



Coaching Guidelines

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| Guideline Name: Coaching Guidelines | |
| Date of Issue: 2015 | |
| Last Reviewed: May 2023 | Next Review: 2025 |
| Controlling Body: FencingWA Board | |

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Statement

Coaches provide an essential service to Fencing in Western Australia as custodians of fencing theory and good fencing practice as well as mentors to countless participants in our sport. As such coaches represent an important stakeholder group at Fencing Western Australia (FWA).

FWA also consult coaches on a range of items, particularly those related to competition rules, events, team selection and development, and high performance pathways.

Coaches also hold a position of responsibility as key influencers and role models and must take such responsibility seriously.

Guideline Scope

These guidelines are for all FWA volunteers, members, employees, contractors, and all other people or organisations which are bound to comply with this policy by agreement or otherwise.

This policy applies to behaviour occurring during FWA business, activities, competitions, and events.

1. Rules and Regulations

Coaches should familiarise themselves with relevant FencingWA and Australian Fencing Federation (AFF) policies, rules, guidelines and procedures.

2. Accreditation

To be an accredited Fencing Coach in Australia, a coach must hold an Australian Fencing Federation Coaching Accreditation.

A coach's accreditation is only active when the accreditation level is awarded and then successfully maintained.

FWA will only select accredited coaches for all FWA activities. These include but are not limited to.

- State Teams
- Projects
- Coaching Courses
- Workshops
- Training Camps

3. Membership – Fencing Western Australia

All coaches coaching at FWA Clubs are required to be a member of FWA.

A coach must renew their membership with FWA annually. The membership is based on a calendar year.

4. Insurance

All Australian accredited coaches who provide details of the location and clubs where they coach to the Australian Fencing Federation have public liability insurance coverage under the Australian Fencing Federation national insurance scheme.

As part of the annual accreditation process, a coach can declare their coaching locations and participant numbers to have access to the insurance.

5. Australian Fencing Federation Coaching Framework and Courses

<https://www.ausfencing.org/current-accredited-coaches/>

6. Coaching at FWA Events

- All coaches are required to comply with the FWA Member Protection Policy, Coach Code of Conduct and all other relevant FWA policies and rules such as Child Safeguarding and Working with Children Checks.
- Have a WWC Card.

7. Contracting of Coaches for FWA Activities, Teams and Events

FWA member coaches may be contracted to present and or coach for FWA at camps, activities, school programs, training sessions, forums, workshops, state and national events and or courses.

FWA can only contract coaches who are a FWA member and have a national accreditation level through the Australian Fencing Federation.

8. Guest Coaches - National

At times, FWA may contract coaches from other states in Australia to coach or present on behalf of FWA. All coaches must have a national accreditation level through the Australian Fencing Federation and have a valid Working with Children card.

9. Guest Coaches - International Coaches

At times, FWA may contract international coaches to coach or present.

All international coaches must have:

- A recognised accreditation level through the International Fencing Federation recognised national body.
- International Certified in working with children card (if the country of origin has one).
- A valid visa.

10. Payment of Coaches

When engaging and paying for the services of a Coach, FWA will contract a coach on a needs basis and the requirements of the association.

The coach will provide their services as independent contractors (contractors). FWA outlined the conditions and payments within the:

- Independent Contractor Guidelines.
- Independent Contract Agreement.

11. Volunteer Coaches

Coaches who volunteer at Fencing WA are an integral part of our association and play a crucial role in the development of our athletes and participants. They contribute their time, knowledge, and expertise to help our fencers reach their full potential.

Being a volunteer means you are not an employee of or an independent contractor and, if you accept a volunteer role, you perform all duties voluntarily and you will not receive remuneration or payment for your work, other than reasonable reimbursement of expenses for out-of-pocket expenses that you incur when performing authorised tasks associated with your role.

FWA do this to ensure that you are not financially disadvantaged as a result of your volunteer role with us. These payments are not remuneration or wages. You might need prior approval and will always need to produce receipts.

We may sometimes provide you with other benefits as part of your volunteering role (examples include training, free food, accommodation, event entry, clothing or equipment). Where this occurs, it is on a gratuitous basis at the discretion of FWA and is not a payment in lieu of salary.

12. Sporting Schools Program

Information regarding the Fencing Sporting Schools will be released by the AFF in 2023.

On occasions, FencingWA may be approached to provide coaches for a school program. FWA will approach the closest club in the first instance and then the closest coach if the closest club is unable to facilitate the school program.

13. State Team Coaching

FWA provides coaches for the following annual events.

- National Youth and Cadet Championships (minimum of two coaches)
- National Junior Championships (minimum of one coach)
- National Senior Championships (minimum of one coach)

The FWA Board will make the final decision on the number of coaches appointed to each team.

Appointment of State Team Coaches

- FencingWA will call for Expression of Interest via the member's newsletter, social media and club email at least 4 months before the event.
- Coaches are required to fill in the Expression of Interest Form by the due date.
- FWA will check the nominees to ensure that each nomination meets the eligibility criteria outlined in the State Team Guidelines and the Coaching Policy.
- The FWA Board selects coaches. The size of the coaching team will be as per FencingWA Board's discretion.

