



HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Version 1.2



Version History		
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Version 1.2	Added: Cross-Jurisdiction Compliance, Workplace Environment & Welfare Standards, Work Equipment, Manual Handling & Facility Safety (PUWER/LOLER etc.), Hazardous Substances / COSHH Compliance, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), DSE & Ergonomic Safety (for office/screen-based roles), Communication, Consultation & Worker Engagement, Contractor, Visitor & Third-Party Safety, Documentation, Record-Keeping & Audit	December 2025

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INTRODUCTION

The Independent Gymnastics Association (IGA) is fully committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of everyone involved in our activities — including employees, contractors, volunteers, gymnasts, parents/carers, and visitors. We recognise that while gymnastics brings significant physical, psychological, and social benefits, it also presents inherent risks that must be actively managed.

IGA and all affiliated clubs will provide and maintain safe environments, ensuring that facilities, equipment, working practices, supervision standards, and organisational culture support a high level of safety and well-being for all.



Our commitment includes:

- Preventing injury, ill-health, and unsafe practices through proactive risk management
- Ensuring compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation across the jurisdictions in which we operate
- Promoting a positive health and safety culture, where everyone is encouraged and empowered to identify hazards and raise concerns
- Providing adequate information, instruction, training, and supervision to maintain competence and confidence in safe practice
- Ensuring facilities and equipment are fit for purpose, well-maintained, and aligned with gymnastics safety standards
- Embedding safeguarding and psychological safety principles in all activities
- Consulting staff, volunteers, and members on matters affecting health and safety
- Continuously improving our approach through learning, review, and innovation

Health and safety is the responsibility of every person engaged in IGA activities. We expect full cooperation with our policies, procedures, and safety requirements, so that together we create an environment where participation and performance can thrive safely.

IGA will monitor compliance, investigate incidents, share learning, and work collaboratively with affiliated clubs to maintain the highest standard of safety across the sport.

PURPOSE & SCOPE

This Health and Safety Policy establishes the minimum standards and expectations for creating, maintaining, and continuously improving a safe and supportive environment across all Independent Gymnastics Association (IGA) operations. It sets out the framework for how IGA and all affiliated clubs will meet their legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities to prevent injury and ill-health and promote well-being.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure full compliance with all applicable health, safety, and safeguarding legislation across the jurisdictions in which IGA clubs operate
- Define the organisational arrangements necessary to manage risk effectively
- Prevent accidents, injuries, and work-related ill-health through proactive and systematic control measures
- Embed a culture where health, safety, and welfare are integral to all decision-making and daily practice
- Establish clear expectations for roles, responsibilities, training, and communication to support safe gymnastics participation



Scope

This policy applies to:

- All IGA staff, coaches, self-employed contractors, volunteers, club leadership, and safeguarding officers
- All gymnasts, participants, parents/carers, spectators, and visitors to IGA-affiliated environments
- All facilities, equipment, activities, events, and digital or online services under the IGA remit, including:
 - Gymnastics training sessions of all disciplines and ability levels
 - Competitions, demonstrations, performances, and events
 - Off-site activities, camps, trips, travel arrangements, and temporary venues
- All locations where IGA or its affiliated clubs operate — including England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, and other jurisdictions such as the Channel Islands where applicable

All individuals covered by this policy must work safely, follow instructions, act to protect themselves and others, and report concerns openly and promptly.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Health and Safety Policy, the following definitions apply:

IGA

The national governing organisation responsible for setting and monitoring health, safety, and safeguarding standards across all affiliated clubs and activities.

Affiliated Club

Any gymnastics club, academy, organisation, or centre formally registered with IGA and bound by its policies, rules, and guidance.

Club Leadership

Owners, directors, managers, trustees, or committee members who hold ultimate accountability for implementing and maintaining this policy within their club.

Health & Safety Officer (HSO)

A designated competent person responsible for coordinating health and safety arrangements, maintaining compliance, overseeing incident reporting, and acting as the primary H&S contact within a club.

**Competent Person**

An individual with appropriate training, qualifications, experience, and/or knowledge to provide advice and support on health and safety matters and ensure compliance with legal obligations.

