

# Code of Conduct for ITA Staff

As an ITA Coach, Coaching Assistant or Volunteer you are required to abide by the ITA Code of Conduct for ITA Staff. This Code is developed in accordance with the formal agreements as outlined in your Consultancy Agreement. The Code of Conduct is publicly accessible to everyone involved with ITA, including students and their parents.

This code provides guidance on the types of attitudes and forms of conduct that help to make ITA a safe, positive and friendly place for all its members to play tennis. ITA staff members should recognise and develop such safeguarding and protecting behaviour as an integral part of good practice and quality.

With this Code ITA ensures to practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff members based on three main elements:

- Coaching Roles and Responsibilities
- Privacy Policy Commitments
- Principles of Conduct for Child Safeguarding and Protection

All references made to 'ITA staff members' apply to Coaches, Coaching Assistants and Volunteers working with ITA. The Code of Conduct for ITA Staff is an integral part of the Consultancy Agreement that should be signed by both ITA and the ITA staff member before coaching can be provided.

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# 1. Coaching Roles & Responsibilities

## 1.1 Commitment to the quality of ITA programmes

- You are expected to coach tennis in English.
- You are expected to create and deliver high quality tennis lessons according to the principles and schedules of the programmes developed by ITA. You agree that lesson plans delivered by ITA are at the exclusive right of ITA and cannot be used or copied for the purpose of coaching in other clubs or organisations.
- You are expected to deliver input and feedback to support the continuous development of ITA coaching programmes; to achieve this you will be asked for feedback on the coaching programmes and are willing to work in partnership with other coaches to discuss potential opportunities for growth and attraction.
- You are expected to assist in the planning and organisation of occasional tennis events for all members.
- You are expected to assist in the entry and selection of teams for (inter-school and club) tournaments and in the planning and organisation of tournaments for competitive players.
- You are expected to promote ITA's on-court tennis programmes among all (potential) players; you encourage members to play tennis and improve their game.
- You are expected to attend occasional training and development meetings.
- You are expected to arrive early and complete your court set up with all the equipment you need before students arrive.
- You are expected to have all the equipment required to deliver all the tennis programmes you are coaching that day.
- You are expected to greet all students and parents at the beginning of each lesson.
- You are expected to recover all the balls (same numbers as you started with) and put away all equipment in the designated place in a tidy manor and ensure all is secure.
- You are expected to record the attendance of all students for every lesson.
- You are expected to record the progression of players.
- You keep records of your Coaching activities undertaken and provide information regarding these activities as ITA may reasonably require.
- You are expected to dress appropriately and professionally in relation to the players. For all Coaching activities and representations on behalf of ITA, ITA branded tops must be worn. The choice for wearing a t-shirt, hoody or jacket (which you receive after signing the Coaching Agreement), is weather dependable.
- You provide your Coaching services with all reasonable skill and care and in a lawful, proper and timely manner. You are held responsible for keeping your required degrees and certificates up to date.
- You use your best endeavours to promote the interests of, and generally act in good faith in relation to, ITA.
- At all times act as a role model by being professional and maintaining the highest standards of personal conduct at all times, projecting a favourable image of tennis and of coaching.

## 1.2 Commitment to the personal development of ITA members

- Always put your students' best interests at the centre of everything you do.
- Treat students with respect at all times. Be honest and consistent with them.
- Treat all students fairly regardless of (but not limited to) gender, ethnicity, age, disability, place of origin, language, athletic potential, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, political beliefs and socio-economic status.
- Encourage all students, parents and fellow coaches to have respect for one another.
- Encourage students and other coaches to develop and maintain integrity.
- Prepare students to respond to success and failure in a dignified manner.
- Respect the confidentiality of students, parents and officials as appropriate.
- Be sensitive to your students' self-esteem when providing constructive feedback.
- Encourage and facilitate students' independence and responsibility for their own behaviour, performance, decisions and actions.
- Involve the students in decisions that will affect them.
- Recognise students' right to consult with other coaches and advisers. Co-operate fully with other specialists if required (e.g., sport scientists, doctors, physiotherapists, etc).
- Be acutely aware of the power that a coach develops with students in the coaching relationships and avoid any intimacy (sexual or otherwise) with players.
- Avoid situations with students that could be construed as compromising and actions that others could perceive inappropriate.
- Actively discourage the use of performance enhancing drugs and any other illegal substance. Never drink alcohol or smoke, either before, during or after ITA activities, in the presence of students under 18 years of age.
- Know and abide by tennis rules, regulations and standards, and encourage students to do likewise.
- Show respect to the authority and decisions of officials in ensuring that competitions are conducted fairly and according to the rules.
- Encourage students to abide by the [Terms and Conditions for ITA members](#). If you have reason to believe that a student has not adhered to the code of practice within an ITA programme, the following actions can be taken in line with the ITF code of conduct:
  1. The player will be given a verbal warning explaining the behaviour or action is unacceptable. It will be made clear that a further breach will result in a 5-minute (or next game) time out.
  2. The player will be asked to sit out of the session for 5 minutes (or the next game). It will be made clear that a further breach will result in them missing the rest of the session and that the coach will be talking to their parents with regard to their behaviour.
  3. The player will miss the rest of the session and parents will be informed of what the breach was and what action was taken.
  4. It will be explained to the parent that repeated behaviour of this kind may lead to the child being asked to leave the course.
  5. The player is asked to leave the course; no refunds will be given.

