BRITISH BASEBALL FEDERATION
CODE OF CONDUCT
v2 — Aligned to the Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework

Document control

Status	Current
Governance layer	Layer 5 — Behaviour, Integrity & Operational Governance
Sister documents (Layer 5)	Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework; Financial Governance Framework (to be drafted)
Replaces	Code of Conduct dated 18.10.2022 (version 2)
Consolidates behavioural content from	Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy; DEI Policy; Social Media Policy; Transgender and Non-Binary Policy (behavioural elements); Terms & Conditions (behavioural elements); Sr. Leagues Handbook (behavioural elements)
Owner	BBF Secretary
Review	Reviewed periodically and on material change

1. Purpose

This Code sets out the behavioural standards expected of everyone involved in baseball under the British Baseball Federation (BBF). It defines what good conduct looks like across the sport and provides a single, clear behavioural standard against which conduct will be measured.

Investigation, complaints, grievance handling, enforcement and appeals are not set out in this Code. They sit in the Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework, which operates the response when this Code is alleged to have been breached.

2. Status and scope

This Code applies to all individuals and organisations participating in, representing, administering or otherwise involved in BBF activity. It applies whether conduct takes place in person, online, during games, at events, in training environments, in meetings, or in any other context connected to, engaged in or related to BBF activity.

Those within scope include:

- Members and participants;
- Players, coaches, managers and national team staff;
- Officials, including umpires and scorers;
- Volunteers, club officials and BBF Board and member club committee officials;
- Affiliated clubs and those acting on their behalf;
- Parents, guardians and spectators where engaged in BBF activity.

All persons within scope are expected to understand and comply with this Code. Clubs and BBF leaders are expected to promote, model and support compliance.

3. Core principles

Everyone involved in British baseball should be able to participate in a safe, inclusive, respectful and well-governed environment. The BBF therefore expects conduct that reflects the following core principles:

- Respect for every person involved in the sport;
- Integrity, honesty, transparency and fairness in conduct and decision-making;
- Inclusion, dignity and equal treatment without discrimination;
- Safety, welfare and safeguarding, particularly for children and vulnerable people;
- Accountability for behaviour, both in person and online;
- Protection of the integrity and reputation of the sport.

4. General standards of conduct

All persons within scope must:

- Act with honesty, integrity and respect at all times;
- Treat others fairly, courteously and without discrimination;
- Follow the rules of the game and all applicable BBF rules, regulations and policies, including the Financial Governance Framework and the Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy;
- Support a safe, positive and inclusive environment in which people can participate and develop;
- Cooperate with the BBF and provide information honestly when reasonably requested;
- Use respectful and appropriate language when referring to others, including in relation to names, pronouns and identity;
- Take care not to bring the BBF, its participants, officials, clubs, competitions or national team programme into disrepute, including through online or social media activity.

All persons within scope must not:

- Engage in abuse, intimidation, victimisation, harassment, bullying or cyberbullying;
- Use discriminatory, degrading, humiliating or hateful language or behaviour;
- Threaten, retaliate against, or seek to undermine another person through misconduct;
- Misuse a position of trust, responsibility or influence;
- Act dishonestly, improperly or in a way prejudicial to the interests of the BBF or the sport;
- Engage in bribery or corruption, or accept or offer any improper inducement;

- Engage in public disputes, arguments or confrontations with other participants, officials, clubs or members of the public on social media, online platforms or in any physical, public forum.

> **Intent does not excuse impact.** A lack of intent to cause harm does not make behaviour acceptable. Phrases such as “I did not mean it”, “It was only a joke”, “banter” or “said in the heat of the moment”, “Others were saying it”, “No one told me to stop”, or “They did not seem to mind” are not valid justifications for conduct that breaches this Code. Individuals are responsible for the impact of their behaviour, not only their intention.

5. Inclusion, equality and dignity

The BBF is committed to making baseball welcoming and inclusive. This means treating people fairly and with dignity and respect, regardless of personal characteristics such as age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010).

