

The image features a large red triangle on the left side, containing the British Fencing logo and text. The background is a photograph of two fencers in white gear, one in a lunge position with a raised foil, and another partially visible on the right. The scene is set in a gymnasium with a wooden floor and a blue wall in the background.

**BRITISH  
FENCING**

# *Risk Management*

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*Learning Week*

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- “It does not do to leave a live dragon out of your calculations, if you live near one.”

- J.R.R. Tolkien



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  - *Identify*
  - *Assess*
  - *Manage/Mitigate*
  - *Monitor, Communicate*

*We will be covering these terms as we go along in the session*

# **TERMINOLOGY**

IMPACT

PROBABILITY

CONTROL

ISSUE

RISK OWNER

RISK

RISK LOG/  
REGISTER

ACTION

MITIGATION  
PLAN

LIKELIHOOD

RISK  
ASSESSMENT

# WHAT IS RISK?

Different definitions depending on the field and context. Common to most definitions of risk is **uncertainty** and **undesirable outcomes**.

- “the possibility of something bad happening.”
- “a probability or threat of damage, injury, loss, or any other negative occurrence that is caused by external or internal vulnerabilities, and that may be avoided through pre-emptive action”.

*Which one of these is the Risk, the Issue or the Action?*

# **RISK, ISSUE OR ACTION**

I will get my  
brakes fixed

My car brakes  
are faulty

My brakes may fail,  
resulting in an accident  
which seriously injures  
someone

# ***RISK, ISSUE OR ACTION***

I will -> ACTION

'are' ->  
ISSUE/PROBLEM

'may' -> RISK

*Which one of these is the Risk, the Issue or the Action?*

# **RISK, ISSUE OR ACTION**

If a mask does not fit properly it may fall off whilst fencing and the participant may be blinded

I will purchase size medium masks

All my masks are size large



# WHAT IS RISK MANAGEMENT

*Having in place a systematic process to identify, evaluate, control, review and monitor the impact of uncertain events.*

*It includes having people with the appropriate skills to identify and assess the potential for risks to arise.*

*When managing risk, make sure that you include people with the expertise of risk – coach, welfare officer, venue operator*

**“Reducing the chance that something will happen that will have a negative impact on the achievement of our objectives”.**

*You set your objectives – a welcoming inclusive club session for beginners, an elite competition, a fun activity for older fencers /young kids*

# **RISK ASSESSMENT**

- The process of and the document that results from identifying risks, assessing potential impact and taking proportionate action to control/mitigate them.
- It can help to start by thinking about obvious ‘hazards’ but important to make sure you understand the risk - rather than an issue which can narrow your thinking around mitigation
- Within Risk Assessments there must be clear ownership of mitigating action.

# INSURANCE

- All Clubs must have a Club Risk Assessment in place and these must be reviewed regularly (eg termly) or when anything significant changes and implementation of mitigation actions/plans monitored.

*The kind of things that would require a review would include venue changes, key personnel change, offering new sessions,*

- All Events must have an Event Risk Assessment in place and these should be reviewed on the day of the event.
- Keep copies in case of an insurance claim

*You can log these in Sport80 - useful if your club does not have a facility to store club documents that the full committee can access*

# WHO TO INVOLVE?

- Club Coaches
- Club Committee members
- Event Organiser (DT)
- Welfare Officer (Club and Event)
- Head Referee
- Venue Operator

*If you don't operate your own venue you should ask the venue for a copy of their risk assessment so you can see what risks and mitigation plans already exist. Eg Some venues will have standard protocols for accidents/missing children etc.*

# **STEPS**

1. *Select a risk assessment template to record*
2. *Identify*
3. *Describe*
4. *Measure*
5. *Control (Mitigate)*
6. *Sign-Off*
7. *Retain/Store*
8. *Communicate*

# ***SIMPLE TEMPLATE***

<b>Potential Risk</b>	<b>People at Risk</b>	<b>Existing Controls</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Overall Risk</b>	<b>Further Controls/ Actions</b>	<b>Person Resp</b>

# DETAILED TEMPLATE

Category	Description of Risk (Person at Risk)	Pre-Mitigation			Mitigation Plan/Actions	Post Mitigation			Resp/ Due Date
		Prob-ability	Impact	Overall		Prob-ability	Impact	Overall	
Injury	Trip/slip Hazards <b>(All)</b>				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaches check activity area for hazards before every <u>session</u></li> <li>Fencers reminded not to create dangerous situations – everyone is responsible for making sure fencing area is safe and free from trip hazards.</li> </ol>				
Injury	Hard Hitting <b>(Fencers)</b>				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaches remind participants to wear protective <u>equipment</u></li> <li>Pairing for training exercises to <u>take into account</u> ability/height/strength differences</li> </ol>				
Injury	Equipment/ Clothing safety <b>(Fencers, Coaches)</b>				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BF Safety Rules part of new joiner induction</li> <li>Participants reminded regularly of safety <u>rules</u></li> <li>Coaches to identify any breaches of BF safety rules and</li> <li>Club equipment to be checked every term</li> </ol>				
Safeguarding	Participant experiences				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding policy and procedures in place and</li> </ol>				

