

Further guidance and FAQ's referring to National Coaching Licence

Background

At British Powerlifting, the safety, integrity, and inclusivity of our sport are paramount. The introduction of the National Coaching Licence is part of a long-planned initiative designed to enhance governance, raise awareness, and protect our community—athletes, coaches, and supporters alike.

This licence aligns us with national sporting standards and ensures that our coaches are equipped with essential knowledge on Anti-Doping, Safeguarding, and Equality and Diversity. By implementing this, we proactively address safeguarding concerns, establish a consistent standard of coaching, and demonstrate our commitment to a professional, responsible, and inclusive sporting environment.

We acknowledge the concerns regarding costs and accessibility. Therefore, we have carefully selected affordable (or free) training resources, with all licence fees directly reinvested into future coaching education initiatives to benefit our entire community. Dispensation has also been thoughtfully provided for parents and guardians assisting dependents to ensure no unnecessary barriers are created.

Our objective is not punitive but preventative—promoting accountability, enhancing education, and strengthening our sport's governance for the well-being of all participants. These steps help secure the future of British Powerlifting as an inclusive, safe, and respected national sport.

Frequently Asked Questions and Concerns

Q) The introduction of a new licence feels like a kneejerk reaction, why now?

This has been in the planning stages for some time now, a meeting with our Coaching Lead early last year identified a need for coaches to be certified for governance and safeguarding reasons. There have also been changes in UK regulations on certain topics, such as sexual harassment, and it is important that British Powerlifting does everything it can to comply with these regulations.

The National Coaching Licence was developed following extensive discussions within British Powerlifting to address growing governance and safeguarding concerns. It formalizes coaching standards and ensures compliance with guidelines recommended by national sports governing bodies, thus protecting our members and enhancing the overall quality and credibility of our sport.

Q) Is a coaching/handling licence needed for all events?

No, a licence is only required for British Powerlifting **national events**. At this point Local level meets and Home Nation level (e.g. All England) do not require this.

Q) Northern Ireland isn't listed, does this licence approach apply there too?

Our apologies—we should have included Northern Ireland. Yes, it applies there as well.

Q) What about international events?

The processes for international events must comply with IPF expectations. All relevant guidance can be found on powerlifting.sport.

Regarding WADA anti-doping regulations, international athletes should be aware of the available training resources and ensure compliance as part of the coaching or competition process.

Q) Do I need this to help my child at the British?

No, dispensation for parents and guardians handling their dependents has been made.

Q) I'm concerned that the licence fees plus the course fees are prohibitively expensive.

We understand that additional costs and processes are not always welcomed and that people have different financial backgrounds and abilities to afford such increases. We have therefore taken an approach that allows us to implement this meaningfully while keeping it affordable for British Powerlifting members.

The cost of the courses may be lower than some members initially expected when we first announced this policy:

1. The three courses below would be acceptable and are outlined on the application form. Two are free and one a small fee of £4.50
2. UKAD/WADA Anti-Doping awareness certification free at the following links
3. Coaches of high performance athletes free course can be found [here](#). (we will also accept the international athlete qualifications mandatory for both international athletes and soon to be coaches)
4. Safeguarding training can be found for free [here](#).
5. Equality and Diversity in sport for a £4.50 fee can be done [here](#).

Q) I feel this licence might enable bias or exclusion, feeling that it might disadvantage those not in certain social circles or established groups.

At British Powerlifting, we strive to create an environment that provides equal opportunities for all.

We are committed to ensuring that obtaining a licence is accessible to everyone and remains cost-effective. We recognise the need to strike a balance, and we hope our approach reflects this effectively.

Q) I just want to handle my [friend/partner/spouse] and this is going to take a long time to complete just to help

We understand that achieving these accreditations requires a time commitment. Currently, we feel that to progress the sport need to have a framework in place that upholds the vision and values of British Powerlifting, along with the necessary policies and processes. It's also essential that anyone involved in coaching or handling is familiar with any particularly sensitive procedures and ensures that we operate in the best possible way.

We are exploring options to create a streamlined version of the training resources, allowing independent handlers to become licensed without undergoing the full process required for coaches managing a larger roster of athletes professionally.

Q) Isn't this going to discourage handlers and helpers for getting involved? What about creating temporary licences to remove friction or ensure quick compliance?

We believe this is a valuable suggestion and have been considering whether different levels of training are appropriate for coaches versus more independent handlers.

We are exploring options to develop our own e-learning resources, allowing handlers to complete the necessary training without requiring a full or half-day away from their busy schedules. This would help ensure they are prepared to handle national events while maintaining flexibility.

