**ANNUAL CLUB RISK ASSESSMENT**

***(This Risk Assessment training must be completed by 2 members of the committee who have completed the online Moodle Training)***

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| **Person/People completing this risk assessment: Anne Kaknena, John Wilson, Evan Little** | **Name of Club: Fencing** | **Date (DD/MM/YYYY): 18.05.2022** |

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| [**Hazards and how they may cause harm**](https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/healthsafetywellbeing/managingrisks/hazidentification/) | [**Who may be at Risk?**](https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/healthsafetywellbeing/managingrisks/peopleatrisk/) | **What existing** [**Control Measures**](https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/healthsafetywellbeing/managingrisks/riskcontrols/) **are currently in place** | **Current**  [**Risk Level**](https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/healthsafetywellbeing/managingrisks/riskassess/matrix_for_risk_evaluation.pdf)  (**VL,L,M,H,VH**) | **Where current risk is** **M, H or VH, what additional** [**Control Measures**](https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/healthsafetywellbeing/managingrisks/riskcontrols/) **are required?** | **What action is required by whom & by when?** | **Final**  [**Risk Level**](https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/healthsafetywellbeing/managingrisks/riskassess/matrix_for_risk_evaluation.pdf) |
| **Novices Lack of Experience**  Each year, a new cohort of absolute beginners joins the club looking to try fencing.  These new members will have little to no experience of fencing in general, and thus little knowledge of the risks involved, and how to use the equipment correctly, and general good practice within a fencing session. | Everyone present at a session. | Before starting any fencing-related activity, Novices are given a safety briefing to:   * Inform them about how to use the equipment properly to prevent injury * Discourage dangerous practices * Inform them of the risks of fencing | L | No additional action required. | Coaches, exec members, and any other session leaders are to continually monitor the novices for safety, correcting behaviour, or equipment where necessary.    The coach leading the session will give a thorough safety briefing before each session. | **L** |
| **Experienced Fencers Equipment and Knowledge**  Each year, a new cohort of experienced fencers joins the club. These members may have fenced before at other clubs or have returned from participating last year. They often have their own equipment.  Such fencers may not be familiar with all safety practices, be familiar with the equipment that we require as a club, or be used to fencing as independently as they might in our club. | Everyone present at a session. | No measures currently in place. | M | Coaches or Exec members to give a safety briefing at the start of each term to the group, or to a member when they join outside of the usual periods. This will encompass:   * The requirements for safety equipment to make sure everybody’s kit meets regulations. * Reminding fencers of risks involved * Informing them of our club practices to reduce risk. | Coaches or Exec members to give a safety briefing at the start of each term to the group, or to a member when they join outside of the usual periods.    Coaches and Exec members to continually monitor fencers for safety, reminding fencers of proper practice where necessary. | **L** |
| **Usage of Protective Equipment**  Fencing requires the use of specialist protective equipment. If this is not worn correctly, or does not conform to the required standards, it can result in injuries. British Fencing standards for equipment regularly change. | Everyone fencing at competitions or sessions. | As part of safety briefings, members are be told what they need to wear and how to wear it properly. | M | Coaches and exec members will continually monitor fencers. Those found not to be wearing  the correct equipment or doing so improperly will not be allowed to fence until they wear the necessary equipment correctly. | Coaches or Exec members to include equipment regulations as part of safety briefings, and continually enforce the regulations during sessions. | **L** |
| **Condition of Protective Equipment**  Fencing requires the use of specialist protective equipment. If this equipment is damaged or in bad condition, then serious injuries can occur. | Everyone fencing at sessions or competitions. | To ensure club equipment is in proper condition:   * Club equipment is regularly checked (at least once a term) by the exec to make sure that it is in proper condition and conforms to the current requirements. * Any instances of non-compliance are removed from use pending a repair or disposal. | M | To ensure that member’s equipment is in proper condition:   * Ultimately, fencers are expected to maintain their own equipment and check it is up to standard. However, exec and coaches will check members kit as part of continual monitoring for safety throughout sessions, and members may use club equipment if theirs is not in good enough condition. | Exec members to check club equipment more frequently (at least twice a term) as well as continual monitoring in sessions.    Coaches and exec members to inform all members of common defects in equipment in safety briefings. | **L** |
| **Usage of High-Risk Equipment**  Fencing requires the use of high-risk equipment (such as swords), which, if improperly handled, can cause serious injury. | Everyone present at competitions or sessions. | Novices are informed of the risks of using swords and how to handle them properly during their safety briefing. | M | Experienced fencers will be reminded of proper procedure and club practice during their safety briefing.  If anyone is found to be misusing the equipment and/or presenting a danger to themselves or others, they will be removed from the session at the coaches’ discretion. | Exec or Coaches to include proper handling of dangerous equipment in safety briefings.    Exec and Coaches to continually monitor for misuse during sessions and give a warning in the first instance, then remove anybody misusing dangerous equipment if they persist. | **L** |
| **Venue Condition & Trip Hazards**  As fencing requires quick changes of direction and involves fast-moving people, a poorly maintained floor surface can present a danger, alongside other general trip hazards present. | Everyone at sessions or competitions. | Before each session or competition, an exec member or coach will review the condition of the floor. If areas are found to be unsafe, fencers will be told to avoid those areas.  Fencers’ bags, and club equipment is placed to the side of the hall.  Spools, wires, and other pieces of electronic scoring equipment are made clearly visible in the hall, and not used during group activities which involve using the whole hall. | L | No additional measures required. | Exec members to ensure that as much as possible is stored to the sides of the hall and move items as necessary. | **L** |
| **Lifting and Carrying**  Fencing kit can often be bulky, heavy and can, if stored incorrectly, present a danger to the person carrying it. | Exec members | No current measures in place. | L | When equipment is moved, multiple people will be present to ensure that any larger items can be dealt with effectively.  Before any equipment is moved, it (and it’s container) will be checked to ensure that it is safe to do so, and either fixed as necessary, or extra care taken when moving such items. | Exec to ensure that enough people are present when moving equipment.    Exec to ensure that all equipment is stored properly and safe to move when it is required. | **L** |
