



SAFEGUARDING IN MARTIAL ARTS

SAFE PRACTICE POLICY

INTERNATIONAL COMBAT ORGANISATION (ICO)

Martial arts are activities where safe practise is essential to help prevent injury. Children (and at risk adults) are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods may need to be modified as described below:

Club activities:

Warm Ups

All activities should first include a through warm up which is appropriate for the activity taking place. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity.

Training Area

Risk Assessment

Prior to practise the coaching team will check the training area to ensure it is safe and free of sharp/hard objects. Any mats must be checked for suitability, particularly where mats have been joined e.g. jigsaw mats.

A risk assessment must be done for all venues you teach at highlighting any potential risks and any actions to reduce or eliminate that risk.

If any changes have been made to your venue then you should perform a new risk assessment to highlight any new potential risks created by the changes.

Safe Training Practises

The following guidelines must be followed when coaching and teaching.

All training sessions will only run in the presence of a suitably qualified and experienced coach whose responsibility it is to ensure the guidelines are followed:

Spacing

Make sure students have enough space to perform their activities safely and without the risk of injury to themselves or other students on class.

Impact Work

All impact training must be performed with adequate protection e.g. bag glove and Wraps for pad/bag work drills, younger students should be coached on good technique, speed and accuracy rather than power.

Any pads/Bags must be in good order and checked for any defects and taken out of circulation if any defects are found.

All students must be instructed on the correct use of any pads, such things as how to hold the pads at the correct height and angle/direction as well as the need to move towards the strike in certain types of pad drills.

Combat

All sparring is performed with controlled contact relevant to the discipline being used.

Head contact for under 16yrs should be of a light contact nature, student and parental consent should be obtained for any heavy or Full Contact sparring/competition.

Consideration should be given to the need for head contact for 12yrs and under, it is advised that parental consent is acquired for head contact sparring/competition in this age group.

Whilst head contact is allowed within competition and therefore it is recognised that athletes training must prepare them for the eventuality of contact, it is highly recommended that head contact is controlled.

Correct safety equipment relevant to style of combat being performed must be worn.

All sparring equipment must fit correctly and be in good condition with no defects.

Sparring across gender and age group is only allowed in non-competitive formats i.e. when contact is controlled and the emphasis is on learning technical skills, not winning and losing.

Age, size, weight, grade and gender must be considered when sparring is competitive in nature. As a rule, training sessions should be separated into the age groups where possible.

Where mats are not available at your venue then techniques such as SWEEPS should not be permitted in sparring.

Injury

In the event of head injury, first aiders/ medics must be sure to communicate concussion protocols with guardians and athletes during handover. All head injuries and other types of

injuries must be recorded in the accident book and ICO need to be notified ASAP.

Conditioning

When strength & conditioning equipment is used on the class, coaches must ensure all students are briefed on the safe use of each piece of equipment prior to the session starting e.g. in the case of circuits the coaching team will go around each station demonstrating safe use and technique at each station.

Weapons Training

During weapons training there will be good supervision by coaches at all times. All junior and intermediate grades will use safety training weapons only.

Live weapons will only be used by senior grades in a separate class. Live training must not take place in the presence of junior grades.

Self-Defence

During self-defence training, content of what is taught must be appropriate to the age group. Self-defence for children of school age will focus primarily on school yard bullying and stranger awareness.

Warm Downs

All activities should first include a warm down period which is appropriate for the activity taking place. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to stretching those muscle groups that have been stressed.

COMPETITION ACTIVITIES (SAFE PRACTICE)

Competition Type:

Small Inter Club - 1 x Area/Ring (not Full Contact)

Interclub Competition – More than one Area/Ring (not Full Contact)

National level Competition – Multiple Area's/Rings (not Full Contact)

Gala Fight Night Competition – 1 x Ring including Full Contact. 16yrs + and 14/15yrs with Parental consent only!

Small Interclub

Requirements:

Event Insurance cover in place.

Medical cover minimum = 1 x Frec level 3 Medic or higher qualification with first aid equipment on site.

Risk assessment carried out for the event.

Local hospital A&E notified of the event to include date, time, venue and what level of medical cover on site.

Safe Matching must be carried out looking at age, gender, weight, grade, and experience.

Clear rule set and rules meeting prior to event.

Qualified Referee/Judges in place.

Equipment checks carried out.

Parental consent acquired where appropriate.

Interclub Competition

(More than one area/ring)

Requirements: All of the above, only amendment would be to up the number of Medics required to cover the amount of area's being used on the day.

A guide for this would be 1 x less medic to total number of area's so if you had 4 x area's then 3 x Medics required.

If you have 2 x area's min 2 x Medics required!

National Level Competition

Requirements: All of the above, again ratio of medics in line with number of areas plus a lead Paramedic must be added to the team with life sustaining equipment on site.

An Ambulance on site is also recommended as best practice, if there is FULL CONTACT at the event then ambulance is compulsory.

Spectator/ Competitor segregation with use of wrist bands or the like and crowd barriers in place.

SIA badged security on site.

Gala Fight Night Competition (1 x Ring) FULL CONTACT.

Requirements: All of the above plus.

Amateur level fights = Medical cover will step up to Paramedic 1st Responder level minimum of x 2 as team leads with 2 x Frec 3 level Medics in assistance.

Full Ambulance on site.

We recommend 4 x Medics in team so if 2 x Medics have to leave with ambulance then 2 x medics are left and show can continue.

1 x 1st Responder and 1 x Frec level Medic must be left on site.

A – Class/Pro level fights will need a Doctor added to Medical team and delete 1 x Frec 3 Medic to keep the team of 4.

Pre-fight medicals must be carried out on ALL competitors.

Post-fight checks must also be carried out by medic's ringside after each bout.

ICO PLAY SAFE Head injury awareness cards must be handed out to all fighters and Coaching Teams.

Ring check carried out by Referee and Supervisor prior to event start.

A barrier cordon around ring separating Officials from the public gallery.

Full Team of qualified Officials Inc. Referee, Head judge/ Supervisor and two more scoring judges.

Any fighter receiving a TKO or KO during a bout will be issued with a 30 day suspension notice by the team Supervisor, this means they must refrain from sparring and combat for this time period.

This information may also be shared with other Assoc. in the interest of the fighter's safety!

Whether member club activities or competition activities ICO always seeks to use BEST PRACTICE with SAFE PRACTICE.

Above all, safe practice means having a suitably qualified and experienced instructor who will ensure that children are not exposed to the above risks and who can make a training session enjoyable whilst maintaining the discipline essential to learning a Martial Art.