

# Level 2 Coaching – Task 2: Duty of Care

## FACT SHEET



# Learning outcomes

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## About this course

By studying this fact sheet you will gain a knowledge and understanding of the importance of the Racing Coach's duty of care to their participants, including:

- What constitutes acceptable relationships as a coach
- The guidelines for safeguarding and protecting the following rider groups, adherence to these and maintaining confidentiality:
  - young people and children, including signs and symptoms of abuse
  - adults at risk
  - riders who share protected characteristics
- How to encourage and reward positive behaviour and to respond to discriminatory behaviour, behaving in a fair, consistent and ethical manner
- The requirements of the rider group; managing information for and about all types of riders

# The Coach-Participant Relationship

A rider or participant's relationship with their coach is key to their achievement and progression.

Establishing relationships with participants helps a coach understand what motivates or drives each individual. It also highlights a personal, caring approach on the part of the coach; demonstrating that the coach sees the participant as more than just part of their job.

There are other benefits associated with creating strong coach-participant relationships. For example, participants may find they can communicate their frustrations and their ideas with the coach, and in turn, the coach can create a better strategy through understanding the participants.



# The Coach-Participant Relationship

The ability to create coach-participant relationships is a skill that coaches must develop. It takes problem-solving, patience, understanding, and mutual trust; and it is the coach who must lead the way in creating intra-team bonds.

There are several skills coaches can develop that can help them form strong ties with their participants. Examples include communication skills, an ability to use positive reinforcement, the ability to gain trust, and a willingness to make themselves available to participants who need advice or encouragement.



# The Coach-Participant Communication

One of the most important aspects of the relationship between coach and participant is communication. With clear communication, coaches can lead, direct, and manage their teams more effectively. In return, the team and individual participants can freely express ideas and concerns to the benefit of everyone.

Coaches must consider every situation and every participant individually to decide the best form of communication. Although a democratic style of coaching is usually the best strategy, an autocratic style can also have its advantages.



# The Coach-Participant Communication

Autocratic coaching is known for telling instead of listening and can be advantageous when concrete trust is present. Democratic coaching, on the other hand, is a style where the coach and individual participants communicate openly and have collaborative discussions.

Communication is a crucial element of a good coach-participant relationship. Without it, coaches may find their participants won't listen as readily. They may also notice a lack of cohesion throughout the team.



# Positive Reinforcement

Building a participant up through positive support and encouragement can help them accomplish their personal goals and develop their skills. Coaches who help their riders visualise a positive outcome can increase the rider's chances of achieving success.

Coaches don't need to be positive about every aspect to accomplish their goals. They can acknowledge where their participants are doing well, along with showing them where they need improvement. It's important to note that positive reinforcement hinges on effective communication.



# Positive Reinforcement

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One of the coach's responsibilities is to help their riders grow and develop within the yard team, as well as help them gain confidence in their skills both within and outside the workforce.

Coaches may find that with positive reinforcement, their riders will find their own inner-motivation and continue to improve individually. A rider that is self-motivated can rise above challenges and find success.



# Genuine Interest

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For a coach to gain the respect of their participants, they must give respect in return.

To create a strong relationship, coaches must show an interest that goes beyond immediate riding or work-related issues. For example, people often react positively when someone remembers what their passions are.

The difference between demonstrating interest and genuine interest is sincerity. A coach with genuine interest will gather information about participants that may help with work life balance, technical skills and workplace relationships.



# Availability

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The relationship between coach and participant depends on how to open the coach is to establishing interpersonal relationships. As a mentor and advisor, the coach needs to make clear that he or she is available to talk whenever needed.

Younger student-participants often need advice and at times, maybe seek someone to follow. By being available and engaged, coaches have an opportunity to positively influence their participants.

Coaches who make themselves available to their participants are paving the way toward establishing and nurturing strong relationships. However, coaches should be able to separate their professional availability to their own personal situation.



# Trust

Trust is the cornerstone of a strong bond, and it is formed when a coach provides clear instructions, delivers positive reinforcement, and shows genuine interest.

Once trust is established, participants usually listen more closely, follow instructions more readily, and generally enjoy the entire coaching experience more intently. Mutual trust is beneficial to the development of skills and generally leads to positive results.



# Safeguarding

You have already covered the principles of safeguarding in Task 1, and completed the BHA Safeguarding course. Please make sure that your certificate is placed in your portfolio. Coaches have clear safeguarding responsibilities to their participants and it is worth looking at these in more detail.

As a coach you have a duty of care towards your riders. One of the critical roles in this is the safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults. There are five main forms of abuse that you should recognise the possible signs and symptoms of.

Form of abuse	Signs of abuse
Physical	unexplained injuries, unusually located bruising, flinches when approached or touched
Emotional	withdrawn, distrust of adults, compulsive nervous behaviour, excessive lack of confidence
Sexual	change in the language or behaviour used (eg use of sexually explicit language/behaviour)
Neglect	weight loss, unkempt state, inappropriate clothing for weather, tired
Bullying	difficulty making friends, withdrawn

# Protection

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Coaches should also consider how they can protect both riders and themselves against safeguarding issues and allegations. Steps you might take include:

- Ensure you are not alone with young participants
- Be aware of how your actions or what you say could be misinterpreted by participants or others
- Communicate your rules to parents as well as the young participants if appropriate
- Treat all participants equally
- Do not give additional support to individual participants outside of the structured coaching environment



# Protection (continued)

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There are additional considerations to be made if you are coaching older teenagers or young adult riders for both your behaviour as a coach and the behaviour of others. Examples of 'poor practice' or 'inappropriate behaviour' include:

- Approaching the young participant on social media with the intention of developing a relationship outside of the coaching environment
- Embarking on a sexual relationship with the participant
- Arranging a social event that focussed on drinking alcohol
- Members of the group approaching the participant(s) and arranging to meet up outside of the coaching environment on a one-to-one basis (i.e. no parental involvement in arrangements)

**Safeguarding is  
Everyone's  
Responsibility**

# Data Protection

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You have already covered the principles of Data Protection in Task 1, but it is worth reminding ourselves about the key principles as we consider protecting participants.

As a Racing Coach you will be exposed to personal information about riders including names, addresses, medical history and possibly disclosures of abuse. You should ensure all written information is stored securely in a locked cabinet with access limited. Electronic files will require an access password. Be discreet when collecting information and do not disclose personal details about riders to any third party.



