



# ACC Policy on the Coach's Code of Ethics Agreement

## ■ Background

The Australian Coaching Council (ACC) has maintained a database of National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS) registered coaches for twenty years. This database is a joint initiative of the ACC, national sporting organisations (NSOs) and training providers. The database contains a record of coaches who have met the minimum competency standards, as prescribed under the NCAS. Coaches who meet these competencies are registered for a four year period. During this time they are expected to coach and/or undertake further educational activities to become re-registered at the end of the four year registration period. Coaches who fail to update their registration are automatically removed from the active coaches register and are no longer recognised as a NCAS registered coach.

Recent increases in allegations of unethical and criminal behaviour by coaches has led the ACC, in conjunction with NSOs and training providers, to set behavioural standards for coaches, including mechanisms for disciplining coaches who breach the code of ethics. It is proposed that in the future, coaches on the database will be required to **agree to abide by a code of ethics**, as well as meet the **required competency standard**. This is a significant shift for the NCAS and requires consultation with stakeholders before it can be implemented.

To implement this process, it is proposed that NSOs/training providers introduce an agreement form, requiring each coach to agree in writing, to abide by their Coach's Code of Ethics.

## ■ Consultation process

The ACC initiated an extensive consultation process, including consultation with NSOs/training providers, State Coaching Centres, ASC staff, lawyers and other stakeholders in the development and introduction of this policy.

This consultation occurred through the following ways:

- mail-outs
- forums
- workshops
- individual meetings (where possible)

The ACC would like to thank people for their feedback during the development of this policy. Their feedback has helped the ACC to develop a workable policy that improves the quality of coaching throughout Australia.

## ■ Coach's Code of Ethics agreement policy

The Australian Coaching Council (ACC) is committed to providing a safe sporting environment in which the principles contained within the coach's code of ethics are respected and promoted. The ACC believes that the behavioural standards within the coach's code of ethics will guide the communications and actions of all coaches within the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS).

The following processes are proposed to formalise the coach's code of ethics agreement for registration with the NCAS.

1. Coaches wishing to become registered with the NCAS will be required to sign a coach's code of ethics agreement form. (two draft forms are attached)

### **This form will require coaches to:**

- agree to abide by the NSO/training provider code of ethics
- acknowledge that the NSO/training provider may take disciplinary action against them, if they breach the code of ethics (In the event of an allegation, NSOs/training providers are required to implement a complaints handling procedure in accordance with the principles of natural justice)
- acknowledge that disciplinary action against them may include de-registration from the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme.

***The 'Coach's Code of Ethics Agreement Form' must contain a copy of the NSO's coach's code of ethics.*** An example coach's code of ethics has been developed by the ACC. Where an alternative code has not been developed by the NSO/training provider, the ACC's code must be adopted by the NSO/training provider as their own.

2. The NSOs/training providers have the option of using the ACC sample coach's code of ethics agreement forms or developing their own form which meets the same requirements. A disk copy of the forms is available from the ACC.
3. NSOs/training providers are responsible for ensuring every new and updating coach completes the coach's code of ethics agreement form.
4. The form can be submitted by the coach to the coaching coordinator at any of the following stages throughout the registration process:
  - during the course
  - on application for registration or
  - during assessment
5. Coaches are also required to sign the coach's code of ethics agreement form when they update their NCAS registration.
6. The coaching coordinator must sign the ACC registration form confirming that the registering coaches have met all the training and assessment requirements and have signed the coach's code of ethics agreement form. The coach's code of ethics agreement forms must be forwarded to the NSO/training provider with the pink copy of the ACC registration form.

**Note:** The ACC will not process registrations without the coaching coordinator's (or the appropriate person's signature). The ACC also reserves the right to request a copy of the coach's code of ethics agreement forms from the NSOs/training provider at anytime.

7. The NSOs/training providers must retain the coach's code of ethics agreement forms for a minimum period of seven years. The NSOs/training providers must have an effective record storage system to archive the coach's code of ethics agreement.

**Note:**

1. The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has developed 'Harassment-Free Sport Guidelines' for coaches, athletes, administrators and sport and recreation organisations. The guidelines assist sporting organisations to minimise the risk of abuse within sport and develop effective complaint handling procedures in accordance with the principles of natural justice. The issue of ethical conduct of coaches is clearly linked to this policy and NSOs/training providers should become familiar with the broader Harassment – Free Sport policy when dealing with complaints which may lead to disciplinary action. The table on the following page outlines the existing measures on preventing and dealing with inappropriate coach behaviour.
2. The ASC is also investigating the development of guidelines which will assist sports to address the following issues:
  - implementing a screening procedure
  - applying the Harassment-Free Sport Guidelines' complaints handling procedures to a broader ethical framework eg appointing drugs in sport contact officers, training and dietary contact officers etc
  - conducting educational programs

