

Woollahra Sailing Club

Code of Conduct

Approved by: Woollahra Sailing Club Board

Effective from: 01 September, 2026

Review date: before 31st August, 2027

Definitions:

Members includes all sailors, paddlers, volunteers, coaches, instructors, officials, staff, leaseholders.

1. Purpose

Woollahra Sailing Club (Club) is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, inclusive and enjoyable environment for all Members.

The Club supports a range of water-based activities, including dinghy and skiff sailing, foiling, windsurfing, paddling, surfskis, kayaks and other approved watercraft activities.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all Members participating in Club activities or using Club facilities.

This Code applies to Members and, so far as reasonably practicable, to visitors, guests, contractors, leaseholders and other people attending or participating in Club activities. A breach by a visitor or guest may result in removal from the premises, cancellation of permission to participate, or action against the sponsoring Member where appropriate.

2. Our Expectations

All Members, are expected to:

- Treat others with courtesy, dignity and respect.
- Behave in a manner that supports the safety and wellbeing of others.
- Follow reasonable directions from Board Members, officials, coaches, instructors, staff and volunteers.
- Comply with Club rules, policies and procedures.
- Follow applicable sailing, paddling, boating, navigation, safety and maritime regulations.
- Take reasonable care of Club property, boats, paddlecraft, equipment and facilities.

- Act honestly and responsibly when representing the Club.
- Respect the rights, privacy and personal boundaries of others.
- Help create an environment where children and young people can participate safely and confidently.
- Raise concerns appropriately rather than engaging in confrontation, intimidation, gossip or retaliation.

3. Respectful Behaviour

WSC does not accept or condone behaviour that is threatening, abusive, bullying, discriminatory, harassing or intimidating. Such conduct may constitute a breach of this Code and may result in disciplinary action.

Members must not:

- Bully, harass, threaten or intimidate another person.
- Use abusive, offensive, racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory language or behaviour.
- Make unwanted sexual comments, advances or physical contact.
- Deliberately humiliate, isolate or victimise another person.
- Engage in physical violence or threaten physical violence.
- Damage or deliberately interfere with another person's property, boat or equipment.
- Engage in conduct that could reasonably cause another person to feel unsafe or unwelcome.

Competitive sailing and paddling can be demanding and disagreements will occasionally occur. These should be handled respectfully and, where necessary, through the Club's complaints and grievance process.

4. On-Water Conduct — Sailing and Paddling

4.1 General

Safety is the highest priority during all sailing, paddling, training and racing activities.

All users of the water are expected to:

- Operate their boat, kayak, surfski or other watercraft safely and responsibly.

- Maintain an appropriate lookout and awareness of other water users.
- Comply with applicable navigation rules and maritime requirements.
- Respect the different characteristics, speeds and manoeuvrability of sailing boats, paddlecraft and other vessels.
- Avoid deliberately creating a dangerous situation for another water user.
- Follow reasonable directions from Board Members, coaches, instructors, race officials, safety personnel and authorised Club representatives.
- Use appropriate safety equipment for the activity and conditions.
- Consider weather, sea state, tides, currents, visibility and their own ability before going on the water.
- Report significant incidents, hazards or damaged Club equipment to the appropriate Club representative.

4.2 Sailing and Paddling Interaction

WSC recognises that sailors and paddlers share the same waterways and Club facilities.

Members must not assume that another water user will see or anticipate their actions.

Sailors and paddlers should:

- Give appropriate consideration to one another when crossing, overtaking, training or operating in confined areas.
- Avoid sudden or unpredictable manoeuvres where they may create a collision risk.
- Maintain a safe distance from other boats and paddlecraft wherever practicable.
- Exercise additional caution around junior sailors, beginner paddlers and participants undertaking instruction.
- Respect organised training sessions while maintaining appropriate safety and situational awareness.
- Not deliberately obstruct, intimidate, crowd or interfere with another person's sailing or paddling.

