

## SECTION 6: CODES



### 6.1 CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

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#### 1. STATEMENT OF ETHICS

- 1.1. Virtus, its members, athletes, volunteers and federations, are committed to upholding the highest standards in line with the organisations mission. This includes the fundamental values of honesty, human rights, fairness, justice, non-discrimination and personal integrity
- 1.2. Virtus will not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, nationality, disability, ethnic origin, religion, philosophical or political opinion, marital status or sexual orientation. In particular, discrimination on the basis of impairment or is forbidden by the Paralympic ideals.
- 1.3. Virtus will not tolerate abuse in any form, verbal, physical or mental, against its athletes and officers including all forms of harassment. Behaviours that are humiliating, intimidating, or insulting will not be tolerated.
- 1.4. Members of Virtus will avoid any behaviour or action that would tarnish or undermine the reputation of the organization.
- 1.5. Consequently Regional and World Championships and other activities will be conducted in a manner that respects the following rules and code.
- 1.6. These ethical standards will be applied consistently across all stakeholders and members, and will be applicable to all Virtus organised or sanctioned events, competitions and activities.

#### 2. DIGNITY

- 2.1. Safeguarding the dignity of the individual and the sport is fundamental.
- 2.2. The athletes are the core constituents of the Virtus. Their interests, priorities and opportunity to participate in fair competition and excel in sport are the main objectives of the Virtus.
- 2.3. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, gender, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, philosophical or political opinion, marital status or sexual orientation. In particular, discrimination on the basis of impairment or disability is forbidden by the Virtus ideals. Classification, which promotes sport participation of athletes with intellectual impairments, is not about discrimination but empowerment.
- 2.4. There will be no toleration of a practice constituting any form of physical or mental injury to the participants. All forms of harassment against participants including physical, mental, professional, or sexual, are prohibited. Behaviours that are humiliating, intimidating, or insulting will not be tolerated.
- 2.5. It is recognised that athletes may have significant medical conditions that require treatment, but the use of any technique or medication whose sole purpose is sport performance enhancement while being detrimental or potentially detrimental to health will not be tolerated. Use of medications in this situation will be evaluated based on whether the medication gives an unfair advantage, whether it is essential to the athlete's health in everyday life not just sport, and whether an alternative medication can be found. Everything possible should be done to contribute to the

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creation of a drug free sport environment for all Virtus athletes in conjunction with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

- 2.6. Safety, well-being, and medical care of competitors regarding their physical and mental health and equilibrium will be maximised.
- 2.7. Members of the Virtus family will respect and protect individual privacy and personal information concerning participants, including oral, written, and electronic means.
- 2.8. Members of the Virtus family will avoid any behaviour action that would tarnish or give the impression of tarnishing the reputation of the family.

### 3. INTEGRITY

- 3.1. Virtus bodies and their representatives will have no undisclosed direct or indirect interest in or any relationship with any outside organisation or person that might affect, or be reasonably misunderstood by others to be affecting his/her objectivity, judgement, or conduct in carrying out the duties and responsibilities that he or she has in conjunction with the Virtus activities. This also applies to spouses, family members, businesses, or organisations to which Virtus bodies or representatives may belong.
- 3.2. Circumstances in which a conflict of interest could arise include material or their direct personal involvement with suppliers, vendors, contractors, sponsors, and candidate organising committees for Virtus events, competitions or activities.
- 3.3. Any action, which results in or creates the impression of the following, should be avoided:
  - a. Utilising association with Virtus for private gain or preferential treatment;
  - b. Impeding Virtus's efficiency or economy of office;
  - c. Loss of independence or impartiality;
  - d. Adversely affecting public confidence in the integrity or the reputation of Virtus;
  - e. Endangering life, health, or safety.
- 3.4. If the situation where a potential conflict of interest or a conflict exists, it must be presented to the Governing Board of Virtus.
- 3.5. All persons shall be responsible for extending the loss, damage, misuse or theft of property, records, funds or other assets belonging to Virtus. All Virtus assets must be used exclusively for conducting Virtus activities.
- 3.6. There is a fiduciary responsibility of the officers and representatives of Virtus. There shall be no illegal or unethical payments including bribes, kickbacks, grafts, unauthorised commissions, unauthorised finder fees from the assets or resources of Virtus or otherwise.
- 3.7. No person shall use for his/her personal gain or disclosure outside Virtus any confidential or trademark information obtained through his/her association with Virtus. This includes spoken, written, and computer-generated data relating to Virtus business.