| **Armoury**  The practice of fixing broken fencing kit (primarily including swords, and parts of the electronic scoring apparatus) is known as armoury, and can present a number of dangers, including from broken weapons, high-tension springs, sharp objects, high-tension springs which are sharp objects, and usage of dangerous tools. | The Club Armourer (Exec member) | No current measures in place. | M | Broken kit should only be handled by, or under the supervision of, the club armourer. Additionally spools should not be disassembled without the armourer present, and spools springs should not be handled without cut resistant gloves. | Exec, especially armourer, to ensure no armoury is attempted unsupervised | **L** |
| **Activity-Specific: Free-Fencing/Competitions**  Letting fencers spar undirected by a coach is often one of the best ways to develop competition experience and practice what a fencer has learnt. However, because of the ‘hands-off’ nature, this is also the time when fencers are most at risk, as they are working independently without direct supervision. | Everyone fencing at sessions. | No current measures in place. | L | Coaches and exec members must continually monitor fencers for safety, despite working independently, and encourage a practice of members checking each other’s equipment before they fence. | Coaches and exec members to continually monitor fencers for safety, despite working independently, and encourage a practice of members checking each other’s equipment before they fence. | **L** |
| **Activity-Specific: Group Coaching**  Giving lessons to a group is one of the most effective ways to teach people how to fence, so is widely used. It is always directly supervised by one or more coaches, so is generally quite safe. However, if managed improperly, a group can cause hazards to themselves or coaches as part of their fencing. Coaches often walk amongst fencers to give feedback. | Everyone participating in a group lesson (including the coaches) | By their nature, group coaching sessions are always lead and supervised by at least one coach, who will continually monitor participants for safety, and devise activities which are safe for the group to do. | VL | No further measures required. | Coaches to continually monitor participants and ensure that they (coaches) wear the necessary protective equipment whilst leading the session. | **VL** |
| **Activity-Specific: Individual Lessons**  One on one lessons with a coach form a large part of developing a fencer’s ability. Again, these are often very safe as they are led by a coach, however they can still pose a risk to others nearby. | Those who receive an individual lesson, and coaches giving the lessons, and those nearby. | Before staring, coaches will check their pupil’s equipment to ensure it is worn correctly and in proper condition. They will never ask fencers to do anything that may be unsafe for them (the coach) or themselves (the fencer). Coaches will watch for passers-by and ensure that everyone is a sufficient distance away. | VL | No further measures required. | Coaches to follow proper practice when giving lessons; including checking the pupil’s equipment and using only safe activities. | **VL** |
| **Activity-Specific: Warm Up**  At the start of each session, the coach or an exec member will run a fencing-related warm-up. This can encompass a wide variety of activities, some of which may require careful attention to ensure that they are safe. | Everyone present. | Coaches will continually monitor any activities run for safety, and run only those activities which they deem safe (for those participating and those spectating or otherwise present), and for which there is proper equipment (if needed). | L | No further measures required. | Coaches to monitor participants during the warm-up, and ensure that any activity chosen is safe. | **L** |
| **Hydration**  Since fencing requires a large amount of protective equipment, fencers often get very hot, especially in the summer or when there is inadequate ventilation. This can lead to dehydration, fainting etc. | Everyone present at sessions or competitions. | Fencers are continually reminded to bring a drink to sessions and are given or encouraged to take regular breaks for water when required. The frequency of these is increased in the summer. | L | No further measures required. | Exec to remind fencers to bring a drink to the session.    Coaches to give regular breaks for drinks and encourage fencers to properly hydrate. | **L** |
| **Risk of Muscular Injury**  As with any sport, but especially in fast-paced ones such as fencing, there is a risk of muscular injury from over-exertion or poor form. | All active fencers. | All training sessions include a warm-up led by a coach or an exec member. | L | Members are to be reminded of the importance of warming up before activity during the safety briefings. | Coach or exec to lead a warmup before each session.    Coach or exec to remind members of the importance of warming up during the safety briefings. | **L** |
| **Fast moving fencers**  Fencing is a fast-paced sport by nature, and on rare occasions momentum or lapse in focus of fencers means they are not confined to the pistes. This represents a risk to themselves should they meet any obstruction (e.g. a wall, tripping hazards etc), as well as to any officials or spectators in the area. This risk is most likely to result in incident at each longitudinal end of the piste due to the one-dimensional nature of the sport, although some limited latitudinal risk remains. | Everyone present at sessions or competitions. | When setting out pistes, all British Fencing safety guidelines shall be followed with regards to dimensions and buffer space (British Fencing Safety guidelines section 4.5.1).  The exec shall be responsible for ensuring these guidelines are adhered to. | L | No further control measures required. | Exec members shall ensure they are familiar with the relevant guidelines before resumption of training. | L |
| **First Aid Provision**  Should an incident occur, whether it major or minor, having a first aider on hand is vital. | Everyone present at session or competitions. | For training in Warwick Sport facilities, Warwick Sport ensures that there is a first aider on hand in the facility.    All coaches registered with British Fencing are also required to have completed a first-aid qualification. As such, since there is always a coach present, there is also a first aider within the session. | L | No further measures required. | Exec shall ensure that they are all familiar with the first-aid procedures of the venue. | **L** |
| **Covid-19**  Covid-19 is still present (and expected to be present) throughout the year’s training. It still poses a risk to anyone who contracts it. | Everyone present at sessions or competitions. | Attendees are periodically encouraged to test. Anyone who tests positive is encouraged to self-isolate. | VL | No further measures required. | Exec shall periodically encourage attendees to test. | **VL** |
| **Storage/Handling of Broken Equipment**  Sometimes the equipment used for fencing breaks – be this swords, protective kit, or parts of the electronic scoring apparatus. Such broken kit can (and often does) break in ways that makes it a hazard to handle and generally be around. Extra care must be taken to avoid accidents. | Everyone present at sessions or competitions. | Any broken equipment (including potentially dangerous items) is handled only by our Armourer, who will have experience in safely handling such equipment. They are set aside in a dedicated section of our cupboards. | L | Fencers need to be continually reminded not to touch broken equipment, and leave it to the exec to deal with properly.  Areas in the cupboard where potentially dangerous items are stored should be clearly marked and have signs making people aware of the potential danger. | Exec and coaches to remind fencers not to touch broken equipment in the safety briefings.  Exec to adequately label areas of the cupboard where any potentially dangerous items are stored. | **L** |

