



***TRACKING  
PROGRESSION  
MANUAL***



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# British Skydiving Manual Update Policy



British Skydiving Tracking Manual is updated periodically. As British Skydiving rules are continually evolving, our primary operational document, the British Skydiving Operations Manual, is regularly updated at meetings of the Safety & Training Committee which are held every two months. Therefore, in the case of any conflict between rules or requirements set out in the Operations Manual and any other British Skydiving manual, the provisions in the Operations Manual shall always have primacy as the definitive statement of the current position.

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Revised: December 2019



# Introduction

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The Tracking Coaching Manual is designed to teach skydivers the art of Tracking on a multitude of axes. It is designed to educate the jumper in the requirements to obtain each of the tracking grades and promote 'in-air' safety, which will prepare them for jumping with others.

When taught correctly, the student will learn all of the skills required to track in relatively small groups on their belly, back and ultimately both axes with steeper gradients of flight. Before moving on to another skill, it is essential that the one being taught is mastered to a high level of competence.

The grading system is not designed to be difficult but each of the Tracking (TR) gradings requires distinct skill-sets so the previous must be mastered and awarded before moving to the next in all cases.

Prior to commencing any formal TR coaching (outside that of the category and AFF system) the student must hold a British Skydiving B licence and have gained the following aerial awareness in basic Formation Skydiving (FS)

- a) Control fall rate and turn in place.
- b) Dive and approach a target and achieve docking techniques.
- c) Break-off turn and track away to obtain clear airspace for deployment.
- d) Maintain good altitude awareness throughout the skydive.
- e) Control horizontal movement (forwards, backwards and sideways).

TR1, TR2 and TR3 may only be awarded after successful completion of the standards set out in the British Skydiving Operations Manual Section 2, Paragraph 6.10. Tracking (TR)

*This manual is not intended to design Skydives of any specific type: owing to the number of competent coaches within British Skydiving and the World and understanding that each has their own teaching style. As long as the pre-requisites are met for each Grade then the coach may teach whatever they wish to maximise the learning of the student.*





## **Section 1: Who Can Coach Tracking (TR)**

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Unlike mass tuition, Tracking requires a much more personal approach, the emphasis, whilst aimed at having fun, is on safety in the air, and the awareness of others in the sky with you. It is aimed at developing a safety culture across all jumpers and promoting that by means of a well-designed, executed and debriefed skydive considering all points from the group, the weather, the jump run and prevailing winds to name a few.

There are currently two coaching qualifications in the discipline of Tracking. Basic TR Coach and TR Coach;

### **1.1 Basic Tracking (BTR) Coach**

This qualification allows those who are competent 'flat' trackers to coach others in small groups up to and including TR2

To become a Basic TR Coach the individual must:

- a) hold TR2 or equivalent
- b) have a minimum of 300 descents and 3 hours Freefall time
- c) have been involved in Sport Parachuting for a minimum of 2 years
- d) be at least a Category System Basic Instructor, or
  - i. have attended a Sportscoach UK Course on 'Coaching Methods and Communication', or
  - ii. have specific teaching or coaching qualifications, or
  - iii. have attended a Methods of Instruction lecture, given by an Advanced Instructor, or
  - iv. have attended a Military Methods of Instruction Course
- e) be fully familiar with the Tracking Manual.

### **1.2 Tracking (TR) Coach**

This qualification allows those who are competent trackers to coach others in small groups up to and including TR3.

To become a Tracking (TR) Coach the individual must:

- a) hold TR3 or equivalent
- b) have a minimum of 300 descents and 3 hours Freefall time
- c) have been involved in Sports Parachuting for a minimum of 2 years
- d) be at least a Category System Basic Instructor, or
  - i. have attended a Sportscoach UK Course on 'Coaching Methods and Communication' or
  - ii. have specific teaching or coaching qualifications, or
  - iii. have attended a Methods of Instruction lecture given by an Advanced Instructor, or
  - iv. have attended a Military Methods of Instruction Course
- e) be fully familiar with the Tracking Manual.

### **1.3 Tracking Coach's Objectives**

- a) To provide the student with information before, during and after the skydive.
- b) To develop the student's freefall skills already attained and teach the skills laid down in this manual
- c) To communicate in freefall using 'in-air' signals, or 'in-air' radio link.