Everyone must help create an environment in which individuals are treated with dignity and respect. In practical terms, this means treating people with equal respect, avoiding assumptions or stereotypes, and not excluding, mocking or disadvantaging someone because of who they are. People must respect the identity, dignity and lived experience of others. Differences of view must never be expressed through demeaning or harmful conduct.

Discriminatory behaviour can include, for example:

- Using offensive or stereotyped language or “jokes” about a person or group;
- Excluding someone from participation or opportunities;
- Targeting someone because of their identity or background;
- Deliberately misnaming or using inappropriate language about a person's identity;
- Treating someone less favourably than others in similar situations.

Participants are expected, where it is safe and appropriate to do so, to challenge, report or take reasonable steps to prevent discriminatory behaviour. Individuals are not expected to be experts in these areas, but they are expected to act respectfully, be open to feedback, and adjust their behaviour where concerns are raised.

6. Bullying, harassment and abuse

Bullying, harassment and abusive behaviour are incompatible with the values of the BBF. These behaviours may be verbal, physical, psychological, sexual, written or digital, and may occur once or more over time.

Bullying and harassment may arise from a single incident or a pattern of behaviour and may occur regardless of intent, where the effect is to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Bullying includes behaviour intended to intimidate, belittle, isolate or humiliate another person or team. Harassment includes unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Cyberbullying and online harassment are subject to the same standards as in-person misconduct.

Any behaviour that targets another person's protected characteristic is treated especially seriously.

7. Safeguarding and welfare

The welfare of children and vulnerable adults must be placed above all other considerations. Everyone has a responsibility to help keep baseball safe.

- Take all safeguarding concerns seriously and report them promptly through the appropriate safeguarding route;
- Maintain appropriate boundaries with children and vulnerable people at all times;
- Do not engage in behaviour that is unsafe, exploitative, grooming-related, sexually inappropriate or otherwise inconsistent with a position of trust;
- Follow safeguarding requirements relating to supervision, communication, photography, transport, changing environments and welfare support.

This Code sets the behavioural standard. Detailed safeguarding procedures, reporting requirements and escalation routes sit in the BSUK Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Complaints Procedure, which the BBF adopts as its lead safeguarding documents, and in the Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework.

8. Information, data and technology use

Individuals must handle information, data and technology responsibly and in a way that protects the BBF, its participants and the integrity of the sport.

Individuals must:

- Respect the confidentiality and sensitivity of information obtained through their role;
- Handle personal data in accordance with applicable legal and BBF requirements;
- Only access, use or share information where authorised and necessary;
- Take reasonable care to ensure that information is accurate, secure and not disclosed inappropriately;
- Use BBF systems, platforms and digital resources responsibly and for appropriate purposes.

Individuals must not:

- Access, use or share information without proper authority;
- Disclose personal, confidential or sensitive information inappropriately, whether intentionally or through carelessness;
- Misuse BBF systems, data or access rights;
- Use information or data obtained through the sport for personal advantage or to the detriment of others.

Detailed requirements relating to data protection, privacy, IT use and information security are set out in the Privacy Policy, IT Policy and Website Terms of Use and must be followed.

9. Competition conduct and respect for officials

The game should be played in a spirit of fairness, respect and self-control. Behaviour in competition settings must support the integrity of the sport and the authority of officials.

- Respect the role and decisions of umpires, scorers and other officials;
- Do not abuse, intimidate, ridicule or publicly undermine officials;
- Do not incite others, including team-mates, spectators or online audiences, against officials or opponents;

- Compete fairly and avoid conduct that is violent, retaliatory, unsporting or intentionally provocative;
- Raise competition concerns through the proper competition or disciplinary channels rather than through public confrontation.

The Sr. Leagues Handbook governs competition discipline and contains the Disciplinary Matrix that applies to in-game and at-event conduct.

10. Online, social media and digital conduct

Social media and other online platforms form part of the environment in which baseball is played, governed and discussed. The same standards of respect, safety and integrity apply online as they do in person.

10.1 General online behaviour

- Use social media and online platforms responsibly and respectfully;
- Do not post, share, respond to or endorse content that is abusive, discriminatory, threatening, defamatory, obscene, inflammatory or otherwise inappropriate, including by liking, sharing or amplifying content that targets, ridicules or harasses another person;
- Do not disclose confidential, private or sensitive information;
- Do not post content that could damage the reputation of the BBF, its clubs, competitions, officials, participants or partners.

Stating that views are personal does not remove responsibility under this Code. Individuals must not engage in public disputes, arguments or confrontations with other participants, officials, clubs or members of the public on social media or online platforms.

10.2 Responding to provocation, criticism or trolling

Individuals must not engage with nor respond to trolling, abusive or deliberately provocative content. Engaging with such content is likely to escalate the situation and may itself constitute misconduct.

- Do not engage in hostile exchanges, arguments or retaliation online;
- Pause before responding where a post, comment or message may provoke an emotional reaction;
- Use platform tools such as mute, block or report where appropriate;
- Escalate significant issues through the appropriate internal route rather than attempting to resolve them publicly;
- Do not use sarcasm, mockery, pile-ons or quote-posting to encourage further abuse of another person.

Individuals remain responsible for their responses even where they have been provoked. Provocation or online abuse does not justify inappropriate or abusive replies.

10.3 Safeguarding in online environments

- Personal social media accounts must not be used for one-to-one communication with minors in a sporting context;
- Do not use private or direct messaging with minors except through approved, transparent and appropriate channels;
- Images or content must not be shared where this could place a child or vulnerable person at risk, including by revealing location, routine, or identifying personal information;

- Obtain any required consent before sharing images or identifying information relating to individuals;
- Exercise particular care when posting, tagging or messaging in youth or safeguarding-related contexts;
- Report online behaviour that raises safeguarding concerns promptly and through the correct route.

10.4 Personal and official capacity

Individuals should assume that their online activity may be seen as representing the BBF where they are identifiable with the sport, regardless of whether they are posting in a personal capacity. Those in prominent roles, including athletes, coaches, officials and Board or club leaders, must exercise particular judgment online.

Official BBF or club accounts must only be used by authorised persons and must be managed professionally and responsibly. The administration of official accounts is governed by the BBF Communications Operations Guide.

10.5 Integrity and live incidents

Individuals must not use social media or online platforms to criticise, undermine or call into question the decisions, competence or integrity of BBF Board and club officials, competitions or participants including umpires and scorers.

Where an online incident has occurred or is developing:

- Cease posting immediately in relation to the matter;
- Avoid further engagement, including indirect or implied responses;
- Notify the appropriate BBF contact (communications, safeguarding or integrity);
- Preserve relevant content and evidence in the event an investigation is required;
- Follow guidance provided rather than attempting to manage the situation independently.

11. Roles and leadership expectations

All persons within scope must comply with this Code in full. This Section sets out additional expectations and role-specific focus areas to support consistent standards of behaviour across the sport. Those in positions of influence or responsibility play a key role in preventing misconduct by modelling appropriate behaviour, setting expectations and intervening early where concerns arise.

11.1 Players

- Play fairly, honestly and within the rules and spirit of the game;
- Show respect to team-mates, opponents, officials and volunteers;
- Accept decisions appropriately and avoid abusive or unsporting conduct;
- Support a positive team culture and avoid behaviour that isolates, humiliates or intimidates others.

11.2 Coaches and managers

- Model the highest standards of behaviour and leadership;
- Place safety, welfare and inclusion ahead of performance pressure or personal interest;
- Create an environment in which people are treated fairly and can learn, develop and participate safely;

- Never encourage cheating, abuse of officials, intimidation or harmful conduct.

11.3 Officials, including umpires and scorers

- Act with fairness, consistency, impartiality and professionalism;
- Apply rules honestly and with appropriate judgment;
- Treat all participants with dignity and respect while maintaining proper authority;
- Avoid conduct that could compromise trust in the fairness or integrity of competition.

11.4 Volunteers, club officials and BBF officials

- Act in the best interests of the sport and the BBF;
- Exercise care, judgment and accountability in decision-making;
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality and protect information entrusted to them;
- Avoid misuse of position, favouritism, retaliation or conduct that damages trust in governance;
- Comply with the Financial Governance Framework and the Anti-Bribery & Corruption Policy in all financial dealings and decisions.

12. Raising concerns and compliance

Everyone within scope is expected to raise concerns about serious misconduct, safeguarding, discrimination, abuse, integrity risks or other behaviour inconsistent with this Code. Concerns should be raised through the appropriate route under the Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework.

Where a concern alleges a breach of this Code, the complaint or grievance should identify the section(s) of this Code that are said to have been breached so the matter can be properly assessed. The Framework sets out what must be included when filing a complaint or grievance.

Failure to follow this Code may result in action under the Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework or, for in-game and at-event conduct, under the Sr. Leagues Handbook.

The BBF will determine the appropriate process and level of response based on the nature, seriousness and context of the concern. Not all matters will result in formal investigation or disciplinary action; where appropriate, issues may be addressed through guidance, education, informal resolution or other proportionate measures.

Outcomes may include, but are not limited to, advice, warnings, conditions, restrictions, suspension or other disciplinary action, in line with the Framework. In serious cases, or where required, matters may be referred to external bodies or authorities.

12.1 Cooperation

Individuals are expected to cooperate with any process conducted under the Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework. A failure or refusal to cooperate, including providing misleading information, withholding relevant information, or failing to engage without reasonable justification, may itself be treated as a breach of this Code. Where an individual does not cooperate, the BBF may proceed to consider and determine the matter based on the information available.

12.2 Public statements during a process

While a process is open under the Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework, the persons involved (the party under review and the complainant) are required to refrain from public statements, direct or indirect, about the matter. This protects the integrity of the process and the

privacy of those involved. Breach of this restraint may be taken into account in the determination of the matter.

12.3 Good-faith reporting and appropriate use of processes

The BBF encourages all individuals to raise concerns where they believe that conduct may be inconsistent with this Code or other BBF standards. Concerns should be raised honestly, responsibly and in good faith. A concern will be considered to have been raised in good faith where the individual has a genuine belief that the concern is valid, based on the information available at the time, even if it is not ultimately upheld. Individuals will not be penalised for raising concerns in good faith.

BBF reporting and complaints processes must not be used to pursue personal disputes, to harass others, or to make allegations that are knowingly false, misleading, malicious, vexatious or frivolous. Where a concern is found to be intentionally false, misleading, malicious, vexatious or frivolous, or part of a pattern of unreasonable repetition, this may itself be treated as a breach of this Code.

13. Relationship to other BBF documents

This Code should be read alongside other BBF documents that serve different purposes:

- The Constitution and Terms of Membership establish authority, membership status and obligations;
- The Sr. Leagues Handbook governs how baseball competitions are administered and played, and contains the in-game Disciplinary Matrix;
- The Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework governs reporting, complaints, grievances, investigation, decision-making and appeal processes;
- BSUK Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Complaints Procedure are the lead safeguarding documents;
- The Anti-Doping Policy and the UK Anti-Doping Rules govern anti-doping matters;
- The Conflicts of Interest, Anti-Bribery & Corruption, Privacy, IT and Website Terms of Use Policies govern specific operational and regulatory matters;
- The Financial Governance Framework governs financial accountability, controls and delegation; routine breach is handled within the finance function, and misconduct is handled under the Integrity, Complaints and Grievance Framework.

Those documents should not repeat the behavioural standards contained in this Code except where a short cross-reference is necessary for clarity.

14. Review and ownership

This Code is owned by the BBF Secretary and forms part of the BBF Governance Framework.