Coach / Session Leader

A qualified and recognised individual delivering gymnastics training, instruction, supervision, or activities under this policy. Includes assistants under supervision.

Gymnast / Participant

Any individual participating in gymnastics activities, regardless of age, membership status, ability, or experience level.

Incident

Any unplanned event that results in or could have resulted in injury, ill-health, damage to property, or unsafe conditions — including near misses.

Serious Incident

An event requiring medical treatment beyond basic first aid; involving hospital attendance; resulting in significant injury (e.g., fractures, head trauma); or requiring notification under statutory reporting regulations.

Hazard

Anything with the potential to cause harm — including equipment, environment, behaviour, or system failures.

Risk

The likelihood that a hazard will cause harm, combined with the severity of the potential outcome.

Risk Assessment

A systematic process for identifying hazards, evaluating associated risks, and implementing proportionate control measures to reduce the risk of harm to an acceptable level.

Safeguarding Concern

Any suspicion, disclosure, behaviour, or sign indicating a child or vulnerable adult may be experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Whistleblowing

Raising concerns about unsafe practices, malpractice, or safeguarding issues in the public interest without fear of retaliation.



Visitor

Any person on IGA premises who is not an employee, volunteer, coach, or registered participant — including parents/carers, contractors, spectators, and venue users.

LEGAL & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The provisions of this policy are underpinned by applicable health, safety, and welfare legislation in all jurisdictions where Independent Gymnastics Association (IGA) and its affiliated clubs operate. This includes (but is not limited to) Great Britain (England, Wales, Scotland), Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland. Where IGA or its clubs operate in other territories (e.g. the Channel Islands), this policy requires compliance with any applicable local health and safety laws and regulations.

Principal Legislation & Regulatory Duties

Great Britain (England, Wales, Scotland)

- The principal statute is the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (“HSWA 1974”), which places a general duty on employers to ensure, “so far as is reasonably practicable,” the health, safety and welfare of their employees at work.
- Under HSWA 1974, employers must also protect others (e.g., contractors, visitors, members of the public) who may be affected by their work.
- Supporting regulations and statutory instruments — such as regulations governing workplace environment, manual handling, use and maintenance of equipment, fire safety, and other specific hazards — augment the general duty.

Northern Ireland

- The equivalent primary legislation is the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978. This Order imposes on every employer a duty to secure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees.
- The Order also mandates preparation (and periodic review) of a written health & safety policy where required, and consultation with employee representatives regarding health and safety measures.
- A range of subordinate regulations apply to specific hazards and activities (e.g., use of work equipment, manual handling, hazardous substances, work at height, display screen equipment, etc.) depending on the nature of premises and activities.

Republic of Ireland

- The governing statute is the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (SHWWA 2005). Under this Act, every employer must ensure — so far as is reasonably practicable — the safety, health and welfare at work of their employees.



- Duties include ensuring safe systems of work, adequate welfare facilities, safe handling/use of substances or equipment, provision of information, instruction, training and supervision of employees, and, where necessary, provision of suitable protective clothing or equipment.
- The Act also covers duties to non-employees (e.g., contractors or other persons present at places of work), in respect of their safety, health, and welfare.
- Complementary regulations such as the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 — covering equipment, hazardous substances, manual handling, work environment, PPE, etc. — may apply, depending on the nature of activities.

General Regulatory Principles & Employer/Organisation Duties

Under all relevant legislation, the following regulatory principles and duties apply (in whatever jurisdiction):

- Undertake risk assessments, identify hazards, and implement adequate measures to control or eliminate risks, in accordance with the principle of “reasonably practicable.”
- Put in place safe systems of work, ensure equipment and facilities are safe, maintained, and adequate for their purpose.
- Provide necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to employees, coaches, volunteers, and others to ensure safety.
- Ensure appropriate welfare facilities (e.g., sanitary facilities, safe access/egress, safe environment) where required by regulations.
- Provide and maintain personal protective equipment (PPE) where needed and ensure safe use of articles, substances, work equipment, structures, and activities.
- Prepare and maintain a written health & safety policy and safety statement where required (or where good practice dictates), and ensure it is communicated to all relevant persons.
- Consult with employees or their representatives regarding health & safety arrangements, and enable cooperation in establishing and reviewing measures.
- Extend relevant duties of care to non-employees (e.g., contractors, visitors, participants, members of public) where their health and safety may be affected by IGA’s operations.