The challenge lies in upholding our standards. If we do not set a minimum standard, we risk having no standard at all. However, we also recognise the importance of minimising friction to keep people actively engaged in the sport.

Q) If feels like this licence an attempt to to make more money out of members?

We completely understand this concern. In a community sport like powerlifting, the last thing you want is to feel that the organisation is deliberately acting just to generate revenue from you, and it can feel like new policies and processes that require payment are doing just that.

The fee is necessary to cover certain processes and overheads required to make this initiative possible. For example, we will be creating and reviewing our own training resources, which may require hosting and validation.

We recognise that, like all roles in sport, everyone involved is a volunteer. British Powerlifting is a non-profit organisation, and all funds generated through this initiative will be ring-fenced for projects like this, as well as future coaching, training, and development.

We are exploring creating and offering free online courses to help offset these costs for our members, limiting the costs to just the licence fee.

Q) This Sport costs enough as it is

I understand that participating in a sport can feel costly, and we always strive to minimise expenses for our members wherever possible. That's why British Powerlifting remains the most affordable affiliated NGB strength sport in the country.

With growing demand for higher-level events, improved facilities, and a more professional approach, some process changes may lead to slight cost increases. However, whenever new costs or additional processes are introduced, they are implemented with the goal of advancing the sport.

Our aim is to continuously improve British Powerlifting, ensuring that future years are even better than ever before. So we make these changes to support our sport's growth and development.

Q) Why are we all being “punished” because of a few people?

In British powerlifting, we cannot reasonably expect people to adhere to a set of conduct standards if we have not explicitly outlined them and established policies and processes to ensure everyone is properly trained—especially those in positions such as coaches and handlers, who serve as role models and influencers within the sport.

By implementing these measures and supporting them with clear policies and procedures, we can enhance awareness and safety for all our members. This also means that when individuals are subject to ongoing complaints, we have proper processes in place to manage these situations, including the revocation of licences where necessary.

These safeguards ensure that only those who uphold the vision, values, and standards of the organisation are permitted to continue in their roles. It is a privilege to be earned and maintained, not an entitlement granted without accountability.

Q) Why us? We've never done this before?

This is something we should have done sooner. Implementing a licence approach to these activities has always been a recommendation from National Sporting Bodies. Through education we aim to provide further awareness, which in turn helps the safety of our membership. Below are examples of other British Sporting organizations and their requirements.

EXAMPLES

(Wider Sporting NGB Terms for Coaches/Handlers)

1. **British Weightlifting.**
 - a. Minimum Level 2 BWL qualification at a cost of £700
 - b. plus, a £40 fee for a two year license. Plus, Membership.
2. **British Rowing**
 - a. Should you want to support your team or club occasionally.
 - b. Level 2 Session coach – Cost £249 plus Membership. In person.
3. **Crossfit**
 - a. Coaching at Club level – CF-L1 At a cost of £830-£1090 in person.
4. **RFU**
 - a. Official RFU Coaching course, Safeguarding course, DBS in person weekend courses.

Although we appreciate that adding an additional process and cost has met with some objection, and we understand the reasons for this, we believe we are benchmarking this against standard practices across other sports, not just British Powerlifting.

Q) Isn't this unnecessary as Safeguarding training does not on its own keep people safe from bad actors.

Although you're right that we can't control people's behaviour if they deliberately choose to act in bad faith, we can at least set expectations to prevent inadvertent mistakes or situations arising due to a lack of awareness. Having a licence that enforces certain standards helps achieve this. It also means that if someone breaches the rules, we have a clearer mechanism to respond, such as revoking their licence, to help ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults.

Our approach provides awareness and an understanding of situations that may arise and how to deal with them, and it's through education that we all know how to keep our children and vulnerable adults safe.

Q) But I do these courses as part of my degree, why do we need it for BUCS?

We recognise that some qualifications may overlap and achieve the same outcomes, such as safeguarding training, bullying and harassment training, or diversity and inclusion training. As a result, evidence of suitable alternative courses will be accepted, meaning you won't need to retake the training.

However, anti-doping training is mandatory if you have not already completed it. If you have undertaken the WADA ADEL training, for example, as part of international competition participation or coaching, you will not need to complete it again, provided it falls within the two-year window before a refresher is required.

Thank You!

We at British Powerlifting are committed to encouraging an inclusive and safe environment for all our members. Following links to coaching and Governing body support in this can be found in the following links.

Safeguarding Sport England can be found [here](#).

CIMSPA Workforce Governance Scheme can be found [here](#).



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