

Risks we think are specific to Fencing

What are the hazards? What can cause harm?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing? What are you doing to control hazards and the chance of someone getting hurt?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk? By following this risk assessment, are the hazards & chances of someone being harmed adequately controlled?
		See Generic Activity Risk Assessment	
Competence of the instructor.	Participants & Instructor, Non participants.	We use appropriate training instructors. British Fencing "Core Coach"; Introduction to Coaching Fencing (UKCC L1).	Trivial if controls are followed
Venue hazards which have not already been identified.	Participants & Instructor, Non-participants	The Outdoor Classroom is the normal venue. (If a different venue is being used, the Operations Manager (January 2025) should formally risk assess the venue.) There are pillars in the venue which participants may bump into. The instructor will highlight these to the participants however if the participant moves forwards/backwards, as per the activity, the pillars will not affect the session. A 'safe area' should be identified for rest periods and no equipment (Swords) should be allowed in this area. An 'Active Zone' should also be identified, where fencing activity takes place. The venue should not be accessible to non-participants. Eg. Barriers & signs should be in place.	Trivial if controls are followed
Equipment failure and poor use of equipment.	Participants & Instructor	The equipment requirements for this session are detailed in the operating procedures. The equipment has been selected by our Technical Adviser or manufactures recommendations. (January 2025) Best coaching practice must be followed. Examples include checking the rubber buttons on foils; ensuring correct PPE is being worn; stopping the session if a foil breaks; when bouts have finished removing masks so people do not trip up.	Trivial if controls are followed

Being struck by a foil – arising from poor group management/ group behaviour	Participants & Instructor, Non-participants	Instructors to: Ensure all spectators remain in the safety area when fencing is taking place. Anyone in the fencing area whilst metal foils are in use must wear a mask, full length trousers and fencing jacket. Participants duelling must wear a glove on their sword hand. Anyone in the fencing area when plastic foils are in use must wear a mask and a long sleeved top. Insist on correct technique, especially the placing of the participants' free arm behind their backs.	Trivial <i>if controls are followed</i>
Over heating	Participants & Instructor	Instructor to monitor participants through the session and allow for adequate breaks if it gets hot. There is an increased risk of participants taking masks off when they are hot.	Trivial <i>if controls are followed</i>
Behaviour issues leading to accidents	Participants & Instructor	The instructor will hold an NGB qualification. The instructor will stop the session if the group, or individuals within the group, are behaving in ways which will affect the safety of others.	Trivial <i>if controls are followed</i>
Inadequate adaption of the session to meet the needs of participants - leading to injury	Participants in with additional needs	Involving disabled participants: Those who have full lower body mobility, (impaired hearing, one hand or arm, etc.) can take part in a normal session but alternative methods of communication may be necessary. Those with lower body mobility issues can fence using chairs to support their body weight. Participants in wheelchairs can fence able bodied opponents who sit on an ordinary chair opposite. Coaches should be aware of setting distance, keeping chair stable and support the fencer may use with their non fencing hand) Those who have difficulty wearing a mask can take part in the mobility practice but they cannot fence with an opponent. Instructors should request additional advice from the Operations Manager (January 2025) who may also consult our Technical Adviser.	Tolerable <i>if controls are followed</i>

Reviews Undertaken: (note template last updated 19/6/2016)	Initial risk assessment complete 10/1/2018 by Richard Irvine Emailed to Dan for review Reviewed by Richard Irvine 3/12/2019; Michael Barrett 2022 & 2023 Richard Irvine Feb 2024, Richard Irvine 2025
Risk Assessment Approved by: <div>Richard Irvine</div>	Date: January 2025

		Potential severity of harm		
		Slightly Harmful 1	Harmful 2	Extremely Harmful 3
Likelihood of harm occurring	Highly unlikely 1	Trivial 1	Tolerable 2	Moderate 3
	Unlikely 2	Tolerable 2	Moderate 4	Substantial 6
	Likely 3	Moderate 3	Substantial 6	Intolerable 9

Slightly harmful: Superficial injuries; minor cuts and bruises; eye irritation from dust, nuisance and irritation (e.g. headaches); ill-health leading to temporary discomfort.

Harmful: Lacerations; burns; concussion; serious sprains; minor fractures, deafness; dermatitis; asthma; work related upper limb disorders; ill-health leading to permanent minor disability.

Extremely harmful: Amputations; major fractures; poisonings; multiple injuries; fatal injuries, occupational cancer; other severely life shortening diseases; acute fatal diseases