- d) To teach and remedy any mistakes the student may have as they happen in order to maximise the student's learning throughout the skydive.
- e) To give the student corrective training after the skydive, by means of video debriefing where possible. This is the most accurate way to debrief; it also brings on the coach, as he/she can call upon more experienced Tracking Coaches to also give advice.
- f) To provide the student with full safety brief/information and awareness required while flying in different orientations and related speed changes.
- g) To give the student a good deal.

## Section 2: The Coaching Format

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### 2.1 Before the Jump

- a) Check logbook – ensure they are suitably qualified to perform the jump.
- b) Check Licence – Ensure they are at least a B licence holder.
- c) Give full safety check and brief, including kit and clothing check.
- d) Talk through the objectives – applicable to the skydive.
- e) Talk through the jump sequence.
- f) Teach the new skill – Use video where available.
- g) Dirt dive the jump – From exit to deployment.
- h) Confirm in-air signals – student's confirmation required.
- i) Confirm emergency procedures – Use harness where necessary.
- j) Manifest.
- k) Confirm flight plan – show aircraft run-in and spot include intended release point.
- l) Check equipment and re-dirt dive.
- m) DRESS FOR SUCCESS – Wear the best suited items of clothing for each jump, if a full suit is more appropriate then wear one. You don't have to look 'cool' to be a coach, but dress incorrectly and you could get caught out, and therefore look very silly in front of your student. Not only this, but their tuition will be greatly affected and most certainly their video debriefs.

### 2.2 In the Aircraft

- a) Let the student think about the dive.
- b) Talk through the dive – Re-confirm objectives.
- c) Re-affirm that the student is aware of the 'Safe Break off procedure, Break-Off height and Deployment height' (especially in the early stages of the syllabus).
- d) Check equipment again – At a suitable time prior to exit.
- e) Check spot – allow the student to do so also to develop spotting skills and overall awareness.

### 2.3 Exit and Skydive

- a) Exit – As briefed.
- b) Give constant in-air signals (if 'in-air' radio link is not used) – Allow the student to make the most of the dive.
- c) Break off – At the designated 'break' off altitude (where possible) observe the student perform relevant agreed safe 'break off' technique and pull.

*Observe the student's canopy handling and correct where necessary.  
Meet student on landing area and walk back together.*

### 2.4 After the Jump

- a) Pack first – Allow the student to think about the dive, make sure the student knows to think through the dive so as to not surprise them, give them the best opportunity to reflect upon the dive.
- b) Debrief – Allow the student to recall the events first.

*If you have made an error or influenced the dive in a negative way, own up - nobody is perfect all of the time. The student will appreciate the honesty.*

- c) Corrective training – Give the student things to work on, include things on the ground to improve upon in the air
- d) Logbook – annotate in the student’s logbook exactly what went on, include as much detail as possible, and remember you may be handing over to another coach. Recommend exactly what you want the student to do; he/she either remains on the same exercise or progress onto another.

*Sign – make sure your name is clearly annotated in the logbook.*

## **Section 3: Notes for Coaches**

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### **3.1 Clothing**

Gauge the fall rate of your student very carefully. Remember that with Tracking the student will travel in a variety of ways until the skill is mastered and their fall rate will change frequently throughout the early stages of the syllabus. Wear clothing that will give you this range if you feel this will make a difference.

### **3.2 Equipment**

Take a close look at the student's gear; ensure that it is completely 'Tracking' friendly - equipment that is considered Freefly friendly is also considered Tracking Friendly. Ensure any Velcro is in good working order (Velcro-less rigs are preferred), all closure loops are in good condition and anything that can be tucked away is tucked away securely. Educate the student so they know what it is they are looking for when inspecting a rig, either for themselves or if they are asked to complete a 'flight-line' check. Educating them will broaden everyone's knowledge.

*Use of audible altimeter and AAD is highly recommended for both coach and student.*

### **3.3 During the Launch**

Brief the student on the importance of relaxing during this phase, remind them that they MAY feel the air on different parts of the body to those which they may be used to. Let them know that any verbal communication from you during the exit phase means for them to breathe and relax, this will give the best start to the skydive.

### **3.4 In-Air Signals**

Brief the student on YOUR in-air signals as these will differ from coach to coach, keep them simple and easy to remember. Ensure that the student reacts to the given signal and that after the dive it is documented in their logbook as to their ability to react to signals to aid future instructors.

