

ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

PREAMBLE

The Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing (ORSR) is an agency of the Government of South Australia. The South Australian Sports Institute (SASI) is a Division of ORSR.

Whilst all SASI staff are bound by all of ORSR's policies, this policy relates only to the operations of SASI and must be complied with by all SASI staff in addition to ORSR policies. SASI's contracted service providers and ORSR staff must carefully check whether they are captured by this Policy at the section headed 'Scope'.

PURPOSE

SASI's mission is to empower people to achieve their sporting dreams and inspire Australia. With the vision to be "The heart of South Australian's Sporting Success" SASI is committed to upholding the highest ethical and performance standards to which our athletes are held. Athletes represent SASI during training, competition and outside the sporting arena – by both their performances and their behaviour. Proud of its successful history, SASI will continue to create legacies for future generations.

This Code is intended to support the integrity of:

- SASI athletes in the pursuit of excellence; and
- the systems facilitating sporting success in South Australia.

This Code is intended to be both:

- proactive in developing and guiding our athlete's attitudes and behaviours to be consistent with SASI's Values of Drive, Pride, Team & Excellence; and
- reactive to serious breaches of this Code.

SCOPE

This Code applies to the following athletes:

- SASI Scholarship Athletes, who have entered into an Athlete Agreement with SASI;
- Training Agreement Athletes or Visiting Athletes, who have entered into a Training Agreement with SASI directly or whose sport has entered into a Training Partnership Agreement intended to accommodate athletes who are expected to be categorised in the next 6-12 months;
- Any other athlete or team where SASI has determined that this Code should apply, subject to that/those persons having been provided prior written notice of the application of this Code.

It is intended that this Code is read in conjunction with the agreement between the athlete and SASI (refer above for examples) and [SASI's other policies](#) that contain conduct requirements (e.g. SASI Anti-Doping Policy).

It is the responsibility of the athlete affected by this Code to understand which, if any, other organisation's (e.g. National Sporting Organisation's and/or Australian Olympic Committee's) Code(s) of conduct that may apply simultaneously.

This Code applies at all times when an athlete is participating in SASI events (including training), representing SASI (including at competition) or interacting with staff or other high-performance participants – whether in-person or online, in Australia or overseas.

This Code will also apply to any behaviour outside the performance environments that has the potential to bring SASI into disrepute – including incidents that occur in the athlete's private lives.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

SASI is committed to and will uphold the following principles:

Integrity

- Obey the rules, and the spirit of the rules, for the athlete's chosen sport.
- The training and competition are pursued by the athlete with a high level of fair play and integrity.
- The sport outcome is not affected by doping, race-fixing, illegal betting, or other forms of competition manipulation.
- Funds and equipment provided to athletes should not be misused.

Respect

- Show respect to the officials that enforce the sport's rules and react with dignity to the decisions of all officials.
- Show fellow athletes, SASI staff, volunteers, sporting partners, community members and key stakeholders with the appropriate courtesy, respect and regard for their rights and obligations.
- Treat people's property with respect and due consideration of its value.
- Respect the right, dignity and worth of every human being, -treat everyone equally regardless of gender, ethnic origin, or religion.
- Use SASI's facilities and equipment with consideration to ensure that other SASI athletes will have access to the same level of resources to support their sporting goals.

Professionalism

- Act in a manner which upholds SASI's standing and reputation and is compatible with SASI's interests.
- Display a high level of behaviour during training, competition and public engagements and respect your position as a role model in the community.
- Show a positive commitment to SASI's Values, policies, rules, procedures, guidelines, and agreements.
- Respect the laws of the countries and/or regions in which you train or compete.
- Recognise the importance of sporting partnerships to SASI and ensure positive athlete interactions with partner organisations.



- Respect the confidentiality of information which you receive in the course of your engagement with SASI.

Examples of unacceptable behaviours can be found in **Appendix 1**.

ATHLETE OBLIGATIONS

All SASI athletes, including visiting athletes, are required to uphold this Code.

