

Para Powerlifting World Class Program

Cultural Code of Conduct

1. Purpose and Scope

The Para Powerlifting World Class Program (WCP) recognises that performance is shaped not only by physical preparation but by the environment in which athletes and staff operate.

This Cultural Code of Conduct sets out the non-negotiable behavioural standards expected of all members of the Program.

Its purpose is to:

- Protect the wellbeing and safety of all athletes and staff
- Sustain a high-performance environment aligned with ParalympicsGB Winning Behaviours
- Ensure all interactions contribute positively to training quality, preparation, and performance
- Establish expected responses and consequences when standards are breached

This code applies at all times when individuals are:

- Training at home or centralised program
- Attending camps, competitions, travel, meetings or events
- Representing the WCP or ParalympicsGB in any capacity
- Communicating through email, messaging, or online platforms

2. Core Principles

2.1 Zero Harm Principle

No behaviour — physical, verbal, emotional, or online — may cause harm, intimidation or distress to another member. Individuals are accountable for both the **intent** and the **impact** of their behaviour.

2.2 Respect for Shared Spaces

Shared environments must remain professional, safe and predictable.

2.3 Positive Energy Contribution

Individuals must manage personal stress and mood appropriately and avoid draining the environment.

2.4 Constructive and Supportive Language

Language must be professional, constructive and performance focused. Toxic or undermining language is prohibited.

2.5 Communication Standards

All communication must be clear, timely and respectful, considering the most appropriate mode of communication.

3. Expectations Within Shared Physical Spaces

All members must:

- Arrive on time for training and competition
- Maintain tidy and safe training areas
- Where kit as instructed by the WCP
- Avoid disruptive behaviour during lifts
- Avoid any intimidating or harmful physical actions
- Always Uphold the zero-harm principle

4. Accountability and Bystander Responsibility

4.1 Personal Accountability

Each member is responsible for their conduct and its impact.

4.2 Bystander Responsibility

Members must challenge or report harmful behaviour. Silence equals tolerance.

5. Staff Commitments and Accountability

Staff must:

- Model the standards in this Code
- Maintain athlete safety and wellbeing
- Provide clear communication
- Manage conflict promptly
- Support reporting of concerns
- Be accountable for lapses in behaviour or communication

6. Reporting, Escalation and Outcomes

6.1 Reporting

Concerns may be raised via the **speak-up guide (Appendix 1)**, athlete leaders, staff or safeguarding contacts.

6.2 Escalation

Serious issues may be escalated to NGB, UK Sport or ParalympicsGB welfare structures.

6.3 Consequences

Breaches may result in informal management or formal warnings, removal from spaces, modified access, impact on selection, or safeguarding investigation.

7. Agreement

All athletes, staff and contractors must confirm in writing that they understand and agree to follow this Code. Compliance is a condition of selection and participation in the WCP.

Speak-Up Guide

Purpose

This guide helps athletes and staff recognise, interrupt, and reset behaviours that fall outside the agreed WCP Cultural Code. The aim is to promote safety, respect, and consistency—not confrontation.

Core Script

The anchor phrase/thought is:

"Pause — check the standard."

This exact wording is optional. What matters is interrupting behaviour calmly and referencing agreed standards.

Realistic Variations

- "Quick check, is that our standard?"
- "Reset, that felt off the standard."
- "Hold up, tone/behaviour is slipping"
- "Wait, we said we'd avoid that language."
- "That's not our standard is it?"
- "Hang on, come back to standard"

1. Gentle, low-key (most common)

"Hey, quick check on our standards there"

"Hang on, is that within our standards?"

"Wait a sec, that felt off to me, are you ok?"

Why it works: soft interruption, easy for someone to correct.

2. Direct but non-aggressive

"Pause, that's not within our agreed standard."

"Hold up, we said we'd avoid that language."

"Stop a moment, check were we are within the standards."

Why it works: communicates a boundary clearly.

3. When someone is being curt, sharp, or negative

“Hey, reset, we said positive energy in shared spaces.”

“Check the tone, not quite the standard.”

“That came across harsh, can we reset not while it’s easier to do?”

Why it works: focuses on behaviour, not personality.

4. During a heated moment or rising tension

“Pause, let’s get back to the standard before this escalates.”

“Reset, this is going off track.”

“Wait, this isn’t aligned with how we work.”

Why it works: interrupts escalation without blame.

5. When witnessing toxic language or ridicule

“Hold on, that’s not acceptable here.”

“Wait, that crosses our line.”

“No, that’s not up to our standard.”

Why it works: strong, clear, uses the shared standard as the anchor.

6. For staff challenging an athlete (professional tone)

“Let’s pause, that language is outside our agreed standard.”

“Reset, that behaviour isn’t safe or respectful.”

“Quick check, that’s not fitting with our WCP expectations.”

7. For an athlete challenging a coach or staff member (safe, respectful)

“Can we pause. That didn’t feel within our standards”

“Sorry, that landed outside the tone we try to keep.”

“Quick check, can we reset that didn’t land well”

Why it works: shows professionalism without fear of reprisal.

In high-performance environments with similar systems, people commonly say things like:

- “Reset.”
- “Not the standard.”
- “Stay in standard.”
- “We agreed that’s not OK.”
- “Come back to standard.”

Or even just a **hand gesture** +
“Standards?”

The goal isn’t the wording — it’s creating a **shared language** that:

- interrupts harmful behaviour quickly
- prevents escalation
- removes personal blame
- normalises accountability

The phrase “*Pause — check the standard*” is an **anchor**

Responding When Someone Speaks Up

- "Thanks, resetting now."
- "Got it."
- "Understood, I'll adjust."
- "Appreciate the check."

Avoid defensive reactions like:

- "You're too sensitive."
- "I didn't mean it."
- "It's just a joke."

Principles

- Use it early to prevent escalation.
- Keep tone neutral.
- Anchor statements to shared standards, not personal preference.
- Anyone can speak up to anyone: athlete-to-athlete, athlete-to-staff, staff-to-athlete.
- It protects performance, relationships, and the training environment.