coaches must be able to recognise and accept when to refer participants to other agencies. It is their responsibility, as far as possible, to verify the competency and integrity of the person to whom they refer a participant.
- 2.3 Coaches should regularly seek ways to increase their professional development and self-awareness. Coaches are also required to register for and complete all available UKMA courses, including coaching courses, child protection courses and good practice courses.
- 2.4 Coaches should welcome evaluation by colleagues and be able to account for themselves to small-sided football players, employers, the UKMA and other governing bodies for their actions.
- 2.5 Coaches have a responsibility to themselves and small-sided football players to maintain their own effectiveness, resilience and abilities, and to know when their physical, emotional and/or mental health is so depleted that it requires them to seek help and/or withdraw from coaching whether temporarily or permanently.