British Orthodontic Conference (BOC) - Exhibitor Code of Conduct

1. Purpose and Scope

The British Orthodontic Society (BOS) is committed to providing a professional, safe, inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone attending, exhibiting at or working at the British Orthodontic Conference (BOC).

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour and professional conduct expected of all exhibitors participating in the BOC. Its purpose is to ensure that delegates, exhibitors, speakers, staff, volunteers, stewards, contractors and other attendees are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect at all times.

Compliance with this Code is a condition of exhibiting at the BOC. It applies to all exhibiting companies and their employees, representatives, contractors, temporary staff and any other individuals attending or working at the event on their behalf.

The Code applies throughout the conference, including the exhibition hall, conference facilities, official social functions, networking events and any other activities organised or endorsed by BOS, including during exhibition set-up and breakdown.

2. Professional Behaviour and Standards of Conduct

All exhibitors and their representatives are expected to:

- Behave professionally, responsibly and courteously at all times.
- Treat all delegates, BOS employees, trustees, speakers, volunteers, stewards, contractors and fellow exhibitors with dignity and respect.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on their organisation and the wider orthodontic profession.
- Respect the views, opinions and professional responsibilities of others, even where these differ from their own.
- Follow all reasonable instructions issued by BOS representatives, event management, venue staff and conference stewards.
- Avoid behaviour that may cause offence, intimidation, disruption, distress or reputational damage to BOS or the BOC.
- Refrain from aggressive, confrontational, threatening, abusive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour.

Bullying, intimidation, verbal abuse, physical aggression, threatening conduct or any behaviour intended to undermine, humiliate or distress another individual will not be tolerated.

3. Respect for BOS Staff, Stewards and Event Personnel

BOS staff and appointed conference stewards are responsible for the effective organisation, administration and smooth running of the BOC.

Exhibitors and their representatives must:

- Treat BOS employees, stewards, volunteers and event personnel with courtesy and respect at all times.
- Recognise and respect their authority when carrying out their duties.

- Comply promptly with reasonable requests, instructions and directions.
- Raise any concerns, complaints or disagreements through the appropriate BOS channels rather than confronting, intimidating or directing inappropriate behaviour towards individual members of staff or stewards.
- Refrain from shouting, swearing, making personal remarks, threatening or displaying aggressive or disrespectful behaviour towards anyone representing BOS or the event.

Disagreement with a decision or instruction does not justify disrespectful, aggressive or obstructive behaviour.

4. Equality, Diversity, Harassment and Sexual Harassment

BOS operates a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying and victimisation.

All exhibitors and their representatives must respect the rights, dignity and individual differences of others, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by applicable equality legislation.

Harassment, discrimination or inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated, whether it occurs in person, verbally, physically, through written communications, electronically or via social media.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwanted physical contact, advances, touching or gestures.
- Unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, propositions, innuendo or suggestive remarks.
- Sexually explicit or offensive material, images or messages.
- Unwanted comments about an individual's appearance, body, gender or personal circumstances.
- Offensive, derogatory or discriminatory language, jokes, gestures or behaviour.
- Bullying, intimidation, humiliation or deliberately excluding or undermining another individual.
- Unwanted attention, persistent approaches or inappropriate personal communications.
- Any conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for another person.
- Retaliation, victimisation or adverse treatment of anyone who raises a concern, makes a complaint or assists with an investigation.

Sexual Harassment and Legal Obligations

Particular attention is drawn to the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 and subsequent amendments to the Equality Act 2010.

Employers are legally required to take proactive and reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their employees in the course of their employment. This includes considering the risk of harassment by third parties, such as customers, clients, suppliers and other individuals encountered through work.

With effect from 30 October 2026, further legislative changes strengthen these obligations, including requirements relating to taking all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and preventing harassment of employees by third parties.

BOS expects all exhibiting organisations to take their responsibilities seriously, ensure their representatives understand appropriate standards of behaviour and take prompt action where concerns are raised.

Sexual harassment or any other form of harassment directed towards BOS employees, stewards, volunteers, delegates, speakers, fellow exhibitors or any other conference attendee will be treated as a serious breach of this Code.

5. Exhibition Stand Conduct and Business Practices

Exhibitors are expected to maintain a professional and welcoming presence within the exhibition hall.

In particular:

- Stands must be staffed by appropriately briefed and professional representatives.
- Exhibitors must ensure their stand activities do not obstruct aisles, neighbouring stands, access routes or conference facilities.
- Marketing, promotional activities and product demonstrations must be conducted responsibly and without causing disruption to other exhibitors or delegates.
- Exhibitors must not engage in aggressive sales tactics, pressure selling, misleading claims or inappropriate approaches to delegates.
- Exhibitors must respect the exhibition space and property of neighbouring companies and must not encroach on another exhibitor's allocated area.
- Photography, filming and recording must respect the privacy and consent of those being photographed or recorded.
- Exhibitors must comply with all relevant health and safety requirements, venue regulations, fire safety procedures and instructions issued by BOS or the venue.
- Alcohol must be consumed responsibly and must never be used as an excuse for inappropriate, offensive or unacceptable behaviour.

6. Reporting Concerns and Complaints

BOS encourages anyone who experiences or witnesses behaviour that may breach this Code to report their concerns to a member of the BOS team or an authorised conference representative as soon as possible.

All complaints will be treated seriously and handled sensitively. BOS will consider the circumstances of each complaint and may take such steps as it considers appropriate to establish the facts and protect those involved.

BOS will not tolerate retaliation or victimisation against anyone who raises a concern in good faith or participates in an investigation.

Exhibitors are also expected to cooperate fully and constructively with any investigation into alleged breaches of this Code.

7. Breaches of the Code and BOS's Right to Take Action

BOS reserves the absolute right, acting reasonably and having regard to the circumstances, to take appropriate action where an exhibitor or any of its representatives is considered to have breached this Code.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the incident, action may include:

- Issuing a formal warning to the individual or exhibiting company.
- Requiring an individual to cease particular conduct or activities immediately.
- Requiring the exhibiting company to remove or replace an individual from its stand or the conference.
- Suspending an exhibitor's access to the exhibition hall or other conference facilities.
- Requiring an exhibitor to dismantle and vacate its stand.
- Removing an individual or exhibiting company from the conference venue.
- Terminating the exhibitor's participation in the BOC and cancelling its exhibition or sponsorship arrangements.

BOS reserves the right to remove any exhibitor or member of its staff, representatives or contractors from the conference where their behaviour is considered unacceptable, poses a risk to others, disrupts the event or brings BOS or the BOC into disrepute.

In serious cases, BOS may take immediate action without first issuing a warning. BOS may also refer matters to the relevant authorities where appropriate.

Where an exhibitor's participation is terminated as a result of a breach of this Code, the exhibiting company will not normally be entitled to a refund of any stand fees, sponsorship fees, deposits or other payments made to BOS. Any outstanding contractual sums will remain payable in accordance with the Exhibitor Terms of Business.

The exhibiting company will be held responsible for ensuring that all individuals attending the BOC on its behalf understand and comply with this Code.

8. Acceptance and Agreement

By submitting a reservation for exhibition space or sponsorship at the BOC, the exhibiting company confirms that it has read, understood and agrees to comply with this Exhibitor Code of Conduct.

The exhibiting company is responsible for ensuring that all employees, representatives, contractors and other individuals attending the conference on its behalf are made aware of the Code and adhere to its requirements.

Compliance with this Code is a condition of participation in the BOC and forms part of the BOS Exhibitor Terms of Business.

BOS reserves the right to amend this Code where necessary and will notify exhibitors of any material changes.