



RULE 40

GUIDELINES FOR AGENTS &

NON-OLYMPIC BRANDS

What is Rule 40?

Rule 40 governs how athletes* can use – and can allow their personal sponsors to use – their name and image during the period of 30 January 2026 – 24 February 2026 inclusive (the “**Games Period**”) in any advertising materials (“**Materials**”)

‘Materials’ is defined very broadly, and includes all uses of an athlete’s image, name or performance in any type of advertising including print, online and digital (including social media and in mobile apps), broadcast, outdoor, as well as any personal appearances.



Why is Rule 40 important for Team GB?



The BOA needs to raise in excess of £75m to support Team GB during the cycle up to LA 2028.

- The BOA is a not-for-profit organisation, where revenue raised goes towards supporting Team GB and providing the optimal performance environment for athletes at Summer, Winter, European & Youth Olympic Games.
- Rule 40 helps allow the BOA to generate this necessary income to fund taking all athletes – whether they are funded or unfunded – and support personnel to the Games by **protecting the exclusive rights of Olympic commercial partners for a short period during the Games**.
- It's important for brands and athletes to be fully aware of the BOA's Rule 40 guidelines, as non-compliance could damage the BOA's commercial programme (and therefore its ability to fund all athletes and sports). As a result, the BOA is obliged to take breaches seriously.

Guidelines

Non-Olympic partners/brands

Application of Rule 40

Non-Olympic partners/brands who sponsor an athlete are permitted to use an athlete's image during the Games, if all of the following conditions are met:



1. They have obtained the **prior consent** of the athlete;
2. The advertising is **generic** and does not contain any references to or intellectual property (e.g. logos, images) of the Games, the Olympic movement or Team GB (including in re-tweets of official Team GB or Olympic posts which may suggest a commercial association); and
3. They have **notified** the BOA by email of their plans by 19 December 2025* (rule40@teamgb.com) and the advertising:
 - (i) has been **in-market by 19 December 2025***; and
 - (ii) is **run consistently** in both nature and frequency during the Games Period as it was prior to the Games Period.

*or by 2 January 2026 if the athlete depicted is selected after 19 December 2025. If an athlete is selected after 2 January 2026, the BOA will consider advertising plans submitted to it after this date on a case-by-case basis provided that such plans are submitted to the BOA prior to any advertising being published.

Territorial scope

- Where an advertiser is featuring an athlete in an advert in the UK, but the athlete is not a member of Team GB, they will need to notify both the relevant NOC and the BOA.
- These guidelines do not apply in relation to advertising outside the UK.
- If you are considering an advert for use outside the UK, please refer to the relevant NOC and/ or the IOC.



Notifications



- Brands do not need to seek approval of the materials they wish to use – the BOA will be operating a ‘deemed consent’ model. However, we recognise that some brands will wish to ensure that they comply with our guidelines and therefore would encourage brands to get in touch at **rule40@teamgb.com** with details of their plans.
- Following such voluntary submissions, the BOA will be able to advise on and approve such materials.
- Athletes do not need to seek approval of their own plans to thank their sponsors on social media under these guidelines.

Exemptions

The BOA will consider exemptions to its guidelines on a case-by-case basis, and athletes/brands are encouraged to contact the BOA at **rule40@teamgb.com** to discuss these. Examples of this might include where:

- Athletes are competing in other sporting competitions around the time of the Games;
- The usage is purely non-commercial (i.e. charitable) and does not suggest a link to Team GB; and/or
- Brands can demonstrate that their 'business as usual' marketing plans regularly entail campaigns which do not accord with the Rule 40 timeline (including in particular for sportswear manufacturers and 'back to school' launches).



Generic Advertising

Examples

ALLOWED

- ✓ Assuming that these ads have run continuously since prior to **19 December 2025**, they can continue throughout the Games Period in the same form
- ✓ The only reference to Olympic performance is factual and in the context of other achievements.



ALLOWED

- ✓ Consent would need to be sought from the BOA prior to **19 December 2025**, and evidence of consent from the athlete's NOC would be required.
- ✓ No references to the Olympic Games or any other Olympic words or marks.
- ✓ In order to appear during the Games Period, it will have needed to have run continuously since prior to **19 December 2025**.





NOT ALLOWED

- ✗ Team GB branded kit
- ✗ "Olympic diver" places undue emphasis on Olympic status to the exclusion of any other sporting achievements
- ✗ Impression is given that Breitling is a Team GB/ Olympic sponsor

Athlete Websites

What is acceptable?