It is the responsibility of all athletes to ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the standards in the Code at all times.

BREACHES OF POLICY

Behaviour that does not uphold this Code may be reported to SASI in any of the following ways:

- Directly to the appropriate SASI point of contact (e.g. Coach, Program Manager/Lead, Athlete Wellbeing and Engagement Advisor etc);
- Write to us at:
 - South Australian Sports Institute
145B Railway Terrace
MILE END SA 5031
- Via our website at: <https://www.sasi.sa.gov.au/about/compliments-complaints-suggestions>
- Via the Integrity Manager at: sasi.integrity@sa.gov.au
- By telephone at: 1300 714 990

All breaches reported will be investigated in accordance with ORSR's Feedback Management Policy.

CATEGORIES OF BREACHES

SASI accepts that it has a two-fold role:

- To provide guidance and support to young athletes to develop positive life skills; and
- To enforce acceptable behaviour standards to provide a safe and inclusive SASI performance environment and maintain a strong reputation for protecting athlete wellbeing.

It will be accepted that there may be times where departures from this Code, of varying level of severity, occur.

Nuisance Behaviour (Level One)

Nuisance behaviours include behaviours that are irritating, unpleasant, but not physically dangerous or likely to cause concern to the safety or wellbeing of athletes or SASI's reputation.

Examples may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Poor language in the performance environment.*
- *Behaviour in a public setting that is likely to cause damage to the reputation of the athlete or SASI.*
- *Social media content posted by the athlete that is likely to cause concern to the reputation of the athlete or SASI.*



All nuisance behaviours should be addressed as soon as reasonably practicable by the relevant Coach (or if appropriate, the staff member who has directly observed the behaviour) in accordance with ORSR's Feedback Management Policy.

Offensive Behaviour (Level Two)

Offensive behaviours include behaviours where there may be some physical or psychological danger to individuals or property and/or where the behaviour is likely to lead to some damage to SASI's reputation. The behaviours in this category will include those that appear to have elements of negligence.

The behaviours are concerning due to the:

- Physical, emotional or psychological damage the behaviour can have on the individual, others and/or potential damage to property;
- Potential to significantly disrupt the training or competition performance of themselves or others (e.g. in a team environment);
- Misalignment with the Principles of this Code and/or Values of SASI and/or the norms of elite performance environments; or
- Likelihood of reputational damage.

Offensive behaviours may also be repeated incidents of nuisance behaviours, which despite attempts to make changes using athlete education approaches, the athlete continues to behave in a manner that breaches the Code.

Examples may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Intentional or reckless damage caused to accommodation whilst representing SASI;*
- *Disrespect for team rules when travelling;*
- *Deliberate damage of SASI equipment such that the intended use of that equipment is significantly reduced;*
- *Intentional interference in an activity conducted by SASI.*
- *Behaviour in a public setting that brings the athlete or SASI into disrepute or is likely to lead to some damage to the reputation of the athlete or SASI.*
- *Using social media in a way that brings the athlete or SASI into disrepute or is likely to lead to some damage to the reputation of the athlete or SASI.*

All offensive behaviours must be addressed as soon as reasonably practicable to the position responsible for overseeing the Sport Program (e.g. a Program Manager/Lead) or the SASI-managed facility (e.g. ACSA) in accordance with ORSR's Feedback Management Policy. This may include discussion with the relevant staff and delegation to the relevant Coach to implement.

Serious Misconduct (Level Three)

Serious misconduct includes behaviours that may be dangerous to individuals or property and are highly likely to lead to significant damage to SASI's reputation.

The behaviours in this category will include those that appear to have a reckless, targeted, and/or intentional aspect.

