



# **British Rowing Regulatory Framework**

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# 1. Introduction

This document provides an overview of the British Rowing regulatory framework and is intended to provide clarity on the rules, policies, and procedures that govern participation in the sport of rowing.

The framework brings together the key standards, regulations, and processes used by British Rowing to support safe, fair, and well-managed rowing environments. It explains how different types of issues are addressed within the sport and which British Rowing processes apply in each case.

The Articles of Association form the constitutional foundation of British Rowing and establish the organisation's authority to govern the sport and adopt rules and policies. All British Rowing regulations, procedures, and governance policies operate within the framework established by the Articles, which are available [here](#).

This document provides an overview of the principal regulatory instruments that together form the British Rowing Regulatory Framework:

- **General Regulatory Provisions:** The British Rowing Regulations (June 2026) set out the general cross-cutting regulatory provisions which apply across the British Rowing Regulatory Framework and support the operation, enforcement, and interpretation of the sport's specialist rules, policies, and procedures
- **Behaviour Standards:** The Code of Conduct, which establishes the standards of behaviour expected within the sport.
- **Safeguarding:** The British Rowing Safeguarding Regulations which establish requirements for protecting Children and Adults at Risk.
- **Disciplinary:** The British Rowing Disciplinary Rules which establish the procedures for addressing misconduct and welfare-related matters involving adults.
- **Affiliation and Membership:** The Club and Membership requirements which establish the obligations that clubs must meet to participate in the sport as a British Rowing Affiliated Member or individually registered British Rowing Member.
- **Other policies and procedures:** These support the operation and governance of rowing activities.

## 2. General Regulatory Provisions

The British Rowing Regulations (June 2026) set out the general cross-cutting regulatory provisions that apply across the British Rowing Regulatory Framework. They operate alongside the specialist regulatory instruments, including the Safeguarding Regulations, Disciplinary Rules, Rules of Racing, Complaints Policy, Club Dispute Resolution Procedure, and Affiliation and Membership Terms and Conditions.

The British Rowing Regulations provide the general regulatory structure for participation in the sport, including provisions relating to regulatory authority, compliance, enforcement, interpretation, and cross-cutting matters such as competition governance, membership and affiliation, and health and safety.

Where a matter is not expressly governed by a specialist rule, regulation, policy or procedure, these Regulations provide the default regulatory framework for its management and resolution.

### **3. Behaviour Standards**

The British Rowing Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour British Rowing expects from those involved with the sport of rowing. The Code of Conduct is available [here](#).

The Code applies to British Rowing registered members (in accordance with the terms and conditions of membership) and to British Rowing Affiliated Clubs and their members, irrespective of their individual British Rowing membership status.

The Code of Conduct establishes the values and conduct expected across the sport and applies broadly to participants including athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, clubs, supporters and those working on behalf of British Rowing.

The Code provides a framework for maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful sporting environment by defining expected behaviours and responsibilities aligned with British Rowing's values of teamwork, inclusivity and commitment.

British Rowing Affiliated Clubs must require all their members to comply with the Code as a condition of club membership. Failure to do so may impact the club's affiliation status. Compliance with the Code is therefore a condition of participation in the sport of rowing. Breaches of the Code may be subjected to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Rules.

### **4. Safeguarding**

British Rowing defines Safeguarding Concerns as welfare issues relating to or involving children and/or Adults at Risk, who are among the most vulnerable participants in the sport. The British Rowing Safeguarding Regulations establish the requirements and responsibilities for protecting the welfare of children and Adults at Risk within rowing. They are available [here](#).

These Regulations set out the safeguarding standards that must be followed by Participants, as defined within the Regulations, which includes British Rowing members, athletes, clubs (who are responsible for enforcing compliance), coaches, volunteers and others involved in the sport of rowing in order to provide safe and supportive environments for participation.

The Regulations define safeguarding duties, reporting obligations and the measures required to prevent and respond to risks of harm, abuse or neglect. They also set out the responsibilities of individuals and organisations to identify and report safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding concerns are managed through dedicated safeguarding procedures and case management processes. These procedures are designed to assess risk, protect individuals, and determine appropriate safeguarding outcomes.

Misconduct incidents or alleged incidents involving adults that do not involve/concern children or Adult at Risk are handled under the British Rowing Disciplinary Rules and processes.

## **5. Disciplinary**

The British Rowing Disciplinary Rules establish the framework for addressing misconduct and welfare-related matters involving adults within rowing. They are available [here](#).

These Rules set out the procedures used by British Rowing to assess allegations, investigate potential breaches, and determine whether disciplinary action should be taken.