References to/images of athletes on their own personal website or fan-site which, during the Games Period:

- contain biographical details of the athlete's achievements at the Games; and/or
- contain still photographs taken within Games venues (or moving images provided they are not of field of play); and/or
- contain blogs in relation to the athlete's personal experience at the Games,

provided always that such materials:

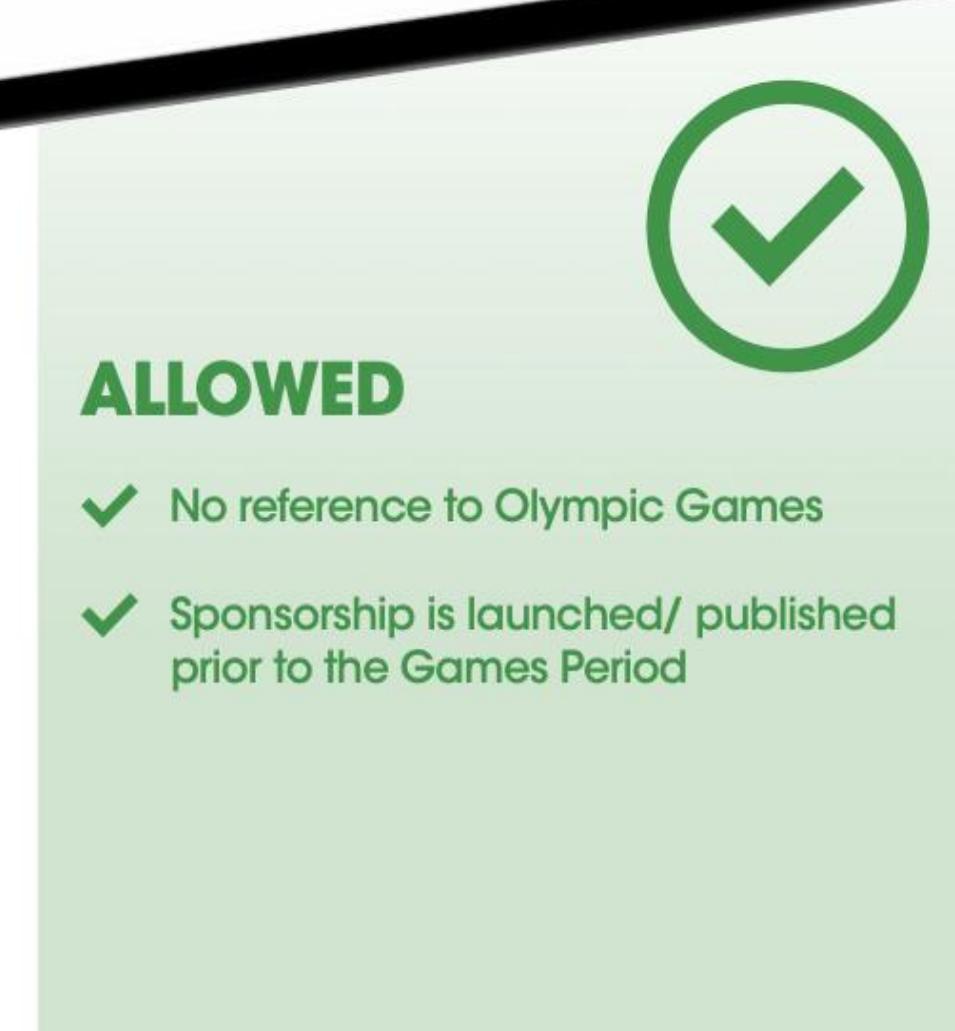