Nothing in this Code replaces the applicable navigation rules or sailing racing rules. Where there is uncertainty, **safety takes priority over competitive advantage**.

4.3 Paddling — Surfski and Kayaks

Members using surfskis, kayaks or other paddlecraft are expected to:

- Have an appropriate level of skill for the conditions in which they are paddling.
- Wear or carry appropriate safety equipment as required for the activity and conditions.
- Ensure their craft is seaworthy and suitable for the intended activity.
- Maintain control of their paddlecraft at all times.
- Take particular care when launching and landing.
- Avoid stopping or congregating in areas where they may obstruct launching, landing or other water users.
- Give appropriate consideration to swimmers, sailors, powered vessels and other Members.
- Follow the directions of coaches, instructors and safety personnel during organised training.
- Not participate in organised training or paddling activities while impaired by alcohol or drugs.

All Members should also exercise particular caution in rough conditions, strong winds, currents, boat traffic and other circumstances where a capsize or loss of control could create a safety risk.

4.4 Training Groups

Training groups, whether sailing or paddling, should operate in a manner that does not unnecessarily endanger or obstruct other Members or water users.

Coaches and group leaders are responsible for providing reasonable instructions appropriate to the activity, but each participant remains responsible for their own safety and for complying with applicable navigation and maritime requirements.

Participants must follow reasonable safety instructions given by coaches, instructors and safety personnel.

5. Launching, Landing and Club Waterfront Areas

Members using surfskis, kayaks, sailing dinghies and other watercraft must use Club waterfront areas responsibly.

Members must:

- Follow Club rules governing the use of ramps, pontoons, jetties and other waterfront facilities.
- Avoid blocking access to launching and retrieval areas.
- Give way to people who are launching or retrieving boats where reasonably practicable.
- Not leave boats, surfskis, kayaks, paddles, trolleys or other equipment in locations that obstruct access.
- Take care when carrying boats and equipment around other people and property.
- Follow any temporary directions issued by the Club relating to waterfront access.

6. Club Facilities, Storage and Equipment

Members are expected to respect the Club's facilities and those of other Members.

This includes:

- Keeping storage areas, rigging areas, change rooms, toilets and common areas clean and orderly.
- Using allocated boat, kayak and paddlecraft storage spaces appropriately.
- Not moving, interfering with or relocating another member's boat, surfski, kayak or equipment without permission, except where reasonably necessary for safety.
- Reporting damage, hazards, maintenance issues or unsafe conditions promptly.
- Leaving facilities in a condition that allows the next person to use them safely.
- Storing boats and equipment only in areas allocated or approved by the Club.

Members must not use another person's equipment without permission.

7. Children and Young People

WSC is committed to providing a safe environment for children and young people participating in sailing, paddling and other Club activities.

Adults must:

- Behave appropriately and respectfully around children and young people.
- Maintain appropriate professional and personal boundaries.

- Follow Club child safeguarding requirements and applicable Working With Children requirements.
- Report concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child through the appropriate Club or statutory reporting pathway.

Coaches, instructors, volunteers and other adults involved in junior activities must comply with any additional requirements applying to their role.

8. Alcohol, Drugs and Impairment

Members and visitors must behave responsibly when consuming alcohol at the Club or at Club events.

A person must not:

- Participate in sailing, paddling, training, racing or other activities while impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- Operate a boat, surfski, kayak or other equipment while impaired.
- Supply or consume illegal drugs at Club premises or activities.
- Engage in inappropriate, unsafe or disruptive behaviour as a result of alcohol or drug use.

The Club may direct a person to stop participating where it reasonably believes that the person presents a safety or conduct risk..

9. Social Media and Electronic Communication

Members are expected to maintain the same standards of behaviour when communicating online as they do in person.

Members must not use social media, email, messaging services or other electronic communications to:

- Bully, threaten, harass or intimidate another person.
- Publish material that is knowingly false or malicious about another member or the Club.
- Share private or confidential information without permission.
- Publish images or information about children or other Members inappropriately or without appropriate consent.

