



# BGC Code of Conduct

## **BETTING AND GAMING COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT**

**The Betting and Gaming Council (BGC) has produced this Code of Conduct to establish a strong standard for membership. This standard reflects the desire of the BGC to support a safe and enjoyable gambling environment for customers. The BGC will also support continued advancements in safer gambling practices and evaluation to constantly update this Code with further provisions. The BGC represents approximately 90% of the non-lottery gambling industry in the UK. Its members include retail betting shops, online betting and gaming operators, casinos and bingo operators. With over 100 operators as members it is the recognised voice and representative of the betting and gaming industry.**

Safer gambling is at the heart of the BGC mission and needs to be reflected across all of the members' businesses. This involves establishing and maintaining measures aimed at supporting the key tenets of betting and gaming: protecting children and vulnerable persons with a culture of safer gambling, keeping the industry crime-free, and ensuring it is fair and transparent. Steps taken by the industry are reflected in this Code.

The industry is determined to further innovate to support a safe and enjoyable betting and gaming experience and as such this Code shall remain open to further amendment as and when these measures are accepted by the membership.

All members of the BGC must adhere to this Code as a condition of membership. Members will make an annual declaration committing their business' commitment to and compliance with the Code.

**On behalf of the millions of customers who use our services, the BGC remains committed to ensuring their safety and control of their betting and gaming. This Code is a testament to the operator's commitment to setting a high standard for the industry.**

**Anyone found in breach of the Code shall have their membership suspended or withdrawn from the BGC.**

## 1. ENFORCEABLE COMMITMENTS

**The betting and gaming industry is committed to funding programmes and organisations that support the ‘National Strategy To Reduce Gambling Harms’. As such each BGC member is obligated to contribute towards the broader Research, Education and Treatment (RET) provision on an annual basis. BGC members undertake to consider greater funding beyond that required under current provision.**

- Agree to contribute to the Industry agreed voluntary levy system of at least 0.1% of Gross Gambling Yield (GGY) to support the National Responsible Gambling Strategy.

Advertising is provided for as a condition of licence. The BGC is committed to developing Guidance and Codes for Advertising which go beyond the regulatory requirements and has introduced measures in accordance with this policy. Recent measures include the Whistle-to-Whistle ban on advertising around live sport pre-watershed and further measures concerning online advertising content. The IGRG was put together as a cross industry body aimed at facilitating a Code to obligate operators to higher standards around advertising.

- Agree to comply with the Industry Group on Responsible Gambling (IGRG) Code for Social Responsible Advertising and subsequent editions, where applicable as well as any additional Codes adopted by the BGC. All advertising Codes will be reviewed annually.

Industry guidance is part of the ongoing effort to stay ahead of innovation and develop new policies for operators, irrespective of existing regulation. Guidance in the past has focused on customer interaction across all betting and gambling venues, data protection and analytics.

- Must apply the Guidance produced by Betting and Gaming Council.

Problem gamblers should have recourse to schemes which block them from accessing to betting and gaming services as well as ensure that they do not receive marketing messaging. BGC members have already committed to the establishment and use of such schemes. The BGC shall continue to work with these schemes to improve their effectiveness and awareness to customers.

- Must participate in the Industry’s Self Exclusion Schemes (GAMSTOP, MOSES, SENSE) as at 2019 and other schemes that the Industry elects to establish as well as encouraging the spread and awareness of safer gambling tools;

Awareness of the tools available to customers to control their gambling is of great importance to ensuring they have an enjoyable and safe experience. It is incumbent on operators to assure that these tools are accessible. As part of the awareness process, BGC members commit to take actions under the auspices of Responsible Gambling Week, a cross industry effort to improve the environment for safer betting and gaming.

- Agree to participate in Responsible Gambling Week through promoting a common standard of safer gambling tools, practices and measures to raise awareness during the Week;

The protection of children is a top priority for the members of the BGC. All BGC operators are committed to preventing access to betting and gaming for under 18s as well as working to prevent advertising from targeting under 18s. As part of this process operators work with third party marketers to promote their brands and products.

- Agree to require all affiliates to age-gate across all channels, where provided, for advertising

The BGC recognizes that responsible gambling is a key issue for the 18-24 year old customer demographic. The industry’s support for the Bet regret Campaign is an example of the industry supporting awareness campaign aimed at this target group.

- The BGC will develop a Code of Conduct to foster a culture of safe play within the 18-24 age group.

The betting and gaming sector is a long value chain of participants which all carry responsibility for ensuring a safe gambling experience. This includes those involved in the provision of online advertising. BGC members are committed to developing and implementing a Code of Practice for Digital Marketing to take advantage of the latest in technological advances to prevent advertising to under 18s and vulnerable people.