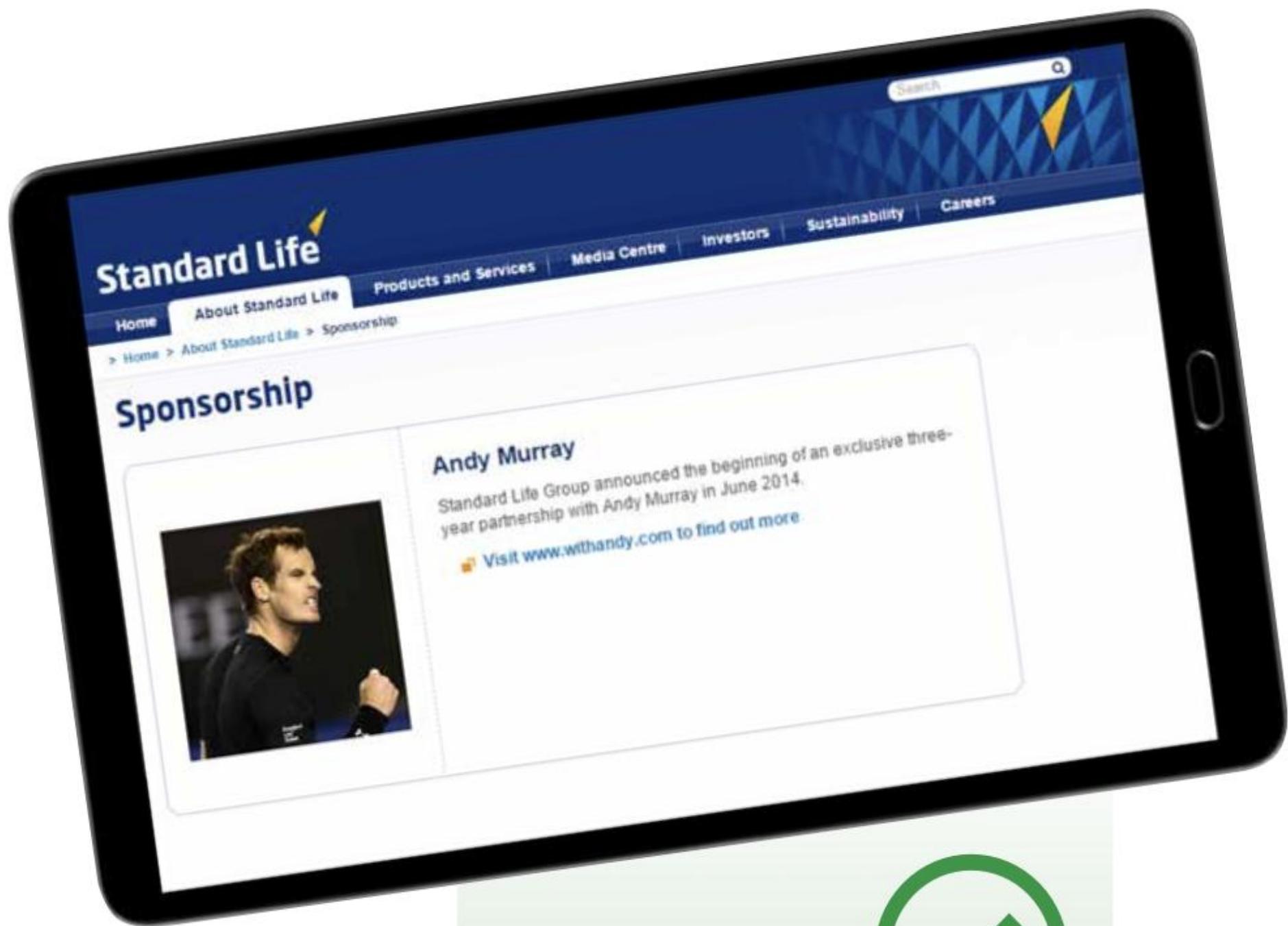
- appear on pages of an athlete's website which do not contain overt third party or sponsor advertising; and
- do not contain video or audio of field of play content from any Games venues; and
- represent an account of the athlete's personal experience and do not promote or in any way endorse a third party brand; and
- otherwise comply with the IOC's social media, blogging and internet guidelines.