- Bring the Club into serious disrepute through inappropriate conduct while representing themselves as connected with WSC.

Reasonable disagreement, criticism and discussion are permitted. Personal attacks and abusive conduct are not.

10. Conflicts of Interest and Club Governance

Members involved in Club governance, the Board, coaching, officiating or other positions of responsibility must act honestly and in the interests of the Club.

Potential conflicts of interest should be disclosed to the relevant Board member.

Members must respect legitimate decisions made by the Board and Club officials, while retaining the right to raise concerns through the Club's established Complaints and Grievance Processes.

11. Visitors and Guests

Members are responsible for ensuring that their guests understand and comply with reasonable Club requirements while attending the Club or participating in Club activities.

The Club may ask a visitor or guest to leave Club premises or cease participating in an activity where their behaviour creates a safety, conduct or operational concern.

12. Reporting Concerns

Concerns may be reported to the General Manager, Commodore, or any Board member. If the concern involves one of these people, it may be reported to the Chairman of the Board or an independent person nominated by the Board.

Reports should be made as soon as reasonably practicable and should include, where possible:

- What happened.
- When and where it happened.
- Who was involved.
- The names of any witnesses.
- Any relevant photographs, messages or other evidence.

Serious matters should be reported immediately where there is an ongoing safety risk.

The Club will seek to deal with complaints fairly, promptly and confidentially, recognising that confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed where disclosure is required to properly investigate or address a matter.

13. No Victimisation

A person must not be disadvantaged, threatened, bullied or victimised because they:

- Make a genuine complaint.
- Raise a safety or conduct concern.
- Participate in an investigation.
- Provide information or evidence about a complaint.

Knowingly making a false or malicious complaint may itself constitute a breach of this Code.

14. Breaches of the Code

A breach of this Code may result in action by the Club.

Depending on the circumstances, this may include:

1. Informal discussion or direction to modify behaviour.
2. Formal warning.
3. Restrictions on participation in particular activities or use of Club facilities.
4. Suspension of membership or participation.
5. Removal from a Club role or position.
6. Member suspension or exclusion provisions in the Club's constitution.
7. Referral to an appropriate external authority where required or considered appropriate.

In assessing whether conduct breaches this Code, the Club will consider the circumstances, seriousness, frequency, intent, impact, relevant safety obligations and whether the conduct was reasonable in the circumstances.

The Club Board will consider the seriousness and circumstances of each matter and will follow its Complaints & Grievance Procedure and Disciplinary Procedure where applicable.

Nothing in this Code prevents the Club from taking immediate reasonable action where necessary to protect the safety or wellbeing of all Members or property.

15. Natural Justice

Where formal disciplinary action is being considered, the person concerned will generally be:

- Told the substance of the concern or allegation.
- Given a reasonable opportunity to respond.
- Provided with a fair and impartial process.
- Informed of the outcome where appropriate.

The Club may take interim measures while a matter is being considered where reasonably necessary to protect Members, visitors, the Club or its operations.

16. Responsibility of Members

By participating in WSC activities or using Club facilities, Members are expected to understand and comply with this Code.

The Code applies equally to all Club Members regardless of whether their primary activity is:

- Sailing;
- Paddling;
- Surfski;
- Kayaking;
- Windsurfing;
- Training;
- Racing;
- Volunteering; or
- Other approved Club activities.

The Code is intended to establish clear standards of behaviour rather than restrict reasonable enjoyment, competition, discussion or disagreement within the Club.

17. Related policies

- Complaints and Grievance Procedure.
- Disciplinary Procedure.
- Child Safeguarding or Member Protection Policy.
- Social Media Policy.
- Safety Management System
- On-Water Safety Policy.
- Privacy Policy.
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18. Review

This Code will be reviewed periodically by the WSC Board to ensure it remains appropriate for the Club's activities, membership and legal and regulatory obligations.

Woollahra Sailing Club Board