### **1.3 Commitment to safety**

You comply with all reasonable standards of safety and take due regard of and comply with any safety regulations prescribed by ITA and the location at which you will be coaching. You are aware of the availability and location of first aid equipment at each location and know how to use it. You report to the ITA Director any incident which could give rise to any unsafe working practices.

## **2. Privacy Policy Commitments**

You shall treat all personal information about individual members as confidential. The following rules and procedures explicitly apply to all ITA staff members according to ITA's Privacy Policy Statement (to be accessed via [this link](#)).

### **2.1 Use of pictures and video materials of ITA members**

- ITA staff members may not take pictures or video materials of ITA members, nor publish them, without the explicit permission of the ITA Director.
- If permission to use pictures and video materials is granted by the ITA Director, ITA staff members are allowed to take pictures and video material during the course only for the purpose of ITA activities.
- If permission to publish pictures and/or video material is granted by the ITA Director, this should be done anonymously.
- At the beginning of each term a list of names from ITA members who might have refused ITA's right to take pictures and video material will be provided by the ITA Director. ITA staff members shall respect the choice of these members to not be filmed at any time.

### **2.2 Use of Contact Details from ITA members**

- The contact details you obtain from your students and their parents, which may include (but are not limited to) email address, phone numbers, postal address or medical details, should only be used for the purpose of communicating about ITA activities when urgent and relevant to the delivery of ITA activities (e.g., in the case of informing students and their parents about unforeseen circumstances).
- It is strictly prohibited to utilise, share or retain the personal data of ITA members for any purpose other than as you have specifically contracted for.
- Upon the termination of the contractual agreement between ITA and a staff member, all contact details of ITA members should be deleted by the staff member. He/she is no longer authorized to contact any of the students and/or their parents without the permission of the ITA Director.

### **2.3 Use of Social Media in Interaction with Students**

- ITA develops a specific policy regarding the use of social media in interaction with students under 18 (see paragraph 3.2). With this policy ITA aims to cover the safe and appropriate use of social media as part of an integral privacy policy to protect and safeguard students' privacy.

### **3. Principles of Conduct for Child Safeguarding and Protection**

By signing the Consultancy Agreement you confirm to consistently follow and apply the Principles of Conduct for Child Safeguarding and Protection, in order to secure young people to play tennis in a safe and enjoyable environment, to treat them with respect, and to have their concerns listened to and acted upon. According to these principles, you promise to avoid and to counteract any form of maltreatment of a child, and you are willing and able to offer help and support to any young person who appears to be at risk or who appears to be the victim of abuse.