ALLOWED

- ✓ References to the Olympic Games are factual/ biographical
- ✓ No overt sponsor/ third party branding



Corporate Websites/ Social Media



What is acceptable?

References to athletes, including use of their image, on corporate websites and social media platforms which were published prior to the Games Period, and which:

- are in the context of factually describing the company's support or sponsorship of the athlete (or sport) or are included within an archived news item or blog; and
- do not appear on the company's home page or equivalent (including, e.g., a landing page or front page of Facebook); and
- do not refer expressly to the Games save to make a balanced, factual biographical reference to the fact that the athlete is an Olympian (alongside any other relevant achievements); and
- do not directly promote or endorse a product.

Catalogues & Corporate Brochures

What is acceptable?

References to athletes, including use of their image, in product catalogues (online and in-store) and corporate brochures provided that the catalogue or corporate brochure:

- is promoting sports clothing or sports equipment;
- was produced and has been available since before 19 December 2025; and
- the packaging does not refer expressly or implicitly to the Games* or contain any Team GB/Games IP; and
- is not distributed by email or post during the Games Period.

**where the materials contain biographical details of the athlete, proportionate, factual statements that the athlete is an Olympian may be made.*

Allowed

- ✓ Assuming that this ad has run continuously since prior to **19 December 2025**, it can continue throughout the Games Period in the same form
- ✓ No references to the Olympic Games or any other Olympic words or marks



Allowed

- ✓ No reference to Olympic Games
- ✓ Catalogue is published prior to **19 December 2025**, and is not distributed by mail or post during the Games Period



In-store Advertising

What is acceptable?

Use of an athlete's name or image on in-store displays and posters during the Games Period is permitted, provided the display or poster:

- is promoting sports clothing or sports equipment and is in a specialist sports retail shop;
- the packaging does not refer expressly or implicitly to the Games* or contain any Team GB/Games IP; and
- is not used in window displays unless they have been used in this way continuously since before 19 December 2025.

Merchandise

What is acceptable?

Merchandise relating either to the athlete alone or their club/ team is permitted provided that the merchandise does not refer expressly or implicitly to the Games* or contain any Team GB/Games IP.

**where the materials contain biographical details of the athlete, proportionate, factual statements that the athlete is an Olympian may be made*

Product Packaging

What is acceptable?

References to athletes (including use of their image) on product packaging is permitted provided that:

- the relevant goods were available for sale in the UK (continuously) since before 19 December 2025; and
- in the case of sports clothing or sports equipment, the athlete is only shown on the packaging modelling the item (and no other promotional messages are made); and
- the packaging does not refer expressly or implicitly to the Games* or contain any Team GB/Games IP.

**Congratulatory / good luck
messaging**

Non-Olympic partners/brands



Clearly, brands who sponsor athletes will want to support, encourage or congratulate athletes in relation to them competing at the Games, perhaps by posting messages of support, congratulation or commiseration. The BOA encourages and welcomes this, provided such messages or materials are:

1. Posted before or after (not during) the Games Period; and
2. Do not contain any Olympic or Team GB-related intellectual property.

Messages posted during the Games would clearly be linked to those Games, and so run the risk of associations being created between the sponsor and Team GB/the Games.

The BOA recognises that, notwithstanding the above, small, local businesses will want to show their support for local athletes with messages during the Games. The BOA encourages this as far as possible provided no commercial conflicts exist. Brands and businesses should get in touch at **rule40@teamgb.com** to discuss their plans.

NOT ALLOWED

- ✖ Posts appear during the Games Period
- ✖ Refer to the athlete's performance at the Games
- ✖ #teamgb not allowed



Company X
@companyx

Proud to sponsor @joedoe, and wishing him all the best next month!

19:05 PM • January 4, 2026



ALLOWED

- ✓ Post appears outside the Games Period
- ✓ No reference made to the Games, or to any Olympic imagery or marks

Thank you messaging

Athletes

The BOA recognises that athletes will want to post messages of thanks to their sponsors, who have supported them on their journey. Athletes will be permitted to post thank you messages on their personal social media channels and personal website, subject to the following limits:

1. One message for each personal sponsor per event (NB – an ‘event’ means an entire event, so e.g. a 1,000m ‘event’ would include all of the heats);
2. One message per sponsor on any one day;
3. Three messages per sponsor throughout the Games Period; and
4. A maximum of ten ‘thank you’ messages per athlete throughout the Games Period.



- Athletes can use creative discretion when posting – however posts cannot contain any Olympic branding (e.g. a medal, or Team GB kit) or references, nor promote or endorse specific products or services. Posts can contain generic references to e.g. “gold”, “silver” or “medal” etc, provided there is no Olympic association.
- Any such posts must not contain any Olympic or Team GB-related intellectual property and must not include any images from the Games. A single identical message, posted at the same time across multiple social media channels and personal website shall be counted as one post.
- Any such posts should not be amplified by paid spend and must not be linked to any activities incompatible with the values of the Olympic movement.
- Any such posts should not include any statement or imply that a product or service enhanced the athlete’s performance.



BOA/IOC Partners

Where athletes have sponsorship deals with brands who are Team GB/Olympic sponsors, some of the restrictions mentioned in above do not apply. In such a case, those Olympic sponsors should contact the BOA to discuss their plans either via their usual client services representative or via **rule40@teamgb.com**.



THANK YOU

WORLDWIDE PARTNERS



OFFICIAL PARTNERS



OFFICIAL PROVIDERS/SUPPLIERS



OFFICIAL CHARITY PARTNERS

