The following document highlights the Code of Conduct adopted by myself as a practitioner both when working under the title of “Gunning Mental Performance” or during work conducted under employment from an external, third party (e.g. a university, club or team). The underpinning concepts have been adapted from the guidelines and policies provided by the British Psychological Society (BPS). More details of these policies can be found online at <https://www.bps.org.uk/guidelines-and-policies>. A copy of this document will be made available on my personal website ([www.gunningmentalperformance.com](http://www.gunningmentalperformance.com)) and will be made available to all clients. Elements of this Code of Conduct are also reflected within the Participant Information Document provided at the initiation of all work with clients.

In line with the BPS Practice Guidelines (BPS 2017), the term client refers to “any person or persons with whom I interact with on a professional basis. This may include “a couple, family group or education institution or any individual, including but not limited to an athlete, child/young person, coach, stakeholder, parent or student” who are in receipt of the services of the psychologist.

This code is based on the four ethical principles of the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (BPS, 2021), **Respect, Competence, Responsibility, and Integrity.** Each of these principles are discussed below, as well as highlighting the key behaviours that will be conducted by myself to demonstrate said principles.

**Respect:**

Respect refers to the equal treatment of all potential clients, regardless of social status, ethnic origin, gender, capacities, or any other such characteristics. All clients will be treated in such a way that allows them to feel respected, have autonomy and have privacy maintained.

The following list contains the key components of **respect** and how I work to maintain these:

* Privacy and confidentiality.
  + All clients are entitled to confidentiality throughout the consultancy process and beyond. All identify information relating to the client (e.g name, age, address) will be kept confidential at all times, except for the following circumstances:
    - When discussing the client with my supervisor (Dr Jenny Smith) or other peers within a professional context, during which the client’s name will be anonymised and additional consent from the client will be requested prior to this.
    - If it is believed that the client poses a n immediate risk to themselves or others, in which case additional consent will not be requested beforehand and the clients name may be disclosed.
  + For clients under the age 18, information will **not** be shared with parents/guardians/other stakeholders unless the client provides me with explicit consent to do so.
* Respect.
  + I will ensure that all clients are respected and allowed equal access to my services regardless of social status, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, capacity and any other such characteristics.
* Issues of power.
  + By adopting a “client-led” approach to my work it is hoped that this limits a perceived power differential between a client and myself.
  + When working with specialist groups (e.g. Young Children, People with Intellectual disabilities or impaired cognitive abilities) additional practices will be put in place to limit power differentials, for example allowing a parent/guardian/stakeholder into the room.
  + All clients have the right to request a refund from services (e.g Workshop, Observation or Consultation) up to 14 days after the delivery date if they do not feel that the service was appropriately delivered, but this should be done in good faith.
* Consent.
  + Informed Consent will be gained from all clients prior to the commencement of any work. This will be done by requiring clients to complete an informed consent document prior to the commencement of work.
  + When working with specialist groups (e.g. Young Children, People with Intellectual disabilities or impaired cognitive abilities) additional practices will be put in place to ensure consent can be supplied, for example requiring a parent/guardian/stakeholder to provide consent on behalf or, or alongside consent from the client.
* Self-determination.
  + The ‘client-led’ nature of my work will allow athletes to determine the direction of their work throughout the consultancy process.
  + All clients have the right to reject a proposed intervention if they believe it will not benefit them and request an alternative intervention or to be referred to an alternative practitioner.
  + All clients have the right to terminate the work at any point, without reason or explanation.

**Competence**

Competence refers to my ability as a practitioner to provide services to a requisite professional standard. I will only ever provide services that are within my current area of knowledge, skill, training, and experience. As a Trainee Sport and Exercise Psychologist, it is likely that various issues will arise that I do not possess the current competency levels to meet. In these cases, I will liaise with my supervisor to discuss the most appropriate line of action.