As with AFF, many instructors use different signals, whichever work for you will suffice, however emergency signals such as alti checks and pull should never be altered... confirm in the ground training that this is fully understood.

Confirm all hand signals on board and attempt to use these signals throughout the TR syllabus. If 'in-air' radio link is used, the student still needs to know the 'in-air' signals. This is in case of radio failure, or if the student subsequently jumps with coaches who do not use 'in-air' radio links.

### **3.5 Let Them do the Work**

The student will be briefed on the use of varying fall rates and close proximity flying etc, so once this has been taught, don't do too much work for them to maintain a level or speed in the skydive. They will achieve much more if you let them work at it, but only compensate for them, keep moving with them so as to give corrective signals, but leave the last few feet of movement to them, let them know if they were moving after the dive or they may slip into bad habits for the future.

### **3.6 Altitude Awareness and Deployment Heights**

It must be understood that notwithstanding the British Skydiving Operations Manual heights for canopy deployments, the TR syllabus mandates that all skydivers must be under a fully deployed

parachute by 3000 ft AGL, so the coach must compensate for this when briefing break off heights etc.

Brief the student to 'check their altitude' throughout the dive and not rely solely on audible altimeters. This is vitally important in the early stages of the syllabus as they will not be used to the change in fall rate and freefall times can be greatly affected. On the ground, confirm the student's altitude awareness by asking them to recollect what heights they were at on each examination.

### **3.7 Leading a Tracking Group**

The leader of the angle flying group must be in a belly to earth position. However, they can be on their backs only if they have another, specifically appointed experienced tracker over them who is belly to earth to assist in the directional control.

### **3.8 If the Student has not yet reached the required standard**

If the student fails to reach the required standard after the dive:

- a) he/she may have been progressed too quickly;
- b) the ground training may not have been comprehensive enough;
- c) the in-air signals may not have been adequate.

Hopefully you will have the dive on video, if so, get another TR Coach to take a look if you are unable to establish the issue and corrective training. Attempt to do this before you de-brief the student, and remember, don't be embarrassed to pass on your student to another coach if you are at a loss as to what to do. Someone else may have the answer.

### **Summary**

Once the student presents themselves to you, the coach, make them feel welcome. Remember we are not here for monetary gain, show that you want to jump with them or you will quickly lose their respect and interest.

Ground training is essential; all types of jumping require timely tuition on the ground to enhance performance in the air. Remember, you will only have 35-45 seconds in the air to get your message across, try to explain everything on the ground and rehearse it constantly until the student is familiar with the training objective. This will ensure that there is no confusion as to what the student must do, and therefore he/she will know exactly what they must achieve before even donning the parachute.

***KISS: Keep - It - Simple - Stupid!***

Start from a point that is reflected in the student's logbook. If the student has done very little or no specific Tracking until now, then remember to set the standard at a level that is achievable, don't try to have them do too much at once, let them progress; this will give them a great sense of achievement.

Also give them a path to work along, tell them exactly what is planned for future jumps, so that they have things to work toward. If they progress quicker than at first thought, it will fill them with enormous well-being and satisfaction.

If, however, they do worse than expected, at least they know the guidelines as to what they must do, and therefore won't feel cheated; they will know what they must achieve to progress onto each subsequent stage.

**REMEMBER THE BRITISH SKYDIVING CODE OF PRACTICE AT ALL TIMES**

## Section 4: Tracking Coaching Introduction Lesson

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*(To be completed at the beginning of the TR Coaching syllabus)*

Allow the student to read the coaches notes in Section 3, so they know how things work.

Agree upon a common term or signal for the exit count, this will depend upon how much TR the student has done, if any, or whether they have learned the 'Ready Set Go' or 'Up Down Arch' techniques in their Conventional FS Coaching Programme. Tracking will undoubtedly use differing signals, as on most occasions the coach and student will be on the outside floater rails of the aircraft and verbal communication may be difficult.

Explain the importance of a good exit key, so that the student and coach leave together.

Introduce a common agreement before starting the exit count, such as *student... OK!* (or nod) *coach...OK!* (or nod) followed by the count. This will confirm both parties are ready to skydive.