The behaviours are concerning due to:

- The serious nature of the physical, emotional or psychological damage the behaviour could have on others and/or the high value of damage to property;



- The serious nature of an actual or potential disruption to the performance of themselves or others (e.g. in a team environment) or the performance environment;
- An overt objection by the athlete to the Principles of this Code and/or Values of SASI and/or the norms of elite performance environments;
- Disregard of the impact of their conduct on others or the organisation (i.e. it is inconsequential to the individual); or
- High likelihood of significant reputational damage.

Serious misconduct may also reflect repeat incidents of Offensive Behaviours, which despite attempts to identify and make changes using athlete education approaches and relevant sanctions, the athlete continues to behave in a manner that breaches the Code.

Examples may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Any behaviour that is found to be unlawful discrimination or harassment of any other person.*
- *Making unfounded or nuisance complaints against fellow athletes or opponents, sporting officials, or SASI staff.*
- *Intentionally participating in any unlawful behaviour whilst representing SASI.*
- *Excessive use of alcohol and/or other drugs that leads to unlawful conduct (e.g. lewd behaviour, drink driving) - whether or not made public and whether or not associated with the performance environment.*
- *Using social media to bully, intimidate or harass another athlete, official or SASI staff member.*
- *Using social media to bring the reputation of SASI or another athlete into disrepute.*

All serious misconduct must be addressed as soon as reasonably practicable by the position responsible for overseeing the Sport Program (e.g. a Program Manager/Lead) or the SASI-managed facility (e.g. ACSA) in accordance with ORSR's Feedback Management Policy and in conjunction with ORSR's Governance Team (i.e. SASI's Integrity Manager).

All alleged serious misconduct breaches must be reported to the SASI Director, Agency Chief Executive and the Governance Team.

For serious misconduct investigated by SASI, the investigation of the breach must be considered by the Athlete Conduct Committee or ORSR's Chief Executive (depending on the seriousness and circumstances of the breach) for the determination of appropriate sanctions.

ATHLETE CONDUCT COMMITTEE

The Athlete Conduct Committee's (or Chief Executive's) role will be to:

- Consider the results of internal investigations into matters of serious misconduct;
- Determine the appropriate sanctions for the athlete; and
- Consider what, if any, changes are required to the performance environment.

Where the matter is dealt with by the Committee, it will be formed temporarily, as required, by the SASI Director or ORSR's Chief Executive. The Committee's membership shall be determined on formation but should include as a minimum:



- The SASI Director (or, in their absence, their delegate);
- The position responsible for the oversight of the affected sport and one other sport;
- A member of the coaching staff from outside the affected sport;
- The Governance Team (i.e. an integrity representative); and
- Where available, an athlete wellbeing representative.

The proceedings of the Committee will be conducted fairly according to the substantial merits of the matter before it, without regard for legal forms or technicalities. The rules of natural justice (refer Appendix 1) will apply. The Committee is not bound by the rules of evidence and may inform itself on any matter and in such manner as it sees fit.

Both the athlete and the relevant coach has a right to appear before, or make a submission to, the Committee. Neither is obliged to do so, however, should they so choose not to appear or not to respond to questions/allegations, the Committee will decide upon the matter before it based on the information that is reasonably available to it.

- When an athlete is under 18 years of age, the athlete must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Athletes appearing before the Committee are entitled to be represented or accompanied by a friend, relative or legal representative.
- Athletes shall not be accompanied or represented by persons who may be implicated in or witness to the alleged breaches by the athlete.
- Where an athlete appears before the Committee, the transcript of the athlete's statement(s) will be made available to the athlete afterwards, on request.

After hearing and/or considering the information before it, the Committee will decide if, on the balance of probabilities, the athlete under consideration has committed a breach of this Code. In such circumstances the Committee may impose the sanctions available in this Code.

SANCTIONS

Consequences for breaches of this Code need to take into consideration:

- The nature of the behaviour and the seriousness of the breach;
- The age(s) of the party(s) involved; and
- Any 'power differential' between the parties involved;
- Any relevant prior history or personal characteristics of the athlete;
- The likelihood of the breach occurring again;
- Whether it is a repeat offence;
- The risk and ramifications of the breach; including the:
 - Impact of the behaviour on the well-being of those affected by the behaviour and the athlete;
 - Level of disruption to staff members and/or use of the facility and equipment of SASI; and
 - Extent to which the breach will threaten the reputation of SASI.