The following list contains the key components of **competence** and how I work to maintain these:

* Possession or otherwise of appropriate skills and care needed to serve persons, peoples, and organisations.
  + Throughout my Undergraduate and Masters’ degrees I was provided with appropriate skills and knowledge that allow me to conduct work as a Trainee Sport and Exercise Psychologist.
  + I will continue to engage in Continuous Professional Development in order to ensure that I maintain the appropriate skill level for my current work.
* The limits of their competence and the potential need to refer on to another professional.
  + I will regularly engage in reflection in order to highlight areas where I lack competence and engage in relevant practice to overcome this.
  + If presented with a client who requires support outside of my current competence, I will seek to refer said client to another, more appropriate practitioner. This process will be aided by my own referral process and through discussion with my supervisor.
* Advances in the evidence base and maintaining technical and practical skills
  + I will seek to continually engage in Continuous Professional Development throughout my career as practitioner, ensuring that I am working in line with the latest best-practice and evidence base.
  + I will regularly invest time reading relevant research and literature in order to ensure that I am working from the latest research.
* Matters of professional ethics and decision-making.
  + When presented with possible ethical dilemmas I will consult this document, as well as the guidance provided by the BPS.
  + Where these documents do not provide adequate guidance, I will consult with peers and my supervisor to reach an appropriate decision.
* Caution in making knowledge claims.
  + I will avoid making knowledge claims, both formally and informally, regarding my own work or the work of others, particularly if I do not have the requisite competency to comment on said work.

**Responsibility.**

I will act in a responsible way throughout my practice, demonstrating awareness of power, avoiding causing harm to others and act in such a way that contributes positively to society and the wider profession.

The following list contains the key components of **responsibility** and how I work to maintain these:

* Professional accountability.
  + I will be accountable for all my actions during my work as a practitioner and take responsibility to challenges that may arise.
  + I will ensure that I regularly engage in reflective practice to maintain accountable for my work and my actions.
  + The work I do will contribute positively to the wider professional and society.
* Responsible use of their knowledge and skills.
  + I will use my knowledge and skills in an appropriate manner, which respects the rights of individuals and does not result in negative consequences.
  + If presented with a situation in which my knowledge and skills are not sufficient to provide support, I will discuss this situation with my supervisor and seek to provide a referral to another, more appropriately qualified practitioner.
* Respect for the welfare of humans, non-humans and the living world.
  + I will seek to conduct my services in such a way that clients are safe from harm.
  + Clients have the right to stop a line of questioning should it be causing distress, to which I will oblige.
  + I will avoid causing damage to the wider environment when conducting field observations (e.g avoiding leaving litter).

**Integrity**

Acting with integrity includes being honest, truthful, accurate and consistent in my actions, methods, and outcomes.

The following list contains the key components of **integrity** and how I work to maintain these:

* Honesty, fairness, and accurate unbiased representation.
  + I will work in a way that supports my values and beliefs as both a practitioner and individual.
  + I will ensure that all work is approached in an honest manner and that all clients, regardless of background or characteristics are able to receive equal access to my services.
* Avoidance of exploitation and conflicts of interest (including self-interest);
  + I will state any potential conflicts of interest to a client prior to commencing any work with them.
  + Should a conflict of interest arise, I will do my best to manage this appropriately and seek advice from my supervisor if necessary.
  + I will only accept payment in the form of money and will not accept “trade offers” in return for my services.
  + Should a client wish to provide additional goods as a form of appreciation or gratitude, this will not influence my work with that clients and should preferably be done at the end of the working relationship.
* Maintaining personal and professional boundaries.
  + Ideally, all clients will not have a pre-existing relationship with myself that may influence any component of the working relationship. This would include individuals with whom I have engaged with regularly in an informal or social context.
  + Where I do already have a pre-existing relationship with a client, this relationship should be no more personal than what would be expected of a professional, working relationship.
  + All attempts possible will be made at maintaining professional boundaries between myself and clients. Likewise, I will maintain professional boundaries between myself and other colleagues and peers.
  + In the unexpected case that professional and personal boundaries are crossed with a client, then I will cease all work with said client and refer them to an alternative practitioner.
* Addressing misconduct.
  + I raise any suspected misconduct from other practitioners or clients with relevant governing bodies to ensure that all work is conducted in a fair an appropriate manner

**References:**

BPS (2017). *BPS Practice Guidelines.* The British Psychological Society, Leicester, UK

BPS (2021). *Code of Ethics and Conduct.* The British Psychological Society, Leicester, UK.