



HEALTH & SAFETY



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1. Introduction

The most important source of advice and support for any organisation on health and safety issues is the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**. This document is based on their guidance.

The main piece of legislation governing health and safety at work is the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**. It places a duty on employers to ensure the general health and safety of their employees and anyone else who may be affected. This includes volunteers and members of the public using the services provided by the employer.

An employer is defined as anyone who employs at least one person, including those who are self-employed. However even groups who are not, strictly speaking, employers and who rely solely on volunteers may, under civil law, owe a “duty of care” to those who work as volunteers with them and to those who use their services. Therefore, as far as practically possible, the guidance should be seen as good practice by all groups regardless of whether or not they can be legally defined as employers.

Health and safety is a large area of concern for any organisation and is generally considered to relate to its workforce. The relevance to safeguarding is twofold:

- Firstly, staff and volunteers who are not being looked after by their employer are unlikely to be able to provide a safe and healthy level of care for the children, young people and adult service users in their charge
- Secondly, health and safety arrangements that are made for staff and volunteers should also apply to children, young people and adult service users involved with the organisation.

You should be aware of three general points about your health and safety arrangements:

- 1) That you have a health and safety policy and a set of specific procedures regarding any of the regulations and orders in this document that apply to your organisation
- 2) That you have at least one health and safety officer with responsibility for overseeing health and safety arrangements within your organisation
- 3) That health and safety arrangements are cross-referenced and consistent with other safeguarding measures (e.g. your over-arching safeguarding policy or lone working arrangements).

2. Health and Safety Policy Statement

UK Gymnastics is strongly committed to encouraging our members to take part, but the health, well-being and safety of each individual is always our paramount concern. We recommend levels of training dependent on age and ability, and expect our junior athletes to participate within these boundaries.

2.1. Health and Safety Policy

To support our Health and Safety policy statement we are committed to the following duties:

- Undertake regular, recorded risk assessment of the club premises and all activities undertaken by the club.
- Create a safe environment by putting health and safety measures in place as identified by the assessment.
- Ensure that all members are given the appropriate level of training and competition by regularly assessing individual ability dependent on age, maturity and development.

- Ensure that all members are aware of, understand and follow the club's health and safety policy.
- Appoint a competent club member to assist with health and safety responsibilities.
- Ensure that normal operating procedures and emergency operating procedures are in place and known by all members.
- Provide access to adequate first aid facilities, telephone and qualified first aider at all times.
- Report any injuries or accidents sustained during any club activity or whilst on the club premises.
- Ensure that the implementation of the policy is reviewed regularly and monitored for effectiveness.

AS A MEMBER YOU HAVE A DUTY TO:

- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what you do or not do.
- Co-operate with the club on health and safety issues.
- Correctly use all equipment provided by the club.
- Not interfere with or misuse anything provided for your health, safety or welfare.

3. Legislation, Regulations, Orders and Guidance

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 states that, as far as reasonably practicable.

Employers should provide:

- Safe equipment
- Safe substances
- A safe and healthy workplace
- A safe and health working environment
- Information, instruction, supervision and training.

Employees also have a duty to:

- Ensure their own health and safety, and that of others
- Co-operate with their employer to uphold the health and safety arrangements that are made
- Not misuse or interfere with health and safety equipment

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to:

- Carry out risk assessments of work activities and workplaces (with special assessment for works under 18, pregnant women and new mothers)
- Take preventative action to remove or control risks
- Have effective health and safety arrangements in place, including arrangements to cover emergencies
- Provide information and access to health and safety advice (this includes displaying a poster or giving out leaflets on what employees should know about health and safety law)
- Take workers' capabilities into account when assigning duties
- Co-operate with other employers on health and safety arrangements (for example, when sharing a building)

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

These regulations cover the use of electrical equipment, electrical wiring in buildings and live electrical work.

The HSE recommends that, in relation to electrical equipment, employers should:

- Ask employees to do a quick check each time they use an item of equipment and report any obvious problems such as loose wires, charring on sockets, overheating or worn flexes
- Make sure that the correct fuses are used
- Have annual portable appliance testing (PAT) carried out by a qualified and competent electrician
- Use circuit breakers for equipment that is used in damp conditions or where there is a danger that the flex might be cut e.g. lawnmowers
- Minimise the use of extension leads and multiple adaptors
- Switch off electrical equipment after use
- Not position electrical equipment near water where possible
- Use the correct type of fire extinguisher for electrical fires
- Provide guards and locks on equipment where there is any danger or entanglement or entrapment or where sharp blades are involved
- Fit emergency stop controls and fail safe mechanisms on equipment to automatically switch off if there is a disruption to the electricity supply
- Provide protective clothing and equipment, such as masks where necessary
- Provide information and training on using equipment safely.

Some of these measures (e.g. using locks and guards, stop controls, protective clothing and equipment and providing information and training) also apply to non-electrical equipment.

The guidance recommends electrical wiring in buildings is checked every five years by qualified and competent electricians and, if necessary, is fitted with additional earthing.

Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) Regulations 2002

The substances referred to in the COSHH regulations are those that could cause health problems or other adverse effects on a person. These might be chemicals (including many cleaning fluids) bacteria and viruses (in soil, standing water, body fluids or faeces, or carried by animals and insects) and large quantities of dust (such as dust created by cleaning out animal stalls on farms, from woodworking or in some pottery workshops.)