Explain the most common mistakes in Tracking and show the student the corrective hand signals for this early on in the training. *Remember emergency signals should never change, such as alti checks and pull!*

Explain and emphasise the safety implications when tracking and ensure they understand the varied closing speeds that they will experience with differing body attitudes.

Explain the importance of altitude awareness. It is easy to become so involved in the skydive and forget the passing of time.





## Section 5: Qualifying Jumps for the Tracking (TR) Grading System

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### 5.1 Tracking Grade 1 (TR1)

The skydiver be introduced to TR (for TR1 training) 'belly to earth' by a CI/Advanced Instructor nominated TR1, TR2 or TR3 Grade skydiver or equivalent of proven TR instructional ability (BTR or TR), have received a full safety brief, and demonstrated the ability to:

- a) fly in a tracking position without noticeable change in fall rates or 'loss of heading';
- b) fly in a controlled tracking position relative to others in groups of no more than 4;
- c) control fall rate in a tracking position;
- d) safely control directional ability upon break off and have a fully deployed main canopy by 3000ft AGL.

Once TR1 has been obtained, the skydiver must not make TR descents in groups of larger than 4 without CI approval, (a logbook endorsement will suffice).

No Tracker in the group may fly on their backs unless they are at least a TR2 grade skydiver or training for TR2.

*N.B. Skydivers training for TR1 and TR2 may not be in the same group.*

In all cases no angle of greater than 45 degrees may be displayed in any tracking group of those not holding TR3 or training for TR3. Tracking groups and individuals within them must only fly at the angle dictated by the least experienced jumper.

Training programmes such as those contained in the British Skydiving Tracking Progression Manual are acceptable for training for TR1, TR2 & TR3, provided all the requirements of the above are met.

The qualifications to become a BTR coach may be found on Form 134h and TR coach may be found on Form 134g.

### 5.2 Tracking Grade 2 (TR2)

To obtain Grade 2 in Tracking (TR2) 'back to earth' the skydiver must be Grade 1 (TR1) and be introduced to TR2 by a CI/Advanced Instructor nominated TR2 or TR3 Grade skydiver or equivalent of proven TR instructional ability, have received a full safety brief and demonstrated the ability to:

- a) fly in a tracking position without noticeable change in fall rates or 'loss of heading' utilising another TR skydiver as a guide for directional control;
- b) fly in a controlled tracking position relative to others in groups of no more than 4;
- c) control fall rate in a tracking position;
- d) safely control directional ability upon break off and have a fully deployed main canopy by 3000ft AGL.

Once TR2 has been obtained, the skydiver must not make TR descents in groups larger than 6 without CI approval, (a logbook endorsement will suffice).

The leader of the tracking group must be in a 'belly to earth' position. However, they may be on their backs only if they have another, specifically-appointed, experienced TR tracker over them who is 'belly to earth' to assist in the directional control.

In all cases no angle of greater than 45 degrees may be displayed in any tracking group of those not holding TR3 or training for TR3. Tracking groups and individuals within them must only fly at the angle dictated by the least experienced jumper.

Training programmes such as those contained in the Tracking Progression Manual are acceptable for training for TR1, TR2 & TR3, provided all the above requirements are met.

The qualifications to become a BTR coach may be found on Form 134h and TR coach on Form 134g.

### **5.3 Tracking Grade 3 (TR3)**

To obtain Grade 3 in Tracking (TR3) 'angle flying' the skydiver must be Grade 2 (TR2) and be introduced to TR3 by a CI/Advanced Instructor nominated TR3 Grade skydiver or equivalent of proven TR instructional ability, have received a full safety brief and demonstrated the ability to:

- a) fly in a 'belly to earth' and 'back to earth' tracking position of more than 45 degrees without noticeable change in fall rates or 'loss of heading' utilising another TR3 skydiver as a guide for directional control;
- b) control fall rate whilst in an angle flying position greater than 45 degrees;
- c) control angled flight of angles greater than 45 degrees relative to others within the group, of no more than 4;
- d) safely control directional ability upon break off and have a fully deployed main canopy by 3000ft AGL.

Once TR3 has been obtained, the skydiver must not make TR descents in groups larger than 6 without CI approval (a logbook endorsement will suffice).

The leader of the angle flying group must be in a belly to earth position. However, they can be on their backs only if they have another, specifically-appointed, experienced tracker over them who is belly to earth to assist in the directional control.

