



## Health, Safety & Welfare Policy for Clubs & Affiliated Organisations

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### **Terminology**

“Gymnastics” is used as a generic term and includes all British Gymnastics recognised disciplines (acrobatics, aerobics, general (gymnastics for all), teamgym, disability gymnastics, pre-school, men’s artistic, rhythmic, trampolining & DMT, tumbling and women’s artistic) and gymnastics activities (freestyle and cheerleading)

The term “safe”, as used in this document, means a situation where, so far as is reasonably practicable, all reasonable steps have been taken to understand the nature of the risks involved and to ensure suitable steps have been taken to control the risks and keep them to a minimum.

## **1.0 Introduction**

British Gymnastics (BG) regards the health, safety and welfare of all members to be of paramount importance, which should not be compromised. To this end, it is BG policy to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that procedures are in place to maintain a safe and healthy environment not only for its members but also for other people who may be affected by the activities of BG and/or affiliated clubs and organisations.

This policy document gives an account of the actions taken by BG in response to government legislation on health and safety and goes on to explain what is required in turn of clubs, affiliated organisations and members. It is essential reading for all individuals who are involved in running a gymnastics club, or providing gymnastics activities under the auspices of BG. The document supersedes any previous guidance contained in the earlier BG Health, Safety and Welfare Policy 2014 or previous versions.

Everyone involved in gymnastics has a responsibility to help maintain a positive health and safety culture across the sport. All clubs have a common law duty of care to those who may be affected by their activities and have a responsibility to implement appropriate policy and arrangements relating to the activities they provide.

Gymnastics is a complex sport with inherent risks. Applying the guidance will help control the risks associated with running a gymnastics club and/or providing gymnastics activity and most importantly minimise the risks associated with participation. Adherence to the guidance will help reduce the likelihood of a successful negligence claim being made against a BG affiliated members or organisations.

This policy and the associated BG documents should be read by club organisers and any member of staff given responsibility for the implementation of health and safety measures. It is important, however, that all those involved in operating the club – employees, contractors and volunteers - are aware of these documents and are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the guidance. All these people should be given appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision in relation to health and safety. This reflects the general point that whereas clubs and organisations are responsible for the introduction of appropriate health, safety and welfare measures, the application and operation of these measures lies to a considerable extent in the hands of all the individual workers involved.

## **2.0 Policy**

BG aims to promote a positive health and safety culture, and to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved in the sport. BG endeavours to achieve the highest standards of welfare and requires all clubs and affiliated organisations to work with it to achieve these aims.

### **2.1 Guidance & Legislation**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (and its subordinate legislation) is the principal legislation that informs the policy. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 is one of the other key pieces of legislation that underpins the BG Management System and guidance.

There are some home country variations in certain aspects of health and safety legislation e.g. the legislation governing smoking in public places falls under a different Act of Parliament in each country. In addition, in Northern Ireland and Scotland there are different underpinning legal systems. Differences of this kind may need to be taken into account in the interpretation of the policy and the BG Management System & Guidance.

The Health and Safety Executive website [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) offers further information relating to Health and Safety Law.

## **2.2 Other relevant BG Policy and Guidance**

British Gymnastics has developed a Health & Safety Management System and Guidance to assist clubs and affiliated organisations to meet the policy requirements. The following Health, Safety and Welfare Guidance documents should also be read and followed in conjunction with this Policy:

- Safe Coaching
- Safe Participation
- Safe Trips

Further guidance can be found within other BG publications, such as Coaching Manuals and Club Management Resources. Members who are also members of other affiliated Home Countries and Regions should also refer to the Articles of Association and Rules of these Organisations.

## **2.3 Actions Taken by British Gymnastics**

BG has already introduced the following measures to underpin the introduction and application of its health and safety policy and procedures.

- BG has contracted the services of Agility UK to act as the BG Competent Health and Safety Advisor.
- Agility UK provides a helpline for all BG clubs and affiliated organisations to support the implementation of the policy.
- BG has worked with Agility UK to develop a comprehensive Health & Safety Management System to support clubs and affiliated organisations to meet legal obligation.
- BG has worked with Agility UK to audit the effectiveness of health and safety arrangements within clubs and affiliated organisations and will carry out regular audits to measure the effectiveness of our management system.
- BG has an established Standards Committee, which is responsible for the development, monitoring and evaluation of policies for Health, Safety & Welfare, Safeguarding and Protecting Children, Adults at risk, Ethics, Equality, Data Protection, Anti-Doping and any other relevant areas.
- BG has an established an Ethics and Welfare department to support the work of the Standards Committee.
- BG has established GymMark, a Gymnastics club accreditation scheme, that provides a framework for clubs to develop a positive culture and provide a safe, effective and child-friendly gymnastics environment.
- BG has a complaints and disciplinary procedure, which is followed in the event of serious breaches of BG Policy.

- BG maintains confidential records of all complaints, concerns and sanctions against clubs and members in line with data protection legislation.
- Health, Safety and Welfare issues are included within BG Coach and Club Management education programmes and best practice is extensively promoted.

## **2.4 Actions to be taken by clubs, affiliated organisations and members**

Although clubs and affiliated organisations may have policies and procedures in place, these policies must, as a minimum requirement, comply with the standards adopted by British Gymnastics.

The right to take part in gymnastics activities in a safe environment, and stay free from harm, applies to everyone and all members must take reasonable steps to ensure they are fully aware and compliant with the relevant aspects of the policy.

### **All clubs and affiliated organisations must therefore: -**

- Comply with BG policy and the relevant statutory requirements;
- Identify the organisation's health and safety responsibilities (see appendix 4.1 in the BG Health & Safety Management System & Guidance document), and put in place the relevant aspects of the BG or equivalent Health and Safety Management system.
- Identify significant risks and plan the work of the organisation to minimise all risks in respect of Health, Safety and Welfare.
- Ensure the responsibilities for Health, Safety and Welfare are designated to individuals with the appropriate skills and experience.
- Ensure that there are adequate training opportunities for staff, coaches, officials and other volunteers.
- Ensure reporting procedures are followed for any accidents or incidents and inform BG of any serious allegations or concerns of poor practice.

### **In addition, all members must: -**

- Take reasonable care of their own health, safety and welfare and that of other people whom their acts or omissions may affect.
- Conduct activities in line with training and BG policy and guidance
- Co-operate with BG, and the appropriate Home, Country or Regional affiliated organisations and club, on issues relating to health, safety and welfare.
- Ensure reporting procedures are followed for any accidents or incidents and inform BG of any serious allegations or concerns of poor practice.
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## **2.5 Monitoring Arrangements**

The BG Health, Safety and Welfare policy will be annually monitored and a full policy review will take place every three years. A policy review may also be conducted in response to any of the following occurrences: -

- changes in legislation or guidance.
- changes in governance of the sport.
- changes in the nature or size of British Gymnastics.
- a procedural review taking place as a result of a significant case.