SASI seeks to ensure that sanctions are applied consistently across athletes, considering the individual circumstances.

Caution

A caution may be imposed when an athlete's behaviour is such that it does not conform to acceptable standards. The use of a caution is limited to circumstances where:



- No previous breach for this behaviour has been found (either through admission or as a finding after investigation); and
- The Committee believes that the athlete will respond to a caution; in particular, that it is likely there will be no future breaches of the policy by the athlete.

Formal Written Warning

A formal warning may be imposed in situations where an athlete has breached this Code and such breach is a repeated breach and/or the breach is of such gravity to warrant the imposition of a formal written warning. Should the behaviour warrant it so being, the warning may be a “first and final” warning.

A formal warning shall be recorded in writing and a copy of the warning will be placed in the athlete’s personal file.

Probation

The athlete may be placed on a period of probation where an athlete has breached this Code and such breach is a repeated breach and/or the breach is of sufficient gravity to warrant the imposition of a period of probation.

This sanction may only be applied by a Program Manager/Lead, SASI Director, ORSR Chief Executive or the Committee,

A record of the imposition of a period of probation shall be recorded in writing and a copy of the warning will be placed in the athlete’s personal file.

A period of probation may be for a **maximum period of 12 months**.

- During a period of probation:
 - An athlete’s behaviour, attitude and performance will be carefully monitored by the relevant Coach and Program Manager/Lead; and
 - Should a further breach be established (by admission or as a finding of an investigation), the sanctions available for that further breach must be ‘higher’ than probation.

Suspension

A suspension of the athlete’s contract may be imposed when an athlete’s behaviour is such that a serious or repeated breaches of this Code have been established (whether or not the breach occurred during a probation period) but where sufficient mitigating circumstances exist to suggest that termination of the athlete’s contract is not warranted.

The effect of this suspension will be to remove:

- Access to SASI personnel (including contracted service providers) with the exception of a designated contact officer of SASI (which should not be any member of the sport program’s staff) and any counselling services that remain available to the athlete;
- Access to SASI services, equipment, facilities and financial support;



- Access to squad communications, including email, social media and app-based communications tools; and
- SASI support for selection, training, competitions, travel and Awards.

This sanction may only be applied by a Program Manager/Lead, SASI Director, ORSR Chief Executive or the Committee.

Prior to the commencement of the suspension period, and subject to the gravity of the circumstances, the SASI Director may approve the development of a training program with specific performance indicators to be achieved by the athlete during the suspension.

A record of the imposition of a suspension shall be recorded in writing and a copy of the warning will be placed in the athlete's personal file.

A period of suspension may be for up to a **maximum period of six months**.

At the expiry of a period of suspension, subject only to the athlete's fitness and training performance, the athlete's contract is reinstated.

Termination

Termination of the athlete's contract may be imposed when an athlete's behaviour is such that a serious or repeated breaches of this Code have been established (whether or not the breach occurred during a probation period).

The effect of this termination will be to:

- Cease all access to SASI personnel, services, facilities, equipment and financial support;
- Cease any further payments related to the athlete's contract, with the exception of reimbursements related to expenses incurred prior to the termination date;
- Make the athlete ineligible to be selected to represent SASI and/or be nominated for a SASI Award; and
- Require the athlete to repay any cost to SASI of benefits under their contract provided to the athlete, as determined by SASI and provided in a written notice to the athlete as a debt due and payable by the athlete.

Should the behaviour (or the pattern of behaviour) warrant it so being, the termination may also include the athlete being ineligible for a future SASI contract (scholarship, training agreement, IAP Agreement, etc).

