

ZEN COMBAT ACADEMY LTD

COACHES & INSTRUCTORS CODE OF CONDUCT

Safeguarding, professionalism, safe coaching and inclusive practice



Organisation	Zen Combat Academy Ltd
Document owner	Zen Combat Academy Ltd Management
Effective date	25 September 2026
Review date	September 2027 or sooner if required
Version	1.0
Applies to	All Zen Combat Academy Ltd activities, premises, events and trips

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This Code sets the minimum standards expected of every coach, instructor, assistant instructor, volunteer coach, visiting coach and other person acting in a coaching or supervisory role for Zen Combat Academy Ltd. It applies during classes, one-to-one sessions, sparring, gradings, competitions, seminars, trips, online communication and any activity where the individual is representing the Academy.

The welfare, dignity and safety of students must always take priority over competitive results, grading progress, commercial interests or personal reputation.

Current safeguarding framework

This Code should be read alongside the Academy safeguarding policies and reflects the principles of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, which applies to sports clubs and organisations in England, together with relevant safeguarding, equality, health and safety and data-protection law.

2. SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE FIRST

- Treat every safeguarding concern, disclosure or allegation seriously and report it promptly through the Academy safeguarding procedure.
- Never investigate suspected abuse personally, promise secrecy, or delay a referral where a child or adult may be at immediate risk.
- Make the welfare and safety of students the first consideration when planning or delivering training.
- Maintain appropriate supervision and never deliberately create unnecessary one-to-one isolation with a child or adult at risk.
- Recognise that children, disabled students, neurodivergent students and adults with care and support needs may require different communication, supervision or reasonable adjustments.
- Challenge bullying, discrimination, harassment, sexualised behaviour, humiliation and unsafe conduct immediately and appropriately.

3. PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES AND POSITIONS OF TRUST

- Build relationships based on trust, respect, fairness and clear professional boundaries.
- Do not use a coaching position to obtain personal, sexual, emotional, financial or other improper benefit from a student or family.
- Do not engage in sexual, romantic or sexualised relationships with any student under 18. Coaches must also understand the statutory positions-of-trust offences that protect 16- and 17-year-olds in specified sporting relationships.
- Do not sexualise coaching, make sexually suggestive comments, initiate unnecessary physical contact or engage in conduct that could reasonably be viewed as grooming.
- Do not invite a child to a private home, share a bedroom with a child who is not your own child, or arrange private social contact outside the normal Academy setting without a legitimate, authorised reason and appropriate safeguards.
- Personal care should normally be provided by a parent, carer or appropriately designated support person, not by the coach, unless a specific agreed safeguarding arrangement is in place.

4. SAFE AND COMPETENT COACHING

- Coach only within the limits of your competence, qualifications, insurance and authorised role.

- Ensure activities are suitable for the student's age, size, ability, disability, experience, medical information and current condition.
- Follow Academy risk assessments, Safe Practice Policy, Sparring & Grappling Policy, first-aid procedures and concussion/return-to-training requirements.
- Use appropriate protective equipment and ensure contact is controlled and appropriate to the discipline, experience and purpose of the session.
- Explain drills clearly, demonstrate safe technique and stop activity where there is an unacceptable risk of injury.
- Never use excessive exercise, physical contact, humiliation, intimidation or pain as punishment.
- Record and report accidents, injuries, near misses and significant safety concerns in accordance with Academy procedure.
- Do not coach while impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, misused medication or any condition that makes safe coaching impossible.

5. INCLUSION, DISABILITY AND SEN

- Treat students fairly and with dignity regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or other background or characteristic.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled students where required and practicable, including changes to communication, environment, equipment, pace, instruction and assessment.
- Do not assume that a diagnosis, disability, communication difference or support need determines what a student can or cannot achieve.
- Use patient, respectful communication and seek advice from the student, parent/carers, safeguarding lead or other appropriately informed staff where a different coaching approach may help.
- Where a coach is struggling to meet a student's needs, ask for support. A fresh approach from another suitably experienced coach may be appropriate and should never be treated as a failure.

6. PHYSICAL CONTACT AND TECHNICAL CORRECTION

- Physical contact must be necessary for the activity, proportionate, safe and professionally appropriate.
- Where practicable, explain why contact is needed before making a manual correction and respect a student who is uncomfortable with non-essential contact.
- Use open and observable coaching practices. Avoid unnecessary contact with intimate areas of the body.
- Sparring, grappling, throws, padwork and partner drills must be supervised according to Academy safety rules and matched appropriately.

7. COMMUNICATION, ONE-TO-ONE COACHING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Use Academy-approved channels for communication with students and families wherever practicable.
- Communication with children should be transparent, appropriate to the coaching purpose and capable of being seen by a parent/carers or authorised Academy representative where required.
- Do not send sexual, flirtatious, secretive, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate messages to students.
- One-to-one coaching must take place in an appropriate environment with safeguarding arrangements proportionate to the student's age and needs.

- Do not post images, personal information or sensitive details about students without the required consent and lawful basis.
- Remember that coaches are role models. Social-media content connected to the Academy must not undermine safeguarding, equality, professional standards or the reputation of students and colleagues.

8. BEHAVIOUR, INTEGRITY AND ROLE-MODELLING

- Display consistently high standards of behaviour, language, appearance and sportsmanship.
- Encourage students to value learning, effort, confidence, discipline and personal development - not only winning.
- Never condone cheating, dangerous practice, prohibited substances, deliberate rule-breaking, intimidation of officials or abuse of opponents.
- Do not publicly humiliate students or undermine other coaches, instructors, referees, officials, parents or volunteers.
- Declare conflicts of interest and never use Academy students, purchases, selections or opportunities for undisclosed personal gain.
- Maintain confidentiality appropriately, while recognising that safeguarding information may need to be shared with people who need it to protect someone from harm.

9. QUALIFICATIONS, VETTING AND CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT

- Maintain any qualifications, licences, insurance, first-aid training, safeguarding training and DBS status required for the role.
- Complete additional training where the needs of students or the Academy require it, including disability/SEN, communication, mental-health awareness or other specialist areas.
- Tell Academy management promptly if any matter arises that may affect suitability to work with children, adults at risk or students generally.

10. REPORTING CONCERNS AND BREACHES

- Report safeguarding concerns through the Academy safeguarding procedure without delay.
- Report serious health and safety issues, discrimination, harassment, bullying, misconduct or suspected criminal conduct through the appropriate Academy route.
- Where the concern is about the person who would normally receive the report, use an alternative senior manager, safeguarding deputy or external statutory route as appropriate.
- Cooperate honestly with safeguarding, complaints, disciplinary and statutory investigations.

Immediate danger

If a child or adult is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical assistance, contact the emergency services on 999. Safeguarding reporting within the Academy must not delay urgent protective action.

11. BREACHES OF THIS CODE

Breaches will be addressed proportionately under the Academy's safeguarding, complaints and disciplinary procedures. Depending on seriousness, action may include advice, additional supervision or training, a warning, restriction of duties, interim suspension, removal from coaching, exclusion from the

Academy, referral to a governing or regulatory body, referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a legal duty or power applies, or referral to police/local-authority safeguarding services.

12. RELATED ZEN COMBAT ACADEMY DOCUMENTS

- Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures
- Safe Practice Policy and Procedures
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Complaints & Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding Travel Policy and Procedures
- Social Media / Photography requirements and relevant risk assessments

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to follow this Code of Conduct. I understand that breaches may be addressed under Zen Combat Academy Ltd policies and may result in restrictions, disciplinary action, removal from duties or exclusion where appropriate.

Coach / Instructor name	
Signature	
Date	
Zen representative / witness	