



Coach/Volunteer Code of Conduct

Fencing • Character • Excellence

Together we show up, give our best, support others and keep improving.

Organisation	Cambridge Sword Ltd
Policy title	Coach/Volunteer Code of Conduct
Policy Number	07
Version	V4
Policy owner	Club Manager, with Welfare Officer oversight
Created	Drawn from existing Cambridge Sword policies and procedures
Updated draft	July 2026
Next review	July 2027, or sooner if guidance, law, club practice or safeguarding requirements change

At a glance

- Coaches and volunteers are expected to model safe, respectful and inclusive behaviour.
- Adults must maintain appropriate boundaries with children and young people.
- Coaches and volunteers should follow safeguarding, communication, photography and data protection policies.
- Concerns, incidents and near misses must be reported and recorded appropriately.
- Coaching decisions should be fair, proportionate and focused on development, safety and welfare.

Purpose

This code sets out the conduct expected from coaches, assistant coaches, volunteers, helpers, officials and other adults acting on behalf of Cambridge Sword.

Coaches and volunteers should

- put the welfare, safety and development of children and young people first
- treat all fencers with dignity and respect
- work within their role, training, competence and instructions from the Club Manager or lead coach
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- avoid unnecessary one-to-one situations and keep individual support visible and interruptible
- use appropriate language, tone and physical contact
- challenge bullying, unsafe behaviour, discrimination and poor conduct promptly
- follow club policies on safeguarding, digital messaging, photography, data protection and risk assessment
- report safeguarding, welfare, incident or near miss concerns through the appropriate route.

Coaches and volunteers must not

- send personal one-to-one WhatsApp or other direct messages to under-18s
- use their position to create inappropriate relationships, favouritism or dependency
- shout at, humiliate, belittle or deliberately embarrass a child
- ignore unsafe kit, unsafe conduct or known hazards
- share confidential, medical or safeguarding information inappropriately
- take or share photos or videos outside the club's consent and photography rules
- coach or supervise while impaired by alcohol, drugs, illness or fatigue.

Role clarity and escalation

Coaches and volunteers should know who is leading the session or event and who to contact for safeguarding, welfare, first aid, behaviour or operational concerns.

Where there is uncertainty, the safer option should be chosen and the issue escalated.

Coach/volunteer supervision and safety responsibilities

Coaches and volunteers should follow the current British Fencing Safety Guidelines and the club's risk assessments when planning and delivering sessions.

The normal maximum supervision ratio is one coach to twelve actively participating fencers (1:12). Coaches must reduce numbers, split into relays, adapt activity or seek additional support where the activity, venue, age, experience or needs of the group make this necessary. Any planned exception must be approved in advance by the Head Coach.

Coaches must not allow fencers to begin or continue fencing if their clothing, weapon or protective equipment is inappropriate or unsafe. They should check that masks are fitted correctly before fencing starts and stop activity if a mask falls off, a blade breaks, a button/point falls off or unsafe practice is seen.

In after-school sessions, electronic scoring should only be introduced once fencers have completed at least one half term of coaching and the coach is satisfied with their weapon control, safety understanding and ability to follow instructions. No more than six fencers should take part in electric sparring at one time in an after-school session unless expressly approved by the Head Coach.

Related policies and guidance

This document should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Welfare Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment Management Policy
- WhatsApp and Digital Messaging Policy
- Mobile Phones, Photography and Filming Policy
- Data Protection and Data Handling Policy
- Complaints and Concerns Procedure

Review

This document will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there is a safeguarding concern, complaint, incident, near miss, change in club practice, change in guidance, or change in relevant law or governing body requirements.

Approval and review record

Prepared by	Emily Lucas, Operations Manager	Date	August 2026
Reviewed by	Sarah Paveley, Club Director / Head Coach	Date	

Reviewed by	Hannah Jones, Welfare Officer	Date	
Next review due	July 2027, or sooner if required	Date	