

IPACS Benchmark Guidelines

Updated 1 February 2022

IPACS Benchmark B1 – The organisation recognises the IOC Code of Ethics and/or has its own Code of Ethics with designated responsibility for ensuring implementation

Definitions

- IOC Code of Ethics - <https://www.olympic.org/code-of-ethics> (see latest version)
- Code of Ethics – a document that typically sets out the organisation's ethical values and principles; within the Code or in separate, related documents (that may include Codes of Conduct) there will be rules and procedures to implement. Examples of topics to be covered in the document(s) are anti-corruption, standards of behaviour, obligation of loyalty, rules regarding gifts and invitations, conflicts of interest and more (see also Recommendation C8)

Introduction to this Benchmark and its significance

- A Code of Ethics, together with any related documents, helps people involved with the organisation understand the standard of behaviour expected from them and that they should expect from others
- A Code of Ethics and related documents provide a set of rules which will allow for a disciplinary case in the event of an alleged breach
- Having a Code of Ethics can help to position an organisation in a positive way with stakeholders

Commentary on the action to be taken

- Develop and formally adopt a Code of Ethics (and related documents for rules and procedures if they are separate) or recognise the IOC Code of Ethics within the organisation's regulations
- Clarify whether or not the Code of Ethics applies to staff as well as officials
- The organisation's Code should be published alongside other relevant regulations (refer to IPACS Recommendation A1)
- Staff regulations may be handled separately
- Link the Code of Ethics with the anti-corruption Code of Conduct (see Recommendation B10)
- In either the Code or associated rules the organisation should set out the process for the suspension and removal of persons in decision-making roles in the event of misconduct (including breach of duties or any rule)
- There is designated responsibility for oversight, implementation, monitoring and sanctioning associated with the Code

Investment requirement – adoption of appropriate rules and procedures involves limited costs; more resources may be required for detecting possible breaches of the Code and conducting investigations

Guidance according to stage of organisation

Early stage

- The organisation has developed and adopted a Code of Ethics covering key topics and relevant procedures, which is published and clearly endorsed by senior management
- Alternatively, the organisation officially recognises the IOC Code of Ethics, for example in its Statutes or prominently on its website

Developing

- Senior management either has designated responsibility for oversight and implementation of the Code, or an individual who reports directly to senior management
- The organisation dedicates adequate resources for detecting possible breaches of the Code and investigating
- The investigation process is handled independently

Advanced

- The organisation carries out regular educational work with stakeholders about the Code, at least annually

Good practice examples

International Federations (from June 2020)

- FIG: There is an Independent Gymnastics Ethics Foundation, which includes a dedicated Compliance Officer (Article 4.3 of the [GEF Operational Rules](#))
- BWF: There is an [Integrity Unit](#) and an [Ethics Hearing Panel](#) with rules and procedures published. The BWF integrity programme includes educational activities. [Outcomes of the Panel](#) are published, including an archive
- UCI: The Ethics Commission is elected by Congress - see [Code of Ethics](#), article 12. Evidence of activity included [report from the Chair to Congress](#)
- IBU: [Biathlon Integrity Unit](#) is operationally independent
- International Orienteering Federation: [Independent Ethics Panel](#) established with rulings and minutes from meetings published. IOF Office co-ordinates with Ethics Panel. Code of Ethics, Cases and Reports to the General Assembly published

Overall standard among International Federations

- All 31 members of ASOIF had a Code of Ethics or referenced the IOC Code of Ethics within their regulations. 30 members had a dedicated unit/officer in place to oversee and implement such codes
- This topic was one of 20 covered in the 2018-19 GAISF assessment for non-Olympic sports (compared to 50 topics for Olympic sports) as it was judged to be important and feasible for small organisations to achieve

Continental Bodies

- None seen

National Olympic Committees

- Canadian Olympic Committee: [Policy Statement on Conduct](#)
- Colombian Olympic Committee: [Code of Ethics](#)
- Swiss Olympic Committee: [Code of Ethics and Conduct](#)

National Federation

- Singapore Table Tennis Association: [Codes of Conduct](#) for people in different roles

Selected references

- [ASOIF GTF Questionnaire 2019-20](#), Indicator 3.1
- [SIGGS](#): Principle 1 (Integrity), Indicator 1: How would you define the code of conduct of your organisation
- [SIGGS](#): See Roadmap Principle 1, Headline 1.1: Personal Integrity
- [European Commission Expert Group on Good Governance, "Principles of good governance in sport"](#):
 - *Principle 1.b: Goals and principles*
 - *Principle 2.a: Development of a code of ethics*
 - *Principle 2.b: Basic rules on the content and enforcement of the code*
 - *Principle 4.e(5): Minimum democratic principles for appointment to decision making bodies – The enforcement of a code of conduct or by-law which includes an express obligation for decision makers to:*
 - *Adopt the highest ethical practices;*
 - *Act independently in the interests of the sports body as a whole;*
 - *Not make decisions in which they have a business or personal interest;*
 - *To declare conflicts of interest.*

- *Principle 6.a(4): Requirements for the board – Board members should act independently in the best interests of the sports body as a whole and in accordance with their legal and fiduciary duties*
- *Principle 7.b: Need for a separate judicial/disciplinary framework*
- Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, [Addendum to the report “Working towards a framework for modern sports governance”](#). Criterion 3.2: Ethics/Integrity Code for all members and officials
- Geeraert, A. (2018). [Sports Governance Observer 2018](#). An assessment of good governance in five international sports federations. Principle 39: The organisation takes steps to ensure that applicable rules of conduct are adequately checked and that transgressors face consequences
- Develop, adapt and implement ethical principles and IOC's [“Consolidated Minimum Requirements for Implementation of the Basic Principles of Good Governance for NOCs”](#):
 - *Theme 3.6: Code of Ethics and ethical issues, Principles 1-3:*
 - *Develop, adapt and implement ethical principles and rules*
 - *Ethical rules should refer to and be inspired by the IOC Code of Ethics*
 - *Monitor the implementation of ethical principles and rules*
- Document EPAS(2018)47rev3 - “Optimising the processes of compliance with good governance principles to mitigate the risk of corruption”:
 - *Paragraph 3: Conflict of interest:*
 - *Indicator 3.5: An independent unit or a body is identified and in charge of ensuring the application of the rules on conflicts of interest, to advise members of the bodies, to initiate investigations proactively and to propose sanctions*

ASOIF indicator 3.1 – scoring definitions used in 2019-20 questionnaire

- 0 – No
- 1 – A designated staff member/unit has responsibility for keeping the Code of Ethics updated
- 2 – Designated responsibility and a defined process for dealing with breaches of the Code of Ethics
- 3 – Designated responsibility and a defined process and resources for investigating breaches, evidence of implementation
- 4 – State of the art Ethics/Integrity unit with defined process, education, resources for dealing with breaches, outcomes published