The rules apply to Participants, as defined within the Rules, which includes British Rowing members, athletes, clubs (who are responsible for enforcing compliance), coaches, volunteers and others involved in the sport of rowing. They provide the process for considering alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct and other applicable British Rowing policies or requirements, and set out how disciplinary cases are investigated, heard and determined.

The Disciplinary Rules also apply where clubs fail to comply with their obligations under British Rowing policies, including the Club Dispute Resolution Framework, or where a club fails to meet the standards required as a condition of affiliation. The Rules outline the powers of disciplinary panels, the procedures for hearings, the range of sanctions that may be imposed on individuals or clubs, and the processes for appeals.

## **6. Reporting Safeguarding and Disciplinary Concerns**

All matters are to be submitted via [centralised reporting portal/email/online system].

British Rowing has adopted a centralised reporting framework, which provides a single, consistent mechanism for reporting concerns, complaints, or incidents arising within the sport of rowing. This centralised reporting system ensures that issues are captured and directed into the appropriate British Rowing regulatory process.

It applies to all affiliated clubs, members, and participants. Where a club has any uncertainty as to whether a matter can be dealt with as a Club Dispute under the Club Dispute Resolution Procedure, or requires escalation, they must report it via the centralised reporting system. This ensures British Rowing can provide appropriate oversight where necessary and mitigates the risk of clubs handling matters that are not suitable for club level resolution. The central reporting framework ensures:

- a) Efficient capture and tracking of complaints and incidents;
- b) Consistent assessment and routing to the relevant regulatory process (e.g., Safeguarding Regulations, Disciplinary Rules, Complaints Procedure, or Club Dispute Resolution);
- c) Transparency, oversight, and accountability in handling all reported matters; and
- d) Collection of data to inform policy development, safety guidance, and risk management.

All reports submitted through the centralised system are reviewed by designated British Rowing Staff, who determine the appropriate regulatory process and required action for the matter (which may include handling it as a Club-Level Matter under the Club Dispute Resolution Procedure, where appropriate and applicable). Failure to report or deliberate mismanagement of incidents may constitute Misconduct and be addressed under the Disciplinary Rules.

This framework is not structured as a hierarchy of severity or escalation. Instead, it operates as a decision-making system to determine whether a report triggers safeguarding action, disciplinary action, club-level resolution, or another appropriate regulatory response.

## **7. Club Dispute and Regional Dispute Resolution Procedure**

The Club Dispute and Regional Dispute Resolution Procedure (“**Club Dispute Procedure**”) aims to provide a structured, fair, and transparent process for resolving internal disputes that arise within a British Rowing Affiliated Club between members or between individuals and the Club (as defined in the Club Dispute Procedure). This Procedure also sets out the appeal routes for Club Dispute/Regional Dispute matters. The Club Dispute Procedure is available [here](#).

## **Club-Level Matter**

A “**Club-Level Matter**” is a dispute which:

- a) arises from the activities, governance, or decisions of a single Club; and/or
- b) involves members, officers, officials, volunteers, or participants within that Club; and/or
- c) concerns a decision taken by a Club affecting an individual or group.

By way of illustration (and without limitation), Club-Level Matters may include:

- selection decisions for crews, squads or training groups;
- disputes relating to membership fees;
- training arrangements, squad organisation, or allocation of equipment;
- disagreements between committee members or minor interpersonal conflicts;
- scheduling or use of club facilities, including boathouse access or boat allocation;
- breaches of internal club rules;
- incident(s) of poor behaviour; and
- routine administrative or communication issues arising within the Club.

## **Regional Dispute**

A “**Regional Dispute**” is a dispute which:

- a) involves a Regional Rowing Council as a party; and/or
- b) arises between two or more Clubs; and/or
- c) cannot reasonably or fairly be determined by a single Club due to the nature of the dispute; and/or
- d) where it would be inappropriate for a Club to determine the matter due to a material conflict of interest affecting the Club as a whole.

This procedure is not a substitute for the Safeguarding Regulations or Disciplinary Rules of British Rowing.

Club-Level Matters should be resolved internally under the Club Dispute Procedure. Clubs must not handle issues involving safeguarding, serious misconduct, discrimination, harassment, or criminal matters, which must always be reported via the centralised reporting system and reported to the appropriate authorities where required.

As set out above, should a club have any uncertainty as to whether a matter can be dealt with as a Club Dispute under the Club Dispute Procedure, they must report it via the centralised reporting system.

## **8. Affiliation**

British Rowing affiliation establishes the formal relationship between a rowing club and British Rowing. The British Rowing Affiliation Terms and Conditions set out the obligations that clubs must meet to become affiliated, and to remain affiliated via the annual renewal process.

