

THE KENNEL CLUB - Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct has been developed to set out the Kennel Club's expectations for all those taking part in or attending events under its jurisdiction along with general guidelines on the use of social media.

Why do we need this Code?

We are all under intense scrutiny in terms of the pedigree dog world and dog breeding generally. The advice and guidance offered in this document are not meant to penalise or cause difficulty but are there for the protection of all of us and particularly the dog – unity and co-operation is therefore vital.

What we expect from you

As with all sports, the Kennel Club expects all exhibitors and competitors to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and to ensure that their dogs are properly taken care of throughout the period of the event and do not become a nuisance to other dogs or to other attendees. Below are expectations which should be followed. These are not exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with relevant regulations as listed in the Kennel Club Year Book. A breach of these provisions may be referred to the General Committee for disciplinary action under Kennel Club Rules and Regulations.

People

- Conduct - participants have a duty both to their dogs and to others to make licensed events friendly and welcoming, and are expected to be co-operative and above all create a safe environment for all to enjoy their time at licensed events.
- Sportsmanship - participants should conduct themselves at all times in an appropriate fashion and should display good manners and respect towards other participants, show officials and to the judges.
- Any verbal communication with a judge should take place after judging has taken place and must be conducted in a polite and professional manner.

Code of Conduct

- Abusive or aggressive behaviour towards anyone at the show – including the judge, other participants, show management or other officials - will not be tolerated under any circumstances (further information appears later in this publication regarding harassment).
- Do not interfere with any dog whilst it is being judged.
- Smoking is not permitted whilst exhibiting or whilst a dog is under test or in breach of the law.
- Mobile phones should be turned off whilst exhibiting or whilst your dog is under test.
- If you have children, do not allow them to touch any dogs unless you have the permission of the owner for them to do so. Be aware of where your children are, and what they are doing, at all times. Take special care around benching areas where dogs may react to an unexpected approach.

Dogs

- All dogs must be of the correct temperament to enable the judge to examine the exhibit, independently of the exhibitor's assistance.
- Sparring between dogs is discouraged.
- Dogs are not permitted to wear muzzles of any kind whilst being judged.

Harassment

A Zero Tolerance approach No-one should be subject to intimidation or made to feel alarmed or distressed or put in fear of reprisal. Harassment is a criminal offence. To that end the Kennel Club adopts a zero tolerance towards all type of harassment activity. Harassment may be defined as causing alarm, distress and anxiety and fear of physical violence or other threat, offensive statements, verbal abuse and threats. Conduct may include speech, obstruction and so on. As such conduct may involve a criminal offence the police may be involved and it may be that the Kennel Club will defer any action pending the outcome of such investigation and/or prosecution.

It goes without saying that the Kennel Club expects courtesy and co-operation to be shown towards all staff and organisers at any Kennel Club licensed event.

Whilst the pressures and tensions which arise at competitive level are understood, any aggression or abuse towards those who are simply undertaking their jobs for the benefit and interest of the exhibitor/competitor and the audience and ultimately the dog itself cannot be tolerated.

Use of Social Media - Overview

The rapid growth of social media technologies combined with their ease of use and pervasiveness make them attractive channels of communication. However, these tools also hold the possibility of a host of unintended consequences. To help you identify and avoid potential issues we have provided some examples of best practices which are intended to help you understand, from a wide range of perspectives, the implications of participation in social media.

General Guidelines - Maintain Privacy

Do not post confidential or proprietary information. Do not discuss a situation involving named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their permission. As a guideline, do not post anything that you would not present in any public forum. Ask yourself, would I want to see this published in the newspaper or posted on a billboard tomorrow or ten years from now?

Does it Pass the Publicity Test

If the content of your message would not be acceptable for face-to-face conversation, over the telephone, or in another medium, it will not be acceptable for a social networking site.

Think Before You Post

There's no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts and pictures years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it's wise to delay posting until you are calm and clear-headed. Understand Your Personal Responsibility You are personally responsible for the content you publish on blogs or any other form of user-generated content. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.

Use of Social Media - Be Aware of Liability

You are responsible for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, libelous, or obscene (as defined by the courts). Be sure that what you post today will not come back to haunt you.

Be Accurate

Make sure that you have all the facts before you post. It's better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later.

Correct Mistakes

If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If you're posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post—just make it clear that you have done so.

Respect Others

You are more likely to achieve your goals or sway others to your beliefs if you are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or disagreeing with a concept or person.

Respect Your Audience

Don't use personal insults, obscenity, also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered sensitive. Users are free to discuss topics and disagree with one another, but be respectful of others' opinions. You are more likely to achieve your goals if you are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or disagreeing with a concept or person.

Take the High Ground

Remember that you're most likely to build a high-quality following if you discuss ideas and situations civilly. Don't pick fights online.