Enforcement & Compliance

- In Great Britain, enforcement of HSWA 1974 and regulations is carried out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), or relevant local authorities depending on sector or premises type, supported by Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs) and guidance.
- In Northern Ireland, enforcement is carried out by the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI) and in some cases by local district councils depending on the premise and activity.
- In the Republic of Ireland, the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) enforces compliance with SHWWA 2005 and accompanying regulations.



Application to IGA

By adopting this policy, IGA and all affiliated clubs commit to:

- Recognising and applying whichever national or local legislation is applicable to the venue, activity, or jurisdiction in which they operate
- Meeting or exceeding the minimum legal requirements described above — including conducting risk assessments, maintaining safe facilities and equipment, training, supervision, welfare and PPE, and written safety statements/policies where required
- Ensuring duty-of-care extends beyond staff to all participants, volunteers, contractors, parents/carers, visitors and others potentially affected by IGA activities
- Keeping abreast of legislative updates, regulatory guidance or changes in the jurisdictions in which IGA operates, and updating internal policy, procedures, and practices accordingly

CROSS-JURISDICTION COMPLIANCE

IGA recognises that affiliated clubs may operate in multiple jurisdictions, including but not limited to England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and the Channel Islands. As legal and regulatory frameworks differ between these territories, all clubs must ensure that health and safety arrangements comply with the specific legal requirements applicable to their location, as well as the standards contained within this policy.

IGA and its affiliated clubs commit to:

- Identifying and complying with all relevant national and local legislation, regulations, and statutory guidance governing health, safety, safeguarding, and welfare in each jurisdiction
- Ensuring that local procedures and risk controls reflect jurisdiction-specific duties of care, enforcement expectations, reporting requirements, and regulatory oversight arrangements
- Maintaining up-to-date awareness of jurisdictional changes in legislation or best practice that may affect safety governance
- Seeking expert advice where required to verify compliance and ensure alignment where operations cross national boundaries
- Implementing this policy as a minimum standard, while adopting additional measures where required by local law or specialised facility/equipment standards
- Ensuring policies and operating procedures are reviewed and updated where clubs open new sites or expand into new territories
- Documenting responsibility for maintaining jurisdictional compliance within club leadership and the designated Health & Safety Officer role



Where inconsistencies exist between IGA policy and local statutory requirements, the higher standard must always be applied. All IGA-affiliated clubs have a responsibility to notify IGA Head Office of any local conditions or legislative changes that could impact compliance or require policy adjustment.

This approach ensures that IGA maintains a consistent level of safety and safeguarding excellence across all operational regions, while meeting the legal obligations specific to each jurisdiction.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective health and safety management requires clearly defined responsibilities at every level of the organisation. All individuals engaged in IGA activities must work together to prevent injury, protect welfare, and promote a culture of safety and safeguarding.

IGA Central Management

IGA retains overall accountability for setting, reviewing, and improving health and safety standards across all affiliated clubs and activities. IGA will:

- Establish and maintain this Health & Safety Policy, associated guidance, and safety frameworks
- Provide training, support resources, templates, and expert advice
- Monitor compliance through reporting, audits, and club engagement
- Lead or support investigations into major incidents or emerging risks
- Liaise with statutory and regulatory bodies as required

Club Leadership

Owners, directors, committee members and managers are responsible for local implementation of this policy. They must:

- Ensure compliance with all legal duties and IGA standards
- Appoint a competent Health & Safety Officer (HSO) in writing
- Provide adequate staffing, equipment, financial resources, and training
- Verify that safeguarding arrangements are fully integrated into club operations
- Promote a positive culture where health and safety is prioritised in every decision
- Review health & safety performance and incident trends regularly

Health & Safety Officer (HSO)