Other

The sanctions included in this section do not give consideration to SASI's role in educating and creating awareness for athletes, building athlete 'life skills' capability and/or demonstrating public accountability for their actions (as a role model). Hence, there is broad discretion to apply for all levels of breach (nuisance, offensive or serious misconduct), in addition to those sanctions outlined above, additional sanctions that support this aim and assist the athlete to understand the seriousness of their behaviour.



Examples may include (but are not limited to):

- Mandatory attendance at training or education sessions;
- Mandatory counselling with a psychologist (or other suitable service provider) to develop strategies to deal with the underlying drivers for the behaviour that caused the breach;
- Removal of SASI Awards; and/or
- Engagement in corrective actions for behaviour within the SASI environment (e.g. apology);
- Community service in an area aligned to the breach (e.g. road safety programs for drink driving breaches) or in their sport.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS

To ensure that athletes learn to demonstrate the Principles outlined in this Code, there will be an emphasis on athlete education – both formally through induction and ongoing training and informally by staff in the daily performance environment.

This Code will be provided to all SASI athletes:

- Through notice of the requirement to comply with this Code at the time of signing the relevant contract (e.g. Athlete Agreement, Training Agreement or Training Partnership Agreement);
- During athlete induction to SASI (for all athletes involved in a SASI Sport Program); and
- Through publication of this Code on the SASI website.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All documentation relating to breaches of the Code, investigations, Committee proceedings and the application of sanctions are to be captured and securely maintained in the relevant records management system against the athlete's personal file.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

A review of all breaches shall be completed and reported to the SASI Management Team **at least annually** looking at whether there are any trends with an athlete, group of athletes, Sport Program or development of similar issues across programs (e.g. disrespectful behaviours). The reporting should make recommendations aimed at improving breach prevention.

All findings of the Athlete Conduct Committee must be reported to the ORSR Chief Executive.



DEFINITIONS

Athlete Conduct Committee	Means a temporary committee formed to determine the sanctions to be applied in relation to a specific serious misconduct breach of this Code. The committee also gives consideration to whether changes are required to the performance environment to prevent further breaches of the same / similar nature.
Caution	Means a type of sanction that informally (i.e. verbally) warns a person that there will be consequences if their future behaviour does not improve. A caution is intended to provide a person with an opportunity to change their behaviour before they face more serious sanctions.
Harassment	Means offensive, unreasonable, and repeated behaviour that demeans, humiliates, or intimidates a person. It may occur verbally, in writing or online. Some forms of harassment may be unlawful e.g. sexual harassment or behaviour targeted at protected attributes.
Nuisance Behaviour	Refers to breaches of this Code that are at the lower end of the scale of seriousness, i.e. Level 1 breaches. They may include behaviours that are irritating, unpleasant, but not physically dangerous or likely to cause concern to the safety or wellbeing of athletes or SASI's reputation.
Offensive Behaviour	Refers to breaches of this Code that are more than Nuisance Behaviours or are repeated Nuisance Behaviours, i.e. Level 2 breaches. They may include behaviours that pose some physical or psychological danger to individuals or property and/or where the behaviour is likely to lead to some damage to SASI's reputation.
Probation	Means a period, not more than 12 months, in which the athlete's behaviours are monitored more closely with a requirement that their behaviours improve, and no further breaches of this Code occur within the period. Where further breaches occur during the probation period, a more serious sanction may be applied, including termination of the athlete's agreement.
Protected Attributes	Means a person's age, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity and sexual orientation.
Respect	Means consideration for another's physical and emotional well-being and possessions, to ensure no damage or deprivation is caused to either.
Sanctions	Means an adverse consequence to a person failing to comply with this Code.
SASI	Is an acronym for the South Australian Sports Institute
Serious Misconduct	Refers to breaches of this Code that are more than Offensive Behaviours or are repeated Offensive Behaviours, i.e. Level 3 breaches. They may include behaviours that may be dangerous to individuals or property and are highly likely to lead to significant damage to SASI's reputation
Suspension	Means a type of sanction that temporarily, for a period of 6 months or less, removes an athlete's rights under their contract with SASI. Typically, this would remove: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to SASI personnel (including contracted service providers) with the exception of a designated contact officer of SASI (which should not be any member of the sport program's staff) and any counselling services that remain available to the athlete; • Access to SASI services, equipment, facilities and financial support; • Access to squad communications, including email, social media, and app-based communications tools; and • SASI support for selection, training, competitions, and travel.
Sledging	Means a statement that is deemed to denigrate and/or intimidate another person, or behaviour likely to constitute emotional abuse.
Termination	Means the cessation of an athlete's agreement, resulting in no further access to SASI venues and services.
Warning	Means a type of sanction that formally (in writing) informs a person that there will be consequences if their future behaviour does not improve. A warning is intended to provide a person with an opportunity to change their behaviour before they face more serious sanctions.

RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Legislation

- *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* [SA]
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004* [Cth]
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* [Cth]
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* [Cth]
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* [Cth]

Policies, Procedures, Forms, Templates

- Anti-Doping Policy
- Improper Use of Drugs and Medicines Policy
- Supplements Procedure

Other Documents

- Nil

REVIEW

This Policy must be reviewed at least once in every five (5) year period

POLICY APPROVAL AND HISTORY DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Policy Administrator	Performance Support Manager & Program Manager
Date of approval by Executive Leadership Team	
Next Review Date	January 2030

Document History	Details
Original Approval Date	
Amendment Version and Date	
Notes	
Amendment Version and Date	
Notes	



APPENDIX 1 Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour

This list provides examples of behaviour deemed to be unsuitable and not in the best interests of SASI. This is not an exhaustive list.

- Any behaviour that is found to be harassment or discriminates unfairly against another person.
- Behaving in a manner that is unlawful, becomes a public nuisance or creates a public disturbance.
- Statements or posts on social media or otherwise which are deemed to cause concern to the reputation of the athlete or SASI.
- Non-compliance with the cultural norms and expectations of others.
- Dishonesty concerning illness or injury and the ability to train fully within SASI requirements.
- Disrespect to team rules then travelling with a SASI, state or National Team
- Deliberately damaging own or another person's property or equipment, including but not limited to hotel rooms, storage facilities, training facilities or depriving them of that property.
- Inappropriate and/or excessive complaints to umpires and/or officials during competition or selection processes.
- Behaving in excessively haughty and arrogant ways towards other competitors and/or spectators.
- Using or encouraging the use of prohibited substances or methods as defined in Sports Integrity Australia & SASI Anti-Doping Policy.
- Gambling, betting, or organisation of betting at any event, while competing.
- Sledging' other athletes, officials, or event organisers.
- Sexual relations with a junior athlete (under the age of consent), irrespective of the wishes and desires of the athlete.
- Non-compliance with the cultural norms and expectations of others.
- The engagement in, and/or exposure of, damaging private behaviour that has the capacity to detract from the reputation of SASI as an elite sport organisation.



APPENDIX 2. NATURAL JUSTICE (or procedural fairness)

Procedural fairness is about giving a ‘fair go’ to people who may be affected by a decision. It isn’t enough that a decision might be ‘right’ – it is not fair if made without the decision-maker first hearing from the person affected by it.

The courts argue that the reasons why procedural fairness is essential is to increase the chances that the decision-maker will make a fair and unbiased decision, and to ensure that justice is not only done but *is seen to be done*.

There are three “rules” that must be followed in order to provide procedural fairness:

- **Hearing Rule** – that any person likely to be affected by a decision or action is given a reasonable hearing, i.e., an opportunity to respond to adverse material, such as proposed adverse comment and/or negative recommendations; and
- **Notice Rule** – that any person likely to be affected by a decision is given notice of the issues in sufficient detail for the person to be able to respond meaningfully; and
- **Bias Rule** – the person(s) investigating an allegation, preparing a case or making a decision must act impartially in considering the matter.