<b>Coach Behaviour</b>	
<b>Preventing inappropriate behaviour</b>	<b>Dealing with inappropriate behaviour</b>
<p>The ACC, ASC and sporting organisations have implemented the following preventative measures to ensure athletes are provided with safe and enjoyable sporting opportunities through qualified coaches:</p> <p><b>Coach’s code of ethics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∅ Sets behavioural standards for coaches</li> </ul> <p><b>Harassment-free sport guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∅ Assists sporting organisations to minimise the risk of abuse within sport</li> </ul> <p><b>National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∅ Coaching courses educate coaches of their legal responsibilities and duty of care</li> </ul> <p><b>Coach’s code of ethics agreement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∅ All coaches are required to agree to abide by the code</li> </ul> <p><b>Sport constitutions, by-laws and articles of association</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∅ All sporting organisations should have a constitution which regulates the relationship between members by setting out the basis for working with other co-members</li> </ul>	<p>The ACC, ASC and sporting organisations have developed the following policies, procedures and guidelines to assist sporting organisations to deal with coaches who breach the coach’s code of ethics:</p> <p><b>Sport constitutions, by-laws and articles of association</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∅ All sporting organisations should have a constitution which outlines the procedure to deal with internal problems between members</li> </ul> <p><b>Harassment-free sport guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∅ Assists sporting organisations to develop effective complaints handling procedures in accordance with natural justice.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACC De-registration policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∅ A NSO/training provider can request the ACC to de-register a NCAS coach, as long as the principles of natural justice were followed during the investigation and implemented the ACC policy on the coach’s code of ethics agreement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sporting organisations can also implement the following strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Identify high risk coach positions within your organisation, for example a junior team coach</li> <li>✓ Adopt effective recruitment processes for all paid and unpaid coach positions, for example: advertise with a clearly defined position statement, conduct interviews, conduct reference checks and/or police checks and develop contracts</li> <li>✓ Apply the Harassment-Free Sport Guidelines to a broader ethical framework eg appointing drugs in sport contact officers, training and dietary contact officers etc</li> <li>✓ Conduct educational programs</li> </ul>	



# Coach's Code of Ethics Agreement Form

for registration or re-registration to the National Coach Accreditation Scheme (NCAS)

*Sport Logo*

TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
National Sporting Organisation (NSO) or Training provider

I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
Full Name Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address cont.

am seeking registration / re-registration (please circle) for the following Australian Coaching Council (ACC) qualification:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Level Sport Discipline (if applicable)

***I agree to the following terms:***

1. I agree to abide by the NSO/training provider Code of Ethics overleaf
2. I acknowledge that the NSO/training provider may take disciplinary action against me, if I breach the code of ethics. (I understand that NSOs/training providers are required to implement a complaints handling procedure in accordance with the principles of natural justice, in the event of an allegation against me)
3. I acknowledge that disciplinary action against me may include de-registration from the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme.

Please refer to the *Harassment-free Sport Guidelines* available from the Australian Sports Commission or contact your NSO/training provider, if you require more information on harassment issues.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (if under 18, parent / guardian signature) / /  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Australian Sports Commission \_\_\_\_\_



## Coach's Code of Ethics Agreement Form

for registration or re-registration to the National Coach Accreditation Scheme (NCAS)

*Insert Sport Logo*

TO:

\_\_\_\_\_ National Sporting Organisation (NSO) or Training provider

I, individually am seeking registration for the following Australian Coaching Council (ACC) qualification:

\_\_\_\_\_ Level

\_\_\_\_\_ Sport

\_\_\_\_\_ Discipline (if applicable)

***I, individually agree to the following terms:***

1. I, individually agree to abide by the NSO/training provider Code of Ethics overleaf
2. I, individually acknowledge that the NSO/training provider may take disciplinary action against me, if I breach the code of ethics. (I understand that NSOs/training providers are required to implement a complaints handling procedure in accordance with the principles of natural justice, in the event of an allegation against me)
3. I individually acknowledge that disciplinary action against me, may include de-registration from the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme.

Name	Address	Signature (if under 18, parent / guardian signature)

Please refer to the *Harassment-free Sport Guidelines* available from the Australian Sports Commission or contact your NSO/training provider, if you require more information on harassment issues.

3 July, 2003

ACC Operational & Policy Folder

Section 3-2: ACC Policy on the Coach's Code of Ethics Agreement

\_\_\_\_\_ Australian Sports Commission \_\_\_\_\_

Proforma

**The NSO/training provider's Coach's  
Code of Ethics must appear on the  
other side of the Coach's Code of  
Ethics Agreement Form**