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- 3.8. No person shall seek gifts or gratuities for him/herself, his/her family or friends from any outside organisation or person having or seeking to have an involvement with Virtus. Only gifts of nominal value that shall be determined by the Virtus Executive Committee in accordance with prevailing local customs may be given or accepted by Virtus representatives in the spirit of respect or friendship. Any other gift must be immediately turned over to the appropriate Virtus organisation. This includes entertainment, non-business travel or other favours such as loans, services, or non-approved compensation.
- 3.9. Any person elected to a general leadership position, such as the Virtus Governing Board or Standing Committee in Virtus shall work for the benefit of the entire Virtus and all its athletes and not just a particular constituent such as a member organisation, or sport.
- 3.10. Virtus and the Virtus Family must not be involved with any firms, organisations or persons whose activity is inconsistent with the Virtus constitution, ethos and code.
- 3.11. There must be an appropriate accounting and records and reports for all assets, liabilities, transactions, and dispositions of the assets of Virtus. Financial statements will be presented in accordance with International Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) or other applicable International Accounting Standards (IAS) recognised by the International Accounting Standards Book (IASB).
- 3.12. Other than the advancement of sport for persons with a disability and democracy, empowerment and equality within Virtus, the Global Games, Regional and World Games, Championships or Cups shall not be used to promote any political agenda.
- 3.13. Virtus values and ethical standards will be applied to all Virtus events, competitions and activities and they shall overrule any local or national practices, traditions, or customs.

### 4. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ATHLETES

- 4.1. All athletes agree to participate in Virtus events, competitions and activities in the true spirit of fair play for the glory of sport
- 4.2. All athletes should respect the performance of their fellow competitors and not cause any illegal obstruction, damage or bodily harm to them.
- 4.3. All athletes shall respect their coaches and team officials and not follow any illegal advice that would violate the Virtus ideals of fair play.
- 4.4. All athletes must respect the eligibility process and participate fully in it. They must respect the final decision of Eligibility Officers and officials and understand that failure to do so would jeopardise their ability to participate in Virtus events and competitions.
- 4.5. Athletes must not support or assist other athletes to gain illegal or unfair advantage and must report this to responsible officials.
- 4.6. Athlete autonomy will be respected as long as it does not violate fair competition and the Virtus ethos.

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- 4.7. Virtus, recognising that the honour of winning competitions lies in sporting performance and excellence, will award only prizes of nominal value such as medals to athletes. Prizes including money prizes given by others, such as sponsors and organising committees, are not promoted by Virtus, but are acceptable if given in accordance with the spirit of sportsmanship and fair competition.

### 5. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES AND TEAM OFFICIALS

- 5.1. Coaches and team officials must comply with the Virtus ideals in the spirit of fair play.
- 5.2. Coaches and team officials must never compromise true sportsmanship or the Virtus code to obtain personal, team or national advantage.
- 5.3. Coaches and team officials must observe and follow all the classification and competition rules and regulations and must report any irregularity to the sport officials.
- 5.4. Coaches and team officials must respect the classification process and ensure that their athletes perform honestly and make protests only when there is genuine doubt about the classification of a competitor.

### 6. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VIRTUS OFFICERS AND STAFF

- 6.1. Virtus Officers must perform their duties courteously, competently, consistently, and objectively for all athletes regardless of team or national origin.
- 6.2. Virtus Officers must declare any potential conflicts of interest.
- 6.3. Virtus Officers must not abuse their positions or capacity to obtain advantage or benefits.
- 6.4. Virtus Officers must respect athletes and coaches and be sure that there is a courteous attitude during the classification process. They must maintain confidentiality of athlete information and respect the dignity of the athletes.
- 6.5. Officials must apply the respective rules consistently for all athletes and ensure fair play at all times.
- 6.6. All officers must make all decisions with absolute impartiality and in the best interest of Virtus, athletes and sport.
- 6.7. Officers should not act in association with any regional, national or vested interest.
- 6.8. All elected Officers must respect the democratic election process and not offer any material benefits, directly or indirectly, to the voting constituencies to influence the result of an election.
- 6.9. No material benefits should be offered to any voting constituent member to influence the voting on any policies within the Virtus.
- 6.10. Officers of Virtus may not play an active role within their national squads, or undertake additional roles, in situations when performing the duties of their Virtus role (for example Sport Director's should not hold a team role during competition).

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- 6.11. There must be no association with any agencies or persons that are inconsistent with the principles of the Virtus Movement and its ideals.
- 6.12. Virtus officers shall promote the Virtus Code of Ethics by role modelling, peer monitoring and active peer support.
- 6.13. Virtus Officers are expected to, as representatives of Virtus whether inside or outside of the organisation, demonstrate a professional image at all times; choosing appropriate clothes for the circumstances is a key part of this.
- 6.14. Great care must be taken with all information, and the way in which it is communicated. All colleagues owe Virtus a duty of confidentiality, and must protect official information which is held in confidence. All information must be securely stored.
- 6.15. Confidential information gained through work with Virtus must not be passed on to any others, in any manner whatsoever, without prior written permission.
- 6.16. Any colleague who is arrested on any charge or who is convicted by a court of any criminal offence (except a traffic offence for which the penalty has not included imprisonment or the suspension of driving licence) should notify Virtus.

### 7. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VIRTUS PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

- 7.1. All relationships and activities with partners, supporters, and sponsors must be done in the spirit of promoting the Virtus athletes in the true spirit of fair play and in keeping with the Virtus ideals.

### 8. BREACHES OF RULES

- 8.1. Disciplinary action will be taken against any colleague who breaches the above rules or any other of Virtus' rules or policies and procedures.
- 8.2. Disciplinary action will also be taken if the conduct or behaviour of a colleague is considered to be unacceptable in any other respects.