**ENSA SPORTS & ENSA SOCIETIES HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**Guidelines & Notes**

Last reviewed: 27/05/2025

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**1 Club and Societies Health and Safety**

Being a student offers great opportunities to join clubs and societies and to engage in shared activities and interests with other students. Building a sense of community and belonging is central to a good student experience, and clubs and societies are core to that. At Edinburgh Napier, sports and societies take place with the support of ENSA - the Students’ Association.

ENSA believes that clubs and societies play an important part in the personal development and enjoyment of student life for most participants. By engaging in club and society shared activities, individual students develop skills, build extra-curricular communities of interest and social support networks, and they have fun together.

ENSA wants as many students as possible to benefit from being active members of sports clubs and societies, and to enjoy their activities, but it also recognises that most club and society activities entail some level of risk to the personal safety of participants.

It is important for each club and society to identify potential risks; to assess the risks inherent in their specific activities and in the changing environments in which these activities take place; the possible impact of risk and the measures that clubs, societies and their participants can take to avoid some risks altogether, or to manage and reduce risk to a reasonable level. For this reason, each club and society is required to understand the safety requirements for their activity and how this information is communicated and enforced for all members.

For most sports, much of what clubs need to consider can be found in the guidelines of their National Governing Bodies. Most representative sport is highly regulated, but adventure/outward-bound activities and some society activities may require more situational assessments. These situational assessments can include individual skill levels and equipment for specific activities under environmental conditions that may change and affect risk significantly, such as weather, daylight hours, river or sea conditions and tides, suitability of kit and safety of equipment.

Every club and society are required to have a safety policy to cover its activities and ENSA is here to help with safety assessments – for high, medium or low risk activities.

* 1. **What are Risks and Risk Assessments?**

Sport club and society activity, as well as everyday life, is full of hazards which can cause potential harm. Risk is then defined as the likelihood of an undesired event occurring due to a hazard.

To aid in promoting a safe environment for participants, all clubs and societies have an existing risk assessment for their general day to day (core) activities which sits alongside their codes of practice and constitutions. This can be requested from clubs and societies.

Risk assessments have the following purposes:

- States in simple terms the activities that happen in the club/society.

- Identifies hazards that could cause harm to members.

- Identifies the Risk Rating (likelihood of a hazard occurring X severity of outcome)

- Outlines the steps that should be taken to minimise the risk of harm (controls).

Club and Society Committees have a responsibility to regularly check their risk assessment is up to date and “suitably substantial” (HSE) for their regular activities.

If a Club and Society wishes to undertake a new activity they will be required to write or provide new risk assessments for each additional activities or one-off events.

For those clubs who have multiple different sites with different safety requirements they should ensure they have relevant Site-Specific Risk Assessments (SSRA) written and kept on record alongside their Core risk assessment.

If you would like help or advice in completing your risk assessment, please view the information video on Moodle or for additional issues please contact ENSA Student Activities Team.

* 1. **Bringing your Risk Assessment to Life**

Risk assessments are ongoing, dynamic and don’t just stop once they are written.

Activity/session leaders should always remain aware of their role as leaders while taking part in activities, and not just “get lost in” enjoying the activity. Those in charge of the activity should always be aware of the controls outlined ensuring these are carried out and maintained. Leaders should be regularly checking the progress of activities and the local environment, assessing the impact of changing conditions on the activity and/or participants.

* 1. **Skill Based Assessments**

All sports and physical activity carry inherent risks, but these can be increase where beginners are concerned. Clubs and Societies should always employ a common-sense approach when deciding whether someone’s skill level is sufficient to participate in an activity.

Water based clubs should ensure that their participants have a suitable level of swimming ability before allowing them to take part in activities. It is not sufficient for participants to agree they are a strong swimmer, Clubs and Societies must ensure this is back up by evidence.

Likewise, some sports require members to undertake certain qualification or training to be able to take part. Clubs and Societies should plan how they ensure that this training take place and is checked.

* 1. **Venue/Site specific Risk Assessments**

Clubs using external facilities must provide a copy of the facility’s own risk assessment. This is key as clubs' activity risk assessments must link in with the site-specific risk assessment. Ways this can link would be in the additional measure's column. For example, venue staff may assist with the ambulance, safety check equipment or be lead point of contact in case of a fire (amongst other examples).

* 1. **Equipment Safety**

All equipment should be regularly checked in line with the risk matrix outlined in the Health & Safety Policy. Additionally, equipment should be maintained and serviced to manufacturers’ standards and a log of this should be kept. In conjunction to this, all items of equipment should be logged in your Inventory and its life span noted. Items with a set lifespan should be replaced in accordance with this.

* 1. **Accident Reporting**

In the scenario that there is an incident or dangerous occurrence (near miss) at any activity involving a Club or Society, an Accident Report Form must be completed and submitted as soon as possible. This can be found in the Health & Safety section of the Policy Bank.

If the accident occurs at [EN]gage Sports Centre, you should complete the Accident Report Form and make the Duty Manager aware.

* 1. **Breaches of Policy**

Failure to follow the policy outlined above will result in disciplinary action being taken against individuals, full Committees and/or entire Clubs/Societies. (See ENSA’s Sports & Societies Disciplinary Policy).