Training programmes such as those contained in the Tracking Progression Manual are acceptable for training for TR1, TR2 & TR3, provided all the requirements of the above are met.

The qualifications to become a BTR coach may be found on Form 134h and TR coach on Form 134g (See Appendices A & B).

## **Qualifying Jumps for the Tracking Grades (Tr) – Sequence**

### **Logbook**

Check what has been learnt so far, so as to not repeat training objectives that have already been met. Also try to identify areas of weakness or potential areas to work on. Do not formulate a plan without consulting their logbook or speaking to them to get information about their previous training.

### **Talk through Objectives**

Decide and agree on what is to be learnt in the skydive

### **Jump Sequence**

Talk through the sequence of events in order to maximise the training and give them a clear view of what to expect.

### **Method of Instruction**

- a) Demonstrate the whole dive or learning point (show video of someone making a good TR dive if available).
- b) Teach the skill, repeat this thoroughly, emphasise the body position throughout.
- c) Dirt dive standing up, using altitude checks also.
- d) Introduce the 'in-air' signals for the dive.
- e) Dirt dive the whole thing, until fluent.
- f) Emphasise safety at all times.

### **General questions on emergencies (Aircraft & Canopy)**

#### **Manifest**

- a) 20-Minute Call, Kit On
- b) Dirt Dive
- c) Kit Check and sign
- d) *SKYDIVE*

#### **Debrief**

- a) Student's version of dive
- b) Coach's version of dive
- c) Video of dive

#### **Corrective Training**

Tips on how to correct any problems from the dive to prevent bad habits.

#### **Logbook**

Students should complete the logbook in the relevant space, they must include as thorough a debrief as possible. The coach is to add any further points relevant to the student's progress. Must recommend PROGRESS or REPEAT, sign and print name.

## **Special Considerations**

Special consideration should be given to the following:

- a) The number of tracking groups or angle flying groups per load and the best suited exit order for these.
- b) Direction in which these groups may track depending on the weather conditions of the day.
- c) Deployment altitudes and use of audible altimeters on such dives.
- d) Deep spots and safe canopy handling amongst larger groups.
- e) The manifest needs to be aware of the tracking/angle flying groups and consideration should be given to the numbers involved.

Collisions with other groups or with members of one's own group could result in serious injury or death. Therefore, everybody involved on the dives should be familiar with the following concepts and organisers should pay close attention to the experience and numbers of jumpers they will allow on a dive or load.

- a) High risk of forceful freefall collisions and how to minimise the risks.
- b) Importance of getting clear of the regular run-in direction.
- c) How to design a flight plan that ensures everyone will make it back to the PLA.
- d) How to determine where other groups are before flying back towards the run-in direction.
- e) What to do if a jumper is left behind the group.

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## **BASIC (BTR) TRACKING COACHES (TR1 & TR2 ONLY)**

### **1. QUALIFICATIONS**

- a) The recommendation of a CI.
- b) Hold TR2 or equivalent
- c) A minimum of 300 freefall descents and 3 hours of freefall time.
- d) Two years involved in Sport Parachuting.
- e) Be at least a;
  - i) Category System Basic Instructor, or
  - ii) Has attended a Sportscoach UK Course on `Coaching Methods and Communication`, or
  - iii) Has specific teaching or coaching qualifications, or
  - iv) Has attended a Methods of Instruction lecture, given by an Advanced Instructor, or
  - v) Has attended a Military Methods of Instruction Course.
  - vi) Is fully familiar with the current Tracking Manual.

### **2. EVALUATION**

Evaluation will be made by an Advanced Instructor who is a TR coach, or a TR2 or TR3 or equivalent jumper of a proven high standard nominated by an Advanced Instructor and acceptable to the Safety & Technical Officer (STO) and/or Chief Operating Officer (COO).

### **3. GROUND SCHOOL EVALUATION**

This will include the successful full ground training phase of two complete Tracking levels, (TR1 & TR2) one of which should be a one on one and the other a group of three or four.

All applicants are strongly advised to use a TR video in their coaching programme.

### **4. IN AIR EVALUATION**

This should be one of the one on one TR1 and TR2 jumps, it should include the whole of the following:

The brief and dirt dive, from the twenty-minute point.