General Eligibility Criteria

- Must hold a coaching accreditation.
- Current First Aid Certificate.
- Valid WWC Card.
- Not subject to any disciplinary behaviours or any investigation of a disciplinary action/s.
- Be a current financial member of FWA
- Experienced to coach athletes at the level of those athletes participating in the National Championships.

FWA will also consider:

- The number of coaching qualifications across 3 weapons;
- Coaching or fencing experience across 3 weapons;
- Demonstrated leadership and mentoring abilities.
- Proven ability to understand all current technical aspects of the sport, including technique, skills, rules, regulations and application.
- Be able to develop good rapport and work effectively with other team members and any associated organisation personnel.
- Ability to contribute to the team and maximise performance while representing WA.
- Number of club fencers attending the event.
- Experience of the coach.
- Feedback received on coaches' performance at FWA events and activities and previous state team roles.

State Team Roles and Responsibilities

- The roles and responsibilities provided by the State Team Coach are dependent upon several factors including the level of maturity of competitors. Youth and cadet fencers require a great deal of support (particularly at an emotional and psychological level) whereas adult/open fencers are more independent.

All Coaches

- Will ensure that all fencers competing have a level of support at the event and state training from all coaches. This includes direct coaching, psychological and emotional support, equipment repair or more general cheering and 'having a friendly face in the crowd'.
- Provide a coaching report for FWA within 4 weeks of the completion of the event.
- All state team coaches have a responsibility to ensure that all athletes are treated fairly and given equal opportunities to showcase their abilities. It is imperative that coaches avoid showing bias towards athletes from specific clubs and instead, focus on coaching all athletes to the best of their abilities.
- Coaches must provide constructive feedback and support to all athletes, regardless of their club affiliations.

- To create an inclusive and supportive team environment, coaches must prioritise the collective success of the team over individual preferences.
- Ensure all athletes are engaged and overseen at training and the event.
- It is understood that the coach undertakes a challenging role in reading and understanding the physical and psychological needs of students – particularly when those students may not be as familiar with the team coach (or vice versa) as they may be in an individual one on one coach relationship. Where a student is unwilling to receive advice or instruction, the coach is under no obligation to provide advice for the individual event; however, the student is required to acknowledge and cooperate with the coach and/or team captain in any team event.
- When representing WA, the coach must assist with all weapon groups when required.
- Liaise and communicate with support staff, FWA and parents as required.
- Complete the State Team Survey within 4 weeks of returning from the event.
- State team coaches appointed to the Youth and Cadet State Team must be available to attend the FencingWA Training Camp and two state team coaching sessions.

14. Reporting and Feedback

All coaches are expected to provide a short report and feedback on all activities conducted for FWA.

15. FWA Member Coach Responsibilities

All FencingWA or Member Club Coaches accept responsibility for complying with the FWA Member Protection Policy, Coach Code of Conduct and all other relevant FWA policies such as Child Safeguarding and Working with Children Checks.

Coaches who exhibit inappropriate behaviour not only reflect poorly on themselves but also FWA. Any breach of the code of conduct or relevant policies may result in suspension or expulsion from FWA in accordance with the member protection policy framework, ensuring the right to natural justice.

Coaches are expected to act as role models for their students and other young fencers, keeping in mind that their actions are always under scrutiny. Consequently, coaches are urged to:

- Act respectfully towards their personal students, other fencers, parents, competition/tournament officials, and members of the public at all times. Abusive, insulting or offensive language in any language is unacceptable. Where there are genuine complaints or issues then the appropriate channels should always be pursued.
- While coaches must drive fencers to perform to the best of their abilities, any perception of bias or victimisation should be avoided at all costs. Coaches should

be even-handed, and moderate, in their treatment of fencers, including the making of any personal comment not directly related to their performance as a fencer.

- Act respectfully toward other coaches and officials including other FencingWA coaches and those of opposing fencers.
- When engaged to support a team, avoid 'favouritism' of an individual at the expense of other members of the team. Coaches should, as far as possible, spread their attentions uniformly, recognising that where there are opportunities to make a positive difference (eg. the finals of a competition where the opposing members are evenly matched) or in cases where their advice is actively discouraged by a fencer, then the coach must also make an informed choice as to how they divide their attention (coaches are asked to quickly document and report back to FencingWA in circumstances where their decisions might be called into question).
- Attend official training sessions and competitions at times advised by FencingWA. If unable, for any reason to do so, inform FencingWA as soon, as is practical so that students can be informed, and other arrangements made.
- Respect the right of fencers to receive training from the coach of their choice.

16. FWA Coach Code of Conduct

Refer to Appendix One of the FWA Coaching Guidelines

17. How to Become a Fencing Coach – Level 1

Whether you are thinking about becoming a coach or looking to build on your existing skills and expertise, Fencing WA offers support and opportunities to assist you on your journey.