- Commit to supporting a BGC Code of Practice for Digital Marketing

There are several organisations which further develop standards for the industry and are independent of it. BGC members will look at adopting the GAMCARE Safer Gambling Standard to augment the industry's existing list of measures and actions. The GAMCARE standard is a recognized professional standard which incorporates safer gambling best practice across the entire business.

- Seek to adopt the GAMCARE Safer Gambling Standard

One of the latest innovations is the ability to share information to develop a greater confidence level in identifying and mitigating against a series of areas such as self-exclusion and anti-money laundering. As part of the culture of safer gambling BGC members commit to being open to the sharing of data without prejudice to competition and data privacy grounds. By sharing data the industry can get a better and deeper understanding on a range of issues from consumer behaviour to patterns of play.

- To commit to exploring data sharing as a means to better inform interventions

BGC members are committed to seeking excellence in the fight against money laundering and economic crime. While betting and gaming are traditionally low risk categories, it is because of the strict measures operators take to mitigate, report and prevent money-laundering. AML measures also contribute to better customer understanding of their source of funds. As part of that effort BGC members have created GAMLG as a group to create leading standards in implementing AML measures.

- Must seek to adhere to the GAMLG standards and any future BGC Guidance on Anti-Money Laundering

## **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

**The challenges across the industry demand an ongoing culture of improvement. The BGC commits to tackling these challenges by creating a culture of open exchange, regular advancement and public disclosure of adopted measures aimed at improving the customer experience. The culmination of this effort should be to produce regular, standard setting "best practice" to guide all industry participants.**

- BGC members are committed to identifying and adopting evidence based "best practice" on safer gambling and other aspects of their operations and to contribute to innovative ideas and initiatives to tackle the issues facing the industry as long as they are competition law compliant.

There is a further need for robust, comprehensive research into the areas such as problem gambling and advertising. The recent increase in industry contributions to RET should facilitate greater research into these areas to give all stakeholders a clear view of where needs exist.

- BGC members are committed to contributing to Industry independent research and to ensuring that accurate information on the Gambling Industry is provided to Government, policy makers, media and the community;

The Gambling Commission's National Strategy calls for greater evaluation of measures and actions taken by stakeholders in the sector. Evaluation leads to better identification of "best practice" and can often lead to further demand for research or trials drawn from the supporting evidence. BGC members commit to evaluating the outcomes of the measures they have taken around safer gambling with a view to sharing that information to inform the broader sector.

- Agree to evaluate all initiatives aimed at safer gambling in line with the National Strategy

Research should be independent from influence by industry funders. While this should not prevent industry for participating in the research (such as release of data), it is important that academics and researchers can feel committed to a body of study without undue influence. This should not prevent stakeholders from accepting grants and donations of support as long as the resulting work and its integrity are safe from any influence which would compromise the results.

- BGC members are committed to being transparent with any funds donated or spent on research.

## **ADDITIONAL CRITERIA**

**The GB licence is a standard in itself. Regulators around the world often look to the GB as a standard- bearer for regulatory innovation and excellence. Therefore, in addition to these commitment under the Code, any applicant for membership in the BGC must be a GB licensee.**

- All members shall carry a GB licence.

GB licensees come with a range of business models and geographic focus. BGC believes that any licensee should participate in the range of support and funding measures undertaken by operators who server customers in GB. This has on occasion not always been the case amongst all GB licensees. To better assure that the BGC membership is at the highest standard of operators, non-GB facing GB licensees would be ineligible for membership.

- All members shall have GB consumer facing businesses.

The commitments in this Code cut across the operators and products of the existing BGC membership. However, often the unique nature and differentiated regulations of specific products and services (such as offline versus online) require additional robust commitments. The BGC is committed to carrying on, upon approval of the BGC committees and EXCOM, the existing Codes developed by segments of the industry prior to the formation of the BGC. This includes the Code measures by the Association of British Bookmakers (ABB) unique to retail betting and the Code by the National Casino Industry Forum (NCF). These product specific measures will remain open to further addition or refinement based on evidence and policy decision making by the BGC members.

- Committed to development of sector-specific additions to the Code

## **ENFORCEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

**The Code is reviewed regulatory by the BGC Executive Committee. Complaints concerning alleged non- compliance may be made by any existing member of the BGC. Any complaint's admissibility and possible future adjudications on compliance will be the province of the BGC Executive Committee.**

Where an adverse adjudication is made against a BGC member, the Executive Committee has the right to warn, suspend or terminate the relevant members' BGC membership in accordance with its by-laws.