



## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Our code of conduct is a set of guidelines and rules that are designed to facilitate learning, growth and trust in our training environment for all students. If you have any concerns, comments or suggestions, please address them to your instructors.

This code of conduct covers behaviour expected of members in club training sessions, socials and any events attended as a club member.

### **Good Practice**

- Don't be afraid to ask questions and try things out. Everyone has their own learning style, individual body mechanics and goals.
- You know your body best. Work at the intensity you and your partner can manage and take appropriate breaks where necessary. It is always acceptable to sit out or watch a drill, this is still learning.
- Drills have no winner. You are there to learn a technique and help your partner learn so please be cooperative.
- Sparring is not intended to be a competition. You spar to practice techniques and principles and to help your partner with theirs.
- When using club kit, please be mindful this is for the use of everyone. Sparring with borrowed kit should be kept to low to moderate intensity to avoid any unnecessary wear and tear on the kit. Please also make sure it is returned to an instructor when you are finished with it.
- If you notice any problems with the kit such as missing pieces or damage, please report it to an instructor.

### **Safety**

- No training under the influence of alcohol or any other substances that may inhibit your ability to participate safely.
- Please make sure you are wearing suitable clothing for exercise and suitable safety equipment for drills or sparring.
- If you have any injury (physical or mental trauma) or pre existing condition, please make your instructor and training partners aware of this as relevant.
- If you are disabled, you should feel welcome to discuss your requirements with your instructor or training partner so that any barriers to your participation can be addressed and drills adapted if necessary.
- Safety is paramount and everyone's responsibility. If you see something unsafe, shout "Halt!" or "Stop!" to get everyone to stop. You must stop what you are doing if you hear someone shout "Halt" or "Stop".



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- Before sparring, make sure you discuss with your partner what you are comfortable with in terms of intensity, contact and hits. Check you are wearing suitable protective equipment before beginning.
- If an instructor tells you to stop doing something or that your sparring or drilling is unsafe for whatever reason, you must take this on board and stop the unsafe action or lower the intensity.
- If you are repeatedly asked to stop an unsafe action or lower intensity, you will be asked to sit out and you may be asked to take a sparring safety test.
- Pointing a weapon at an unmasked person's face is dangerous. Care should be taken at all times if protective equipment is not worn. You must be aware of your weapon and take due care at all times.
- When crossing the hall or space, wait for a safe moment to pass around a sparring bout or drill.
- When watching, please stand to the edge of the hall or marked area at a safe distance. When sparring or drilling, please be mindful of the space around you and your partner.
- You are responsible for maintaining your personal kit and ensuring it is safe to use. If an instructor decides an item is unsafe, you may not use it.
- All club kit should be inspected by the user before and after use. If any defects or damage is found it should be reported immediately and may not be used.

### **Respect**

- Respect means considering other people's needs and feelings. We must act considerably, listen and make reasonable adjustments with others. Treat all students and instructors with respect and courtesy.
- We ask that students arrive on time and be ready to begin at the scheduled start time of their class. If lateness is unavoidable, the student should enter quietly and wait at the side for an appropriate moment to join in.
- We request students attend class in a reasonably clean state and wear appropriate attire. This also includes your kit, please make sure your kit is free from strong odor.
- When training for a martial art, we are participating in a close and confrontational situation. Be aware that your training partner may have different comfort limits, so ask permission if you are initiating close physical contact in or outside of training.
- Give your partner feedback during drills to make sure you are both working at the same pace but please ask permission before giving any other critique.



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### **Disability/Injuries:**

- Not all disabilities/injuries are visible, some can vary in their intensity day to day and people's requirements could change as a result. Conversely, some conditions are apparent and people may require physical aids. Please trust that everyone knows their own body best and be respectful of their decision whether or not to take part in an activity.
- If you have a disability or injury, please make your instructor and training partner aware of your requirements so that any barriers to your participation can be addressed and drills adapted if necessary. You are also welcome to agree personal boundaries with a training partner if this will make you feel more comfortable.
- Your safety and wellbeing is paramount. You know yourself and your limits best and are encouraged to go at your own pace, take breaks as and when you need, or speak to an instructor to see if an exercise can be adapted to suit your needs. Please do not push yourself if you feel it will make an injury or condition worse, only do what you feel comfortable doing.
- If you feel unable to do a drill – whether the reason be mental, physical, due to personal comfort levels or otherwise – you are encouraged to speak to your instructor to see if the drill can be adapted to your needs in order to maximise its effectiveness. This could include:
  - adapting techniques, guards or footwork;
  - increasing the space between you and your partner during a drill;
  - a slower, more detailed demonstration of the technique;
  - agreeing intensity/speed/distance boundaries with your partner.
- You are always welcome to sit out of an activity for any reason and jump in again later when you feel ready. You can still benefit from observing a drill.
- Everyone has their own learning style. You are always encouraged to ask questions, ask the instructor to repeat something, or ask for a demonstration if you do not understand an exercise.
- Learn at your own pace. Personal progress is more important than winning bouts or medals. This is your personal HEMA journey, you do not need to keep pace with others for it to be a valuable experience.
- Saorsa is committed to inclusion and will do its best to meet the needs of members and encourage you to meet your HEMA goals. We do not tolerate discrimination on the basis of disability or any other protected characteristic.

### **Social Media:**

- Saorsa has an official presence on social media including on Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.
- The Saorsa code of conduct applies to the conduct of club members and affiliates interacting on Saorsa's social media pages.



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- Saorsa's social media is a place where all members of the club should feel welcome, included and able to contribute to the discussion. Saorsa does not censor specific topics unless the Club's Code of Conduct has been or is likely to be breached.
- If members are uncomfortable with a topic being discussed, they should always feel able to ask to change the subject. If the subject of conversation does not change and does not breach the code of conduct, then members (as always) are free to mute or temporarily leave the chat and rejoin later by either following the group link or contacting a group admin.
- The Saorsa WhatsApp Group Chat will remain a private group and content from it should not be shared without the permission of those involved in the material to be posted (e.g.. screenshotted submissions to social media groups (such as HEMA Out of Context) should only be made with the permission of the author(s) of the content being screenshotted).
- Official announcements/ communications will be clearly marked as such at the start of the message so that members are clear as to when a committee member is acting in an official club capacity rather than expressing their own personal opinions.

### **Inclusion**

- Saorsa welcomes people of diverse race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability and age and any form of discrimination of these or any protected characteristic will not be tolerated.
- Sexual harassment, defined as being where a person is subjected to unwarranted or uninvited sexual behaviour will not be tolerated.

### **Issue Resolution**

If you have any issues with fellow members or instructors please speak to an instructor, preferably in person and at the time. All reports are taken seriously and will be investigated and acted on accordingly.

Alternatively, if you do not feel comfortable speaking with us in person or unable to do so at the time, you can send us a facebook message to our page, email us at [saorsa.swords@btinternet.com](mailto:saorsa.swords@btinternet.com).

Please note: The instructors have the right to issue warnings, suspend or expel members who are found to be guilty of misconduct or malicious intent.