



Beaundesert Outdoor Adventures

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) & Risk Assessment: **Fencing**

Document ID: SOP-BOA-FENCE-001

Effective Date: 5th January 2026

Review Date: January 2027

1.0 Purpose

To outline the standardized, safe, and progressive procedure for conducting a Fencing session at Beaundesert Outdoor Adventures. This ensures a high-quality instructional experience while maintaining paramount safety standards in line with **British Fencing** guidance.

2.0 Scope

This SOP applies to all instructors (British Fencing "Core Coach," UKCC Level 1, or In-House Assessed) and participants engaging in fencing activities.

3.0 Location & Ratios

3.1 Location

The activity will primarily take place in the Fencing Tent located near the Main Street toilet block.

- **Venue Requirements:**

- **Size:** Equivalent to a badminton court for a group of 12.
- **Columns:** there are columns in the tent to be aware of – it does help to separate the "Pistes" but is an added obstacle to be aware of.
- **Lighting:** Adequate lighting must be available – Lighting in the tent is available.
- **Zones:** A clear "**Active Zone**" (for fencing) and a "**Safe Zone**" (for rest/waiting) must be identified (Outside the tent in the bench area. No swords are allowed in the Safe Zone.)





3.2 Ratios

- **Standard Ratio:** 1:12 (One Instructor to twelve participants).
- **Maximum Ratio:** 1:15 (With additional adult supervision and Operations Manager approval). (There is only room for 12 to be fencing at one time – will need rotation).

4.0 Equipment

- **Foils (Swords):**
 - Non-electric blades (size 3 or less preferred).
 - Must have a rubber/plastic button in good order (no sharp tips).
 - Must not have exaggerated bends or kinks.
- **Masks:**
 - Steel mesh masks (must not flex over the face).
 - Jackets must be intact with no tears.
 - Must be fitted with a secure retainer/strap.
- **Jackets:**
 - Minimum strength 350N (CEN1 standard).
 - Fastenings must be at the back or on the non-sword arm side.
- **Chest Protectors:** Rigid chest protectors must be provided and **must be worn by females**.
- **Gloves:** Reinforced glove must be worn on the sword hand, covering the cuff of the jacket.

5.0 Safety Briefing & Rules

Mandatory briefing before any equipment is handled.

1. **Masks On:** Participants must **never** point a sword at anyone who is not wearing a mask.
2. **The "Halt" Command:** If the instructor calls "**Halt**" (or Stop), all fencing ceases immediately.
3. **Safe Zone:** Swords must never be taken into the "Safe Zone" / Rest Area.
4. **Non-Sword Hand:** The free arm must be kept in the air or behind the back to prevent injury.
5. **Behaviour:** No brutal hitting or throwing of equipment.



6.0 Session Procedure

6.1 Pre-Session Checks (Instructor)

- **Kit Check:**
 - **Masks:** Check for rust, dents, or weak mesh.
 - **Foils:** Check buttons are secure and blades are not "soft" or dangerously bent.
 - **Jackets/Gloves:** Check for holes or tears.
- **Venue:** Ensure the floor is clear of slip/trip hazards.

6.2 Introduction & Warm-up

1. **Warm-up:** Games like "Stuck in the Mud" or "Coach Says" to get moving.
2. **Safety Brief:** Explain the Safe Zone vs. Active Zone.
3. **Kit Up:** Put on jackets and gloves. **Masks go on last** just before handling swords.

6.3 Phase 1: Technique (No Swords)

- *Teach the basics without weapons first.*
- **Stance:** "On Guard" position.
- **Movement:** Step forward (Advance) and step backward (Retire).
- **Lunge:** Demonstrate the attacking move.

6.4 Phase 2: Introduction to Foils

1. **Masks On:** Ensure everyone has a mask on properly.
2. **Handling:** How to hold the grip.
3. **The Hit:** Demonstrate a light touch (not a heavy hit).
4. **Drills:** "Rock, Paper, Scissors" using footwork.

6.5 Phase 3: Bouting

- **Etiquette:** Teach the Salute (before and after) and the Handshake (after).
- **Free Fencing:**
 - Pairs fence to a set number of hits (e.g., 5).
 - Rotate partners regularly.
 - **Instructor Vigilance:** Monitor for aggression or overheating.

7.0 Session Conclusion

1. **Kit Down:**
 - Foils placed down in the Active Zone first.
 - Then remove masks and jackets in the Safe Zone.
2. **Storage:**
 - Hang jackets to dry (do not bundle them wet).
 - Store masks and foils separately to prevent damage.
 - **Do not** leave damp kit touching steel blades (causes rust).

8.0 Emergency Procedure

1. **Command:** "HALT" or "STOP".
2. **Action:** All fencers stop, masks remain on until safe, swords grounded.
3. **Injury:** Administer First Aid. Contact Duty Manager.

9.0 Risk Assessment

Activity: Fencing

Review Date: January 2027

Assessment by: Martin Kirby – Operations Manager

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls: What are you doing to control hazards?	Risk Rating (with controls)
Being struck by a foil (Injury)	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPE: Masks (steel mesh), Jackets (CEN1/350N), and Gloves worn at all times in Active Zone. • Technique: Free arm kept behind back. • Equipment: Rubber buttons checked on foil tips pre-session. 	Trivial
Chest Injury	Female Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest Protectors: Mandatory use of rigid chest protectors for females. 	Trivial

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls: What are you doing to control hazards?	Risk Rating (with controls)
Overheating	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor monitors group. Allow frequent breaks to remove masks (in Safe Zone). • Hydration breaks encouraged. 	Trivial
Slips, Trips & Falls	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue: Floor checked for hazards/cables. • Area: "Safe Zone" kept clear of kit. Masks removed when walking off the piste to prevent tripping. 	Tolerable
Equipment Failure (Blade Snap)	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection: Daily checks for bends/cracks. Soft blades discarded. • Procedure: If a blade snaps, "HALT" called immediately. 	Trivial
Venue Hazards (Pillars/Space)	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing Tent (or similar) must provide adequate space (badminton court size). • Instructor highlights any structural pillars/obstacles. 	Trivial
Behaviour / Aggression	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Halt" command strictly enforced. • Aggressive fencers removed from the bout immediately. 	Trivial



11.0 Document Control & Review History

Document Creation

Action	Name / Role	Date
Created By	Martin Kirby – Operations Manager	December 2025
Approved By	Martin Kirby, Luke Chance & Oliver Tombs (OM / SI / AOM)	January 2026

Review Log

This document is to be reviewed annually or following any significant incident or change to the activity.

Date of Review	Reviewed By	Comments / Changes Made	Next Review Due
January 2026	MKirby / OTombs / LChance	Document Created (V1.0). Updated location to Fencing Tent. Verified British Fencing PPE standards.	January 2027

