

# BRITISH JUDO COUNCIL

## Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

Approved 12<sup>th</sup> June 2011

1. The purpose of this policy is to promote good practice with regard to the issues arising from the protection of vulnerable adults (VA). The British Judo Council is committed to protecting all those in positions of vulnerability but the particular issues surrounding VA protection justify a separate policy.
2. Allegations of or concerns about the abuse often evoke intense emotional responses in those dealing with them. It is **vital** that those involved in VA protection issues or who deal with a potential complaint or incident deal with the matter **calmly, dispassionately and without prejudging**.
3. One of the difficulties in protecting VA from potential abusers is that the abuser is usually both careful and secret in his or her behaviour. Some people will become involved in judo with the specific aim of making it easier to obtain access to those in a vulnerable position.
4. On the other hand, the vast majority of those involved in judo are entirely respectful of and committed to the protection of children, young people and those in a position of vulnerability. It is recognised that, for such people, some of the restrictions placed on contact with their members may seem unnecessary or unduly prohibitive.
5. In order to ensure that the maximum protection is offered to vulnerable adults, it is necessary for this policy to be robust and, moreover, to discourage or prevent activities which **expose the vulnerable adult to risk of harm**. This has to be the primary aim of the policy and the British Judo Council is confident that its coaches, members and supporters will understand and support this vital aim.
6. For this reason the BJC requires all adults who have contact with vulnerable adults in a judo environment to have a CRB check on a biannual basis. In this way it is expected that the maximum protection can be provided.

## **7. What is a “vulnerable adult?”**

**A vulnerable adult is defined (under the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Regulations 2002) as a person aged 18 or over who has one or more of the following conditions:**

**(a) a learning or physical disability; or**

**(b) a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or**

**(c) a reduction in physical or mental capacity.**

8. The general guidance contained in our CHILD PROTECTION POLICY and the processes described therein apply equally to vulnerable adults and should be read in conjunction with this document. Particular care must be taken in the case of vulnerable adults as their vulnerability may be less obvious.
9. Similarly, our Equal Opportunities policy stresses the need for equality of opportunity and treatment. A commitment to these concepts will also provide protection to vulnerable adults.
10. Particular care must be taken to ensure that those in a vulnerable position are not taken advantage of or subjected to abuse. Abuse of the vulnerable can come in many forms. They include:
  - (i) Sexual – either against their will or, sometimes, consensually, in circumstances where they do not fully understand the acts involved or are not in a position to give an informed consent;
  - (ii) Financial – the vulnerable are at particular risk of being “persuaded” to pay for items or to trust individuals with their finances or cash;
  - (iii) Physical/Bullying – this can take many forms, from physical abuse to supposed “banter” which, whilst it might be tolerable amongst those without special needs, is incomprehensible to them and is causing them to be held up to ridicule;
  - (iv) Psychological/Emotional – certain vulnerable adults have particular emotional difficulties which make them susceptible to emotional abuse (e.g. “emotional blackmail” or “guilt tripping”)
  - (v) Neglect/Abandonment – for example, not ensuring that the VA is able to get to and from a lavatory or leaving a venue without ensuring that the vulnerable adult has a means of getting home.

11. It should also be borne in mind that one vulnerable adult may be the abuser or another. Assumptions should not be made when dealing with those in a vulnerable position. Vulnerability is a concept which cannot easily be defined. Those involved in coaching or working with VA need to discuss very carefully with the member and, if relevant, their carers, what, if any special needs they have and what, if any, adjustments need to be made to the coach's normal teaching methods.