The employer is required to risk assess each substance or situation where the hazard exists. The assessments should cover:

- The people who may come in to contact with the harmful substance
- How it might get into or onto the body (e.g. by being swallowed, through the skin or inhaled)
- The effect of such contact
- The likelihood of it happening

If the risk is unacceptable, the employer should take steps to remove the substance or control it.

All details of chemicals should be kept on file and risk assessments and worker health records should be kept for as long as possible (up to 40 years).

Methods of managing the risks posed by harmful substances include:

- Clearly labelling any chemical used and the danger it poses (e.g. toxic, corrosive etc.)

- Locking chemicals away
- Using safer alternatives
- Ensuring there is adequate ventilation where harmful substances are being used
- Providing protective clothing e.g. goggles, gloves or overalls
- Vaccinations
- Hand-washing rules
- Raising awareness and providing information

First aid arrangements

Employers are required to provide:

- Adequate first aid equipment for the number of people using the building / service and for the type of work that is carried out
- Trained first aiders or appointed people

In most cases, standard first aid boxes should be sufficient. These should contain a selection of:

- Sterile dressings and bandages
- Eye pads
- Plasters
- Safety pins
- Disposable gloves

They should be regularly checked and maintained, and should be clearly accessible and labelled.

They SHOULD NOT contain pills, medicines or creams of any kind

First aiders need to be available whenever people are at work. To qualify as a first aider, they need to attend a four-day HSE approved course and be awarded a certificate. This needs to be renewed every three years.

Accidents

Employers must have a system in place for recording all accidents, even when no injury or damage is caused. These are sometimes known as “near misses”. Having a system ensures that similar accidents are avoided, that there is information available if a worker claims benefit as a result of the accident and that there is information available for possible insurance claims or legal proceedings.

Accident records must comply with data protection legislation, which means that they should be kept confidential and that personal details should be made available to those who need to know.

Most organisations use an accident book or standard form for recording accidents. In many ways a form is better than an accident as it makes it easier to file the information securely. It also means that a copy of the form can be kept on the worker’s file as well as on the designated accident file.

Accident reports should:

- Be written clearly

- Contain fact not opinion
- Contain as much information as possible about the accident
- Give details of witnesses
- Be signed by the manager
- Provide the name and address of the person who has had the accident and the person completing the form (if different)
- Be returned to a central point
- Be completed as soon as possible after the accident

Accidents do not need to be reported to UKG in the initial stages, but **MUST** be recorded. Should there be a claim then UKG & the Insurance company must be informed.

Fire Safety

Employers should have a fire safety management system in place. This should include:

- A fire safety policy for the workplace that covers responsibilities, the role of the fire warden, frequency of fire drills and fire alarm tests and signing in and out arrangements
- A fire risk assessment that identifies and controls high risk areas and storage of combustible material, and makes provisions for those who may be particularly vulnerable
- A training and awareness raising programme (e.g. fire drills, using fire extinguishers and general fire safety awareness)
- Keeping records of fire drills and any training
- Information on the premises, including details of fire exits, assembly points and the location of combustible material
- Emergency procedures for the situations where the fire alarm may not work e.g. during fire fighter strikes or fire alarm failure.

Moving and handling

Moving and handling means using the body to lift, move, hold or support a load. The load may be animate (a person or animal) or inanimate (an object). Regulations state that employers should remove the risks of injury associated with moving and handling. This includes the risk of injury to a person being moved as well as to the person who is moving him or her. If this is not possible, the employer must reduce the risks as much as possible.

As with most health and safety issues, risk assessment is a key tool in creating a safe environment. The employer should consider:

- The nature of the load
- The individual who is moving or handling the load
- The task being undertaken (what is it and how is it being done?)

If the load is a person, part of the assessment should be whether the person is able to move him or herself, can understand what is happening and whether he or she suffers from any medical conditions that increase vulnerability (e.g. whether he/she uses a catheter)

Risk reduction measures may include:

- Information and training in how to move and handle loads safely

- Ensuring that workstations (including desks, keyboards and chairs) meet minimum health and safety requirements
- Encouraging staff to take regular breaks or changes in activity during the working day

Visual Display Units

The employer should assess risks associated with the use of Visual Display Units (VDU). This includes:

- The use of lifting and handling aids (training on how to use the aids will need to be provided, and they need to be properly and safely maintained)
- Changes in the environment to make moving and handling easier (e.g. keeping the load nearer to where it has to be moved to)
- Providing training and information on reducing risks associated with prolonged periods of desk-based working.

Staff who habitually use visual display screens are entitled to an eye test funded by employers.

Other workplace safety issues

The responsibility to provide a safe working environment covers all aspects of the work place, including:

- The structure of the building and its grounds (e.g. entrances, exits, staircases, floors, ceilings, gardens and car parks)
- Fittings (windows, doors and stair rails)
- Seating, temperature, lighting and ventilation
- Welfare provisions (water, toilets and rest facilities)
- Utilities (water, gas and electricity supplies, drainage)
- Work away from the main premises

Fuller details on what employers are specifically required to do in relation to these issues are provided in HSE guidance.

4. Useful Contacts

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

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