Minimum Age

- To be an accredited coach, you must be turning 16 years old in the year of the course.

Register with FWA

- Each candidate must be a member of a FWA Affiliated Club.
- Each candidate must be affiliated with FWA as an athlete or coach.
- FencingWA coaching affiliation must be renewed annually.
- Coaching affiliation is free of charge.

Attending a Course

- Each candidate must be a member of a FWA Affiliated Club.
- Each candidate must be affiliated with FWA as an athlete or coach.
- Have a Working with Children Check Card (unless exempt as per the WWC Screening process.)
- Each candidate must have completed the SportAUS Community Coaching - Essential Skills Online Course
 - www.sportsaus.gov.au/coaching

Working with Child Check

- The Working with Children Check (WWC Check) is a compulsory screening strategy in Western Australia and the Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands.
- A person requires a WWC Check if they are coaching anyone under the age of 18 years old.
- For further information on the process and exemptions, go to www.workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au

Sport Australia Community Coaching Principles Course

- The Sport Australia Essentials Course helps coaches create fun, safe and inclusive environments for participants.
- The free online course has been designed so coaches can learn at their own pace and complete eight modules anytime, anywhere, on any device.
 - www.sportsaus.gov.au/coaching/course

Australian Fencing Federation Registration

- Register with the AFF as a Trainee Coach.

Requirements of Becoming a Level 1 Accredited Fencing Coach

- Be a member of FWA
- Have a WWC Check Card
- Certified in the Sport Australia Community Principles
- Certified in First Aid (HLTAID003)
- Register for the course coaching course fee. (This fee is reimbursed on the successful completion of the gaining an AFF Level One Coach Accreditation).
- Attend a coaching course.
- Upload your details on the Australian Fencing Federation Website.

What Happens After the Course?

- FWA provides your details to the Australian Fencing Federation (AFF), who set you on the portal as a Trainee Coach.
- Once you have completed the Face to Face Course, you will need to:
 - Log in to the AFF Portal and upload
 - Any post-course requirements
 - WWC Card details
 - SportAUS Community Coaching – Essential Skills Certificate
- Complete a First Aid Course and upload the certificate to the portal
- The AFF will check off all the Level One Coaching Accreditation requirements.
- Once all the requirements are fulfilled, you will gain your Level 1 Coach Accreditation.

18. Document Control

These guidelines will be reviewed every two years or earlier if required by the organisation. The review will ensure it reflects both the community expectations and all legal requirements.

Version History

| Date | Version number | Executive Summary of Changes |
|----------|----------------|--|
| 2015 | V1.0 | New Policy |
| May 2023 | V2.0 | Review of the 2015 Coaching Policy and updated into this document. |

Relevant FWA Policies and Procedures

- Independent Contractor Policy and Guidelines
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- WWC Check Policy
- Members Protection Policy
- Coaches Code of Conduct
- Volunteer Handbook



Coach Code of Conduct

Whilst performing their duties as a member of a FencingWA team or in any other official activity associated with the Western Australian Fencing Federation,

Coaches will:

1. Abide by the terms of any contract with FWA.
2. Act respectfully towards their personal students, other fencers, parents, competition/tournament officials, and members of the public at all times. Abusive, insulting or offensive language in any language is unacceptable. Where there are genuine complaints or issues then the appropriate channels should always be pursued.
3. Act respectfully toward other coaches and officials including other FencingWA coaches and those of opposing fencers.
4. When engaged to support a team, avoid 'favouritism' of an individual at the expense of other members of the team.
5. Attend official FWA training sessions and competitions at times advised by FencingWA. If unable, for any reason to do so, inform FWA as soon, as is practical.
6. Respect the right of fencers to receive training from the coach of their choice.
7. Respect and follow the appropriate directions of FencingWA and AFF officials, including D.T.s.
8. Avoid individual or collective behaviour, which may reasonably be held by spectators or other fencers or officials to be offensive. Avoid all acts likely to incite spectators to violence or disorder.
9. Respect the facilities and equipment of FWA, any Club and their own, and those of opposing fencers and coaches.
10. Avoid any inappropriate relationship with a student – whether or not of the legal age of consent, and whether or not an individual student or a student of a group class.
11. Abide by the Constitution, relevant Policies and guidelines.
12. Make no detrimental statements in public and or by any form of digital and print media in respect of the performance of any athlete, volunteer, official or coach, nor respect of any policy decisions of FWA or the AFF.
13. Consequences of any breach of the Coach Code of Conduct may include, (depending on the nature and severity of the breach):
 - Disciplinary action may be taken against a person who is found in breach of these guidelines, by the Member Protection Policy.
 - Fine or suspension by FencingWA.
 - Removal from a team or squad by FencingWA.
 - Legal proceedings – civil or criminal for conduct unlawful under State or Federal law. If a criminal offence is considered to have been committed, the appropriate authorities will be contacted for advice and guidance.