Where a club's initial affiliation application or annual renewal is approved, this will enable the club to participate in the sport as an official British Rowing Affiliated Club and ensure compliance with the rules, policies, and standards of the sport.

Affiliation ensures that clubs and their members can access the benefits of British Rowing membership, including governance guidance, training and development programs, insurance, and participation in competitions, while providing a structured and regulated environment for safe and fair participation in the sport. Affiliated clubs are responsible for enforcing compliance with British Rowing policies and regulations among their members and participants.

Affiliation requires clubs to maintain governance standards, including appropriate constitutions, management structures, and financial oversight, and to implement measures for safeguarding, safety, and conduct.

As a condition of affiliation, clubs are now required to accurately record and audit all Club-Level Matters they handled with outcomes, and provide this data to British Rowing on request, to ensure all matters are captured appropriately.

Competitions may also be British Rowing affiliated, and must adhere to specific conditions as part of affiliation.

The framework for affiliation defines the responsibilities of clubs and competitions to promote safe, well-managed, and supportive environments for rowing, and sets out the processes by which British Rowing may assess and address non-compliance. This includes the potential suspension or termination of affiliation where clubs or competitions fail to meet required standards.

## **9. Membership**

British Rowing Membership Registration can be done via the JustGo membership system. Registering as a member of British Rowing establishes the formal relationship between an individual and British Rowing.

All British Rowing Members are required to comply with the Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Regulations, Disciplinary Rules, and other applicable British Rowing policies and procedures, in line with the terms of their Membership.

Members are personally responsible for understanding and adhering to these standards, and satisfying any and all requirements mandated by their membership while participating in rowing activities, whether independently, at an affiliated club, or in British Rowing-sanctioned events.

Membership provides individuals with access to the full range of British Rowing benefits, including eligibility to compete in competitions, participation in training and certification programs, insurance coverage for rowing activities, and the ability to engage with governance processes such as voting and representation in policy development. Where members fail to meet these obligations, they may be subject to the Disciplinary Rules, which establish the procedures for addressing breaches of conduct and policy.

## **10. Complaints Policy**

The British Rowing Complaints Procedure provides a clear and accessible way for individuals to raise concerns relating to British Rowing, affiliated clubs, or activities under its governance. It is intended for issues that do not fall under Safeguarding, Misconduct, discrimination, harassment, or criminal matters. The Complaints Policy is available [here](#).

The procedure ensures that concerns are captured, reviewed, and addressed consistently, transparently, and fairly, providing a route for concerns to be considered at a national or organisational level. It covers matters such as service delivery or administrative concerns, complaints about competitions or events not involving regulatory breaches.

## **11. Other Policies, Guidance and Procedures**

Set out below are the additional governance, operational, and guidance documents that support the safe, fair, and effective management of rowing clubs, events, and participants. These policies

provide guidance, standards, and good-practice expectations for clubs, members, and participants.

**Anti-Bullying Policy:** This policy provides guidance for preventing, identifying, and addressing bullying within clubs and the sport. It supports safe and inclusive participation and helps create respectful environments for all participants. [\[link\]](#)

**Whistleblowing Policy:** The Whistleblowing Policy establishes a framework for reporting concerns about wrongdoing, malpractice, or breaches of law or policy, ensuring protection for individuals who report concerns in good faith. [\[link\]](#)

**Equality & Diversity Policy:** This policy outlines expectations for inclusive and non-discriminatory practice in clubs, competitions, and governance. It supports fair access to rowing for all participants and promotes diversity across the sport. [\[link\]](#)

**Health & Safety Guidance (Row Safe):** Guidance on maintaining safe club environments, risk management, and operational safety. Provides advice for clubs and participants to reduce risks associated with rowing activities. RowSafe provides the primary safety guidance for rowing in the UK. It sets out the safety responsibilities of clubs, participants and event organisers, and provides practical guidance on risk management, safe boating practices, equipment safety, and incident reporting. Please note, while RowSafe supports the safe operation of the sport, it operates as guidance rather than a disciplinary regulation. [\[link\]](#)

**Data Protection / Privacy Policy:** Provides guidance on the collection, use, and protection of personal information in line with applicable data protection legislation, including UK GDPR. [\[link\]](#)

**Competition & Event Guidance (Rules for Racing):** Provides operational guidance for competitions, regattas, and licensed events, including event management, eligibility, and the role of officials. These rules are operational in nature and are separate from the regulatory framework. [\[link\]](#)

**Club Governance Guidance:** Provides advice, templates, and recommendations for club constitutions, committees, financial management, and reporting. Supports clubs in meeting their governance obligations under affiliation. [\[link\]](#)