The climb to altitude.

The skydive where the Evaluator will make typical student errors.

The debrief.

Logbook entries, which should include any corrective training required.

### **5. THE EVALUATOR'S TASK**

The `in air` phase as already stated would include typical student mistakes. The candidate should not only be aware of these mistakes but should attempt to correct them in the air by use of signals or other means.

On the ground the candidate should make good use of training aids and have a good coaching manner.

The candidate should demonstrate a good knowledge of the basic principles of teaching and coaching.

### **6. SAFETY**

The candidate should not attempt to take on the role of an Instructor.

In air Instructors operate to a different criteria to BTR Coaches, this should always be remembered.

The candidate should not try to change a student's emergency procedures, unless they break British Skydiving rules, in which case they should refer to an Instructor.

The BTR Coach is in no way responsible for the deployment of the student's canopy.

Always if in doubt refer back to an Instructor.

### **7. CODE OF PRACTICE FOR BRITISH SKYDIVING INSTRUCTORS AND COACHES**

BTR Coaches should have read the Code of Practice for British Skydiving Instructors and Coaches (Form 288) and are expected to adhere to its principles.

### **8. RENEWALS**

British Skydiving Coaches ratings expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> March each year but may be renewed up to six months after that date. To renew a coaching rating the coach must satisfy a Chief Instructor, that he/she is current in all aspects of the rating. Once a rating has expired the coach may not exercise the privileges of that rating until the rating is renewed.

### **NOTE**

- i) BTR Coaching Courses/Evaluations may be held at any Parachute Training Organisation (PTO), provided all the above criteria is met.
- ii) Details of Sportscoach UK Courses can be obtained from Sportscoach UK, Leeds.  
Tel: 0113 274 4802, Fax: 0113 275 5019, e-mail: [coaching@sportscoachUK.org](mailto:coaching@sportscoachUK.org)





## **TRACKING COACHES (TR1, TR2 &TR3)**

### **1. QUALIFICATIONS**

- f) The recommendation of a CI.
- g) Hold TR3 or equivalent
- h) A minimum of 300 freefall descents and 3 hours of freefall time.
- i) Two years involved in Sport Parachuting.
- j) Be at least a;
  - i) Category System Basic Instructor, or
  - ii) Has attended a Sportscoach UK Course on `Coaching Methods and Communication`, or
  - iii) Has specific teaching or coaching qualifications, or
  - iv) Has attended a Methods of Instruction lecture, given by an Advanced Instructor, or
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This will include the successful full ground training phase of three complete Tracking levels, (TR1,TR2 & TR3) one of which should be a one on one and the other a group of three or four.

All applicants are strongly advised to use a TR video in their coaching programme.

### **4. IN AIR EVALUATION**

This should be one of the one on one TR1,TR2 & TR3 jumps, it should include the whole of the following:

- i) The brief and dirt dive, from the twenty-minute point.
- ii) The climb to altitude.
- iii) The skydive where the Evaluator will make typical student errors.
- iv) The debrief.
- v) Logbook entries, which should include any corrective training required.

### **5. THE EVALUATOR'S TASK**

The `in air` phase as already stated would include typical student mistakes. The candidate should not only be aware of these mistakes but should attempt to correct them in the air by use of signals or other means.

On the ground the candidate should make good use of training aids and have a good coaching manner.

The candidate should demonstrate a good knowledge of the basic principles of teaching and coaching.

### **6. SAFETY**

The candidate should not attempt to take on the role of an Instructor.

In air Instructors operate to a different criteria to TR Coaches, this should always be remembered.

The candidate should not try to change a student's emergency procedures, unless they break British Skydiving rules, in which case they should refer to an Instructor.

The TR Coach is in no way responsible for the deployment of the student's canopy.

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- iii) TR Coaching Courses/Evaluations may be held at any Parachute Training Organisation (PTO), provided all the above criteria is met.
- iv) Details of Sportscoach UK Courses can be obtained from Sportscoach UK, Leeds.  
Tel: 0113 274 4802, Fax: 0113 275 5019, e-mail: [coaching@sportscoachUK.org](mailto:coaching@sportscoachUK.org)

British Skydiving forms can be found online at

<https://britishskydiving.org/forms/>



***Maintaining the highest safety standards in our sport.***