Valour Historical European Martial Arts Academy

Code of Conduct & Ethical Framework

1. Purpose and Guiding Principles

Valour Historical European Martial Arts Academy (hereinafter "Academy") is committed to providing a safe, respectful, inclusive, and development-focused martial arts environment. This Code aligns with the Sport Manitoba Code of Conduct & Ethics, True Sport Principles, and the NCCP Coaching Code of Ethics. Every participant, instructor, volunteer, and spectator must uphold these principles to ensure a safe, respectful, and disciplined training environment for everyone involved in activities operated by the Academy. ***Adherence to this Code is mandatory for participation.***

2. Core Ethical Commitments

2.1 Respect for Self and Others

Treat all individuals with dignity and respect. No harassment, discrimination, abusive behaviour or bullying including nice bullying. "Nice bullying" is defined as a form of passive-aggressive manipulation where someone acts pleasant, helpful, or charming while undermining, controlling, or hurting others. It is difficult to identify because the bully masks cruel intentions behind polite behavior, social norms, or "constructive" advice, making the victim feel guilty for feeling hurt.

This conduct includes behaviour and communication inside and outside of the Academy including online conduct and communication whether private or open forum. Listen actively and communicate respectfully. Persons known to act in manners contrary to section 2.1 may be precluded from participating in Valour HEMA Academy activities

2.2 Integrity and Fair Play

Act honestly in training, sparring, and competition. No cheating, sandbagging (competing below your ability level to gain advantage over weaker opponents), manipulation, or unsafe competitiveness.

2.3 Safety as the Highest Priority

Follow instructor directions immediately. Report hazards or injuries. Mandatory use of approved protective equipment. No participation under the influence of substances that include but are not limited to alcohol and recreational or illicit drugs. Exception: Medication prescribed by a medical professional.

2.4 Inclusive, Positive Sport Culture

Encourage teammates, welcome newcomers, avoid gatekeeping or elitism, and help maintain a positive training environment.

2.5 Commitment to Growth and Excellence

Strive for continuous improvement with discipline and resilience. Accept coaching feedback with humility.

2.6 Contribution to Community

Support the growth of historical European martial arts. Treat facilities and equipment with respect and model positive community conduct.

3. Behavioural Expectations

3.1 On the Training Floor

Follow all safety rules. Maintain awareness of surroundings. Stop immediately when commanded. Always use controlled fencing techniques. Our goal is to train for learning and competition, never to intentionally or unintentionally injure our fellow students and instructors.

3.2 Weapon Handling

Only blunt steel or synthetic training weapons permitted. No live sharp steel on the training floor. Handle weapons only under supervision. At minimum, a Scholar ranked student must be participating in or supervising any sparring at any Academy training session or event.

3.3 Equipment Standards

Masks, gloves, throat/neck guards, jackets, and other protective gear must meet Academy requirements. Missing gear means no participation in sparring or opposition based drills.

3.4 Major Misconduct

Anyone determined to be acting in a willfully unsafe manner, such as but not limited to egregious excessive force, revenge blows (hitting another competitor after a hold has been called), or competing with intent to cause injury to another competitor will immediately be cause for expulsion from activity and a mandatory full review of that participant as per section 8 of this Code of Conduct & Ethical Framework.

4. Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons

Two-adult rule applies at all times. No one-on-one closed-door interactions. Immediate reporting of any concern regarding inappropriate behaviour as per section 8.

No filming of minors without express permission. Note: that the Academy waiver signed by the parent/guardian of a minor grant's permission for the Academy to film/photograph. However, any parent/guardian/minor wishing to not have the minor's likeness published openly will be respected and any video/pictures will be removed from online sources whenever requested.

5. Attendance, Readiness, and Fitness

Arrive prepared and on time. Inform instructors of injuries or health limitations. Chronic lateness or unsafe behaviour, including hiding or masking injury/illness, may result in restricted participation.

6. Facility, Community, and Public Conduct

Maintain cleanliness and respect for training spaces. Behave professionally when representing the Academy.

7. Instructor & Coach Ethics

In addition to Parts 1 – 6 inclusive, coaches will prioritize and be beholden to the following additional standards:

7.1 Safety First

Prioritize health and safety of students above all. Modify or stop drills when necessary. Ensure adequate supervision.

7.2 Responsible Coaching

Provide instruction appropriate to skill level. Maintain professional boundaries. No inappropriate relationships with students.

7.3 Integrity

Maintain confidentiality and avoid conflicts of interest. Model honesty and fairness.

7.4 Respect & Leadership

Treat all students equitably. Address misconduct promptly. Promote inclusion and diversity.

8. Disciplinary Measures and Reporting

Consequences may include warnings, retraining, suspension, removal from classes, or permanent expulsion. Instructors must take immediate action to protect the safety of everyone including, participants, coaches, volunteers, and spectators. Safety may mean physical or mental safety of any person subject to this Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework.

Any breaches of this code of conduct are to be reported to the head Provost, Chad McFarland, preferably in writing but a complaint may be made verbally if the complainant feels that is warranted. If Provost Chad McFarland is the subject of the complaint, then the complaint is to be reported to Provost Doug Crighton who will independently investigate any complaint alongside two other senior instructors of Journeyman level or higher.

9. Acknowledgment and Compliance

All participants must sign this Code of Conduct, the Valour HEMA Academy Liability Waiver, the Valour HEMA Academy Class Registration, the Get Active Questionnaire, and any other supplementary safety documents prior to participation in Academy events or training.

Participant Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to abide by the Valour Historical European Martial Arts Academy Code of Conduct and Ethical Framework.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____