The HSO is the club's primary point of contact for safety coordination. Their responsibilities include:

- Maintaining current and comprehensive risk assessments, updated at least annually and when changes occur



- Ensuring timely reporting, investigation, and recording of all incidents, near misses, and hazards
- Coordinating staff/volunteer training and competency records
- Monitoring equipment safety checks, facility inspections, and maintenance actions
- Providing ongoing safety communication, advice, and escalation where required
- Liaising with IGA and external authorities on serious incidents and compliance matters

Coaches & Session Leaders

Coaches are directly responsible for safe activity delivery. They must:

- Follow approved risk assessments, supervision ratios, and safe coaching practice
- Complete pre-session equipment and area checks
- Intervene immediately where conditions are unsafe
- Report concerns or incidents without delay
- Model professional behaviour and uphold safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensure gymnasts only use equipment under supervision and within safe ability limits

All Staff & Volunteers

Everyone working on behalf of IGA must:

- Take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others
- Follow all safety procedures, briefings, and signage
- Attend mandatory training and refreshers
- Report hazards, unsafe behaviours, or health concerns promptly
- Support and contribute to a culture of continuous improvement

Gymnasts, Parents & Visitors

Everyone participating in or attending activities must:

- Comply with guidance from coaches and safety signage
- Wear appropriate clothing and remove jewellery where required
- Report potential hazards, injuries, or concerns immediately
- Provide up-to-date medical information relevant to participation
- Support IGA's approach to respectful and safe behaviour

RISK ASSESSMENT AND HAZARD CONTROL

Effective risk management is essential to ensuring that all gymnastics activities are conducted in a safe, controlled, and responsible manner. Risk assessments enable hazards to be identified, risks to be evaluated, and appropriate measures to be implemented to reduce harm and prevent incidents.



IGA and its affiliated clubs must ensure that risk assessments are:

- Suitable and sufficient for the activity, environment, and participants
- Conducted by a competent person
- Reviewed regularly and updated when changes occur
- Communicated clearly to all relevant staff and volunteers

Types of Risk Assessment Required

Each club must maintain a portfolio of written risk assessments tailored to its operations, covering:

1. **Facility Risk Assessments** - All areas including training spaces, entrances/exits, changing rooms, toilets, viewing areas, and equipment storage.
2. **Activity and Discipline-Specific Assessments** - Covering different class types (e.g., recreational, squad, disability sessions) and gymnastics disciplines (artistic, acrobatic, rhythmic, adults, preschool etc.).
3. **Event and Travel Risk Assessments** - For competitions, showcases, camps, or temporary venues, completed in advance and communicated to staff.
4. **Individual/Participant Risk Assessments** - Where a gymnast's medical condition, disability, or identified vulnerability requires additional safeguards.

The Risk Assessment Process

All risk assessments must follow this structured approach:

1. **Hazard identification** — recognising anything that could cause harm (equipment faults, slippery floors, inadequate supervision, fatigue, behavioural risks).
2. **Risk evaluation** — assessing likelihood and severity, prioritising those with the highest risk.
3. **Implementation of control measures** — eliminating hazards wherever possible or applying layered controls such as:
 - Equipment maintenance
 - Engineering controls (padding, spotting blocks, barriers)
 - Administrative controls (ratios, training adaptations, staggered traffic flow)
 - PPE where appropriate
4. **Communication** — informing individuals of risks and control measures
5. **Monitoring** — ensuring measures remain effective and appropriate
6. **Review** — annually as a minimum, or immediately following changes or incidents

Dynamic (on-the-spot) risk assessment is also expected by coaches, especially in fast-changing environments such as gymnastics activity delivery.



All staff, volunteers, gymnasts and parents share responsibility for identifying and reporting hazards quickly to the Health & Safety Officer or Club Leadership.

Reported hazards must be assessed promptly, and temporary safety controls must be applied until a full review can be completed.

Failure to report known hazards is a breach of safety responsibilities.

Continuous Hazard Control Improvement

To support continuous safety improvement, clubs must:

- Record hazards, near misses, and incidents for analysis
- Review patterns and root