# **SAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT**

- *On the website - Membership, Club Zone, scroll down to the Quicklinks (red) section*
- *Click on the link - [BF RESOURCES FOR CLUBS - BRITISH FENCING](#)*
- *This is not the 'answer' - this is for you to adapt as you feel is necessary, for the activity you are involved in*



# IDENTIFY - THINK ABOUT:

Venues/Location

Changing Rooms

Toilets

Catering

Injury /H&S

Social Media/Livestream

U18/Consent

Security (theft)

Equipment

Abuse/Harassment

Legal, statutory and  
cultural environments

Fencer/ coach/  
official/ spectator  
behaviour

Religious observance

Quality of session

Financial

Environmental  
Sustainability

Transport

Accommodation

Event Staffing

Supervision -  
Staff/parents/

First Aid/Medical

Practical

Other Organisations

Terrorism

Weather

# DESCRIBE

- *Potential Risk - An undesirable outcome, one that will negatively affect your goal. For example*
  - *Spectator verbally abuses referee*
- *People at Risk - The category of people that will be harmed by an action eg Participants, athletes, coaches, referees etc*

# MEASURE

- *Probability or Likelihood - how likely is this harm to occur (prior to any mitigation action/control measures). Also know as 'probability' (H M L - or you can score 1-5)*
- *Impact - the impact of this upon the individuals, this may be higher on certain groups such as children (H M L - or you can score 1-5)*

# MEASURE

## Overall Risk:

- *High - certain or near certain that harm would be caused if risk were not removed*
- *Medium - the likelihood of harm is probable without mediation*
- *Low - there is a low risk of harm or this will be relatively simple to prevent*
- *(Or you can calculate Likelihood x Impact as a numerical)*

# CONTROL (MITIGATE)

- **Existing Controls** - *What precautions/control measures have already been taken to reduce the risk?*
- **Further Controls** - *What further precautions/control measures need to be taken to reduce the risk*
- **Person Responsible** – *Who is responsible for putting in place the further controls. Note - not every safeguarding control is the Welfare Officers responsibility!*

# MITIGATE - ACTIONS TO REDUCE IMPACT AND LIKELIHOOD

## RISK

My faulty brakes may cause me to have an accident which seriously injures me/someone

I will get my brakes fixed

I will avoid driving my car

I will drive at 10mph to the garage

I will drive on quiet roads at a quiet time (to get to garage)

# MITIGATE - ACTIONS TO REDUCE IMPACT AND LIKELIHOOD

I/the coach will check that club masks are fitting properly before starting fencing

The club committee will purchase (more) size medium masks

## RISK

In our club sessions we frequently only have large masks available to borrow - if a mask does not fit properly it may fall off whilst fencing and the participant may be blinded

I/the coach will check that the Elastic/Velcro straps are in good condition

# CONTROL (MITIGATE)

- **BF Policy** - remember that certain BF Policies and Guidelines are designed to help control/mitigate risk and are a condition of insurance. For example, the Safety Guidelines are designed to reduce the risk of accidents. It is up to clubs and coaches to establish a culture in the club of following these.
- **BF Registers** - these are important ways to mitigate the risk that unqualified and people unsuitable to work with children or adults at risk. If you allow unregistered/unchecked people to occupy positions of trust over children you are likely to be breaking the law and insurance would likely not cover you should anything happen as a result.
- **BF Membership** - not only does checking for valid membership ensure the club workforce (including coaches) are covered by BF insurance, it also helps to keep our community safe. We don't publish lists of suspended members, instead we rely on clubs to check and direct people back to BF who will engage with Welfare Officers if required.



# TO FINISH

- **SIGN-OFF** - your risk assessment can be signed off by one or more of your club committee members, or (eg for Events) the organising committee.
- **RETAIN** - store your risk assessment somewhere where all club committee members can access it and in the event of a claim to provide to insurers. Club workforce (coaches, welfare officers etc) should be sent a copy.
- **COMMUNICATE** - you may decide that it is appropriate to send around your RA to all club members, or you may want to publish an overview. We would encourage clubs to update their members after performing a risk assessment as it's a good idea to remind all participants of their responsibilities in reducing risks. Your venue operator may also expect a copy.
- **REVIEW** - unless the assessment is for a one-off activity we recommend you set a regular review schedule. A minimum of once a year (assuming nothing significant about the club set-up, venue, workforce, participants changes significantly), more often if there are changes. Review can also be triggered by factors outside your control, eg BF Safety Guidelines updates, welfare Issues, venue changes.

**THANK YOU!**



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