**Risk Assessment matrix**

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|  | **Severity** | | | | |  |  | **Risk Level** |
| **Likelihood** | Superficial | Minor | Serious | Major | Extreme |  | **Very low** | Acceptable risk - no action required |
| Unlikely | **Very low** | **Very low** | **Low** | **Low** | **Moderate** |  | **Low** | Tolerable risk - further control measures not required, but status must be monitored |
| Possible | **Very low** | **Low** | **Low** | **Moderate** | **High** |  | **Moderate** | Further control measures required to reduce risk as far as is reasonably practical |
| Likely | **Low** | **Low** | **Moderate** | **High** | **Very high** |  | **High** | Urgent action required to allow activity to continue |
| Very likely | **Low** | **Moderate** | **High** | **Very high** | **Very high** |  | **Very high** | Risk intolerable - activity must cease until the risk has been reduced |
| Certain | **Moderate** | **High** | **Very high** | **Very high** | **Very high** |  |  |  |

The **Severity** is how serious the outcome would be if was injured from a hazard.

Superficial Injuries include bumps, small cuts, abrasions etc.

Minor Injuries that could result in treatment required off site, and may involve limited time off work less than 7 days

Serious Injuries that require 7 days or more off work

Major Injuries include broken limbs, serious head injuries, injuries to eyes that affect sight, asphyxiation etc.

Extreme Fatality or life changing injuries