#### **3.1 General policy for safeguarding and protecting children**

- Recognise the trust placed in adults by children, and recognise the power held over children by adults. Treat this trust and this power with the highest responsibility.
- Try to work in an open and accountable manner at all times. Work in view of others wherever possible, be wary of working alone and unobserved, and be willing to accept questions or criticism regarding good practice.
- Expect others to work in an open and accountable manner. Question and criticise the practice of others if necessary.
- Maintain a professional relationship with children. Any form of sexual relationship or activity with a child is unacceptable and could lead to disciplinary or legal action.
- Not be under the influence of drink, drugs or any illegal substance.
- Use appropriate and respectful forms of discipline and communication. Physical aggression, intimidation, verbal abuse and persistent shouting are not acceptable. Any form of assault (e.g. hitting, kicking, pinching, slapping) should be regarded as a serious incident.
- Use appropriate language. Don't swear, and never make sexual or suggestive comments to a child. If a child makes such comments, be prepared to enforce such boundaries in your response.
- Not appear to favour one child or show interest in one child more than another.
- Not discriminate against a child because of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity.
- Use physical contact with players only where necessary. If contact is necessary (e.g. for the purpose of coaching or first-aid), then explain to the child what the contact is for, and change your approach if he/she feels uncomfortable.
- Design and adapt training methods and programmes appropriate to the individual child.
- Be aware of situations that could be misunderstood or manipulated by other adults. For example, if a coach or official is alone with a child in a clubhouse, changing room or car, he or she may be vulnerable to allegations of misconduct.
- Be vigilant and aware of how actions can be misinterpreted by children. Actions made with good intentions can seem intrusive or intimidating to some children. Sometimes children become attracted to the adults working with them. Adults should be aware of the impact of their actions, and should sensitively address any misunderstanding.

#### **3.2 Policy on the use of social media in interaction with students**

ITA coaches are expected to adhere to the following rules to cover the safe and appropriate use of social media (images and online communication) in relation to children under 18:

- It is forbidden to engage in a social media connection with ITA members. A social media connection refers to text or phone conversations for personal purposes and to online

connections made on platforms such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, etc. If a student approaches you through social media, you are advised to ignore this request. Any form of communication with students outside the context of the ITA training courses is unacceptable and could lead to disciplinary or legal action. If you feel like a student is trying to approach you in an inappropriate way, you are advised to speak directly to the ITA Director who will handle this case professionally and confidentially.

- You are not allowed to film or photograph students on court without the permission of the ITA Director. The ITA Director will ask the child and their parents/carers for permission to film students and to use their image(s). Upon approval of the ITA Director, video equipment can be used as a legitimate coaching aid. However, tennis players and their parents/carers should be made aware that this forms part of the coaching programme, and recordings should be used, stored and destroyed with care.
- Once permission to film or photograph students is given, you are not allowed to share or publish this material on websites or social media platforms unless stated otherwise by the ITA Director.
- When you obtain the ITA Director's permission to film your students, try to take photographs that represent the broad range of youngsters participating safely in tennis. Think about the gender, ethnicity, ability and age of the children: at all times you try to capture the diversity of the children you work with.
- When you obtain the ITA Director's permission to publish children's films or pictures on any social media platform, make sure to not mention the name of individual students. It is recommended that you employ appropriate security on web servers, so that material can only be accessed, copied or downloaded by authorised people.

### 3.3 Recognising Child Abuse and Neglect

You should be aware of the different possible forms of child abuse and of the possible signs that abuse is occurring, in order to be able to identify problems quickly and adequately. You confirm to understand the following descriptions of, be alert to, and act against, the different types of abuse and neglect that may occur during tennis courses (HM Government, 2006):

- **Physical abuse** – physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- **Emotional abuse** – emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- **Sexual abuse** – sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexual inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** – neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to inappropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.
- **Bullying** – bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.

### 3.4 Guidelines for responding to suspected abuse or the disclosure of abuse by children and reporting it

When identifying inappropriate behaviour or the disclosure of abuse it is not your responsibility to investigate or intervene, but as a coach it is your responsibility to listen and make sure that the child receives all the necessary help and support. As a coach you understand your responsibility in being alert to the signs of abuse and, consequently, your responsibility for referring any concerns to the ITA Director. There are five steps to follow when someone reports a concern to you:

1. Take seriously any suspicion or allegation of abuse, or any disclosure of concern made by a child.
2. If a concern comes to your attention, record information, including relevant details. Listen carefully to what the child says and do not suggest ideas. Be sure to record opinions or feelings as such; be clear to make a distinction between fact and opinion. Use open questions to gather relevant information, but avoid ‘why’ questions. Keep written records of the conversation and your observations during, or as soon as you can after, the meeting.
3. It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose a problem, and he/she usually wants you to help. Therefore, you should not make promises of confidentiality, but be clear that you may have to contact other people who will be able to help. Stay calm, assure the child and do not show your emotions or feelings.

4. Report any concerns within the area of Child Protection (physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect or bullying), in confidence and without delay, to the ITA Director. Explain clearly what you are concerned about and why.
5. Never discuss an allegation or suspicion with another person before receiving advice from the ITA Director.

### **Contact details for questions or queries about this policy**

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