

COACH CODE OF CONDUCT 2026-27 (NATIONAL SQUAD)

This Code of Conduct applies to all activities regarding a coach's involvement with the Gymnastics Ireland (GI) National Team including but not limited to training sessions, camps, meetings, travel and competition. It also applies to coaches attending National Squad activities (with or without a selected National Squad gymnast).

Coaches are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with gymnasts. The Coach must realise that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted and could lead to allegations of serious misconduct or impropriety.

(Prior to a coach's appointment to a National Team, all adults with substantial access to young gymnasts will go through appropriate recruitment/selection procedures to ensure that they are suitable and appropriately qualified for the role).

As a coach, you agree to promote a positive and healthy environment by implementing the following guidelines:

- Respect all decisions made by the Head of Delegation (HOD) and Head Coach appointed by GI.
- Behave with the utmost professionalism and represent GI in a positive way. Never do, say or suggest anything that may bring GI and/or any of its members into disrepute and ensure to set a good example for all other delegation members. This also refers to any comments made on social media sites/apps.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young gymnast (including participating countries) and treat each one equally regardless of age, gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, membership of the Traveller community or any other ground protected under the Equal Status Acts.
- Challenge bullying in any form i.e physical or emotional. Bullying is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone in Gymnastics Ireland - child, coach, volunteer or parent. Coaches must comply with GI's anti-bullying policy. Any breach of this policy may be dealt with under the Complaints & Disciplinary Rules & Procedures.
- Ensure that nobody acts towards or speaks to another person in a manner or engages in any other conduct which threatens, disparages, humiliates, vilifies, intimidates, offends or insults another person on the basis of that person's age, gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, race, disability, membership of the Traveller community or any other ground protected under the Equal Status Acts.
- Never use social media or social media apps for the distribution of offensive content, to taunt, bully or racially abuse others.
- Never use foul language or provocative language/gestures to a gymnast, opponents, officials or colleagues and never lose your temper.
- Be positive during all activities so that the gymnast(s) always has a sense of achievement and an increased level of self-esteem. Don't shout at or lecture any gymnast or reprimand them when they make a mistake (Learning happens best through trial and error. No-one should be afraid to risk error to learn). Any allegations made in this regard may be dealt with under GI's Anti-Bullying policy, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination policy, or where appropriate, the Complaints & Disciplinary Rules & Procedures.
- Physical punishment or physical force must never be used.
- Report misconduct of participants or supporters, conscious of the fact that such matters may be followed up in accordance with Gymnastics Ireland Rules & Regulations.
- Promote a culture that ensures all young people (and adults) are listened to and respected and in which their welfare is put first.
- Ensure all activities are inclusive and allow all gymnasts to participate in an enjoyable way.
- Gymnasts should have been systematically prepared for the activity being undertaken and made aware of their personal responsibilities in terms of safety and thus ensuring a safe enjoyable environment.
- Respect the decisions of all referees/officials, committees and councils.

- Communicate decisions to athletes/participants in an effective and constructive manner in consideration of the age groups taking part.
- Be punctual and properly attired as per GI policy and display high standards of appearance.
- Adhere to guidance on the use of mobile phones – (see GI Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Youth Sport).
- The consumption of non-prescribed drugs is prohibited. Refrain from using tobacco products in the company of gymnasts and within the competition area.
- Consumption of alcohol is forbidden in the company of any gymnast (including gymnast accommodation venue), irrespective of whether you are signed off from your responsibility or not. Never consume alcohol in excess at any time and/or to the extent that it may impair your judgement, endanger others or cause offence.
- Behave responsibly if attending “Banquet” type events.
- Report incidents/accidents in accordance with and as required by Gymnastics Ireland Rules and Regulations, and report to parents or guardians.
- Never enter, before, during or after, the sporting environment in which the sport is being conducted, unless authorised to do so.
- It is compulsory to ensure that supervision levels for any gymnast are appropriate at all times and your assistance from the HOD may be required.
- Carry out duties such as changing room/hotel room checks without compromising yourself or the privacy of those using them.
- Avoid taking coaching sessions on your own or avoid a situation where you are alone (i.e. in a gym, car, changing room or hotel room with a gymnast).
- Never undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc), in the training of a young gymnast.
- Avoid any inappropriate touching when assisting any gymnast to perform a technique or if First Aid is being administered. Physical contact should only occur when necessary in an open and appropriate way and always be intended to meet the needs of the gymnast.
- Ensure availability of First Aid and do not encourage or allow gymnasts to perform while injured. (Keep an accurate record of each injury and ensure another team official is present when a gymnast is being attended to and can corroborate the relevant details – inform the HOD/Head Coach to complete the Accident/Incident form).
- Ensure appropriate confidentiality to all gymnasts, as you may be privy to information about the young person or their family.
- Participate in continuous professional development when required and other supports to maintain and improve performance,
- Report breaches of this Code of Conduct to the appropriate person or committee.
- Be aware and understand that any breach or failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct may result in an investigation being conducted under the Complaints & Disciplinary Rules & Procedures.
- Review, comply with and be bound by Gymnastics Ireland’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Policy/Strategy.

Your signature is not required on this Code of Conduct - It is compulsory to complete the annual Gymnastics Ireland National Squad Data Form and the Declarations Section of that form confirms that you have read the National Team Coaches Code of Conduct, and the policies & procedures of Gymnastics Ireland, and agree to abide by their contents in your capacity/role with the National team/squad.

A breach of this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action under Gymnastics Ireland Complaints and Disciplinary Rules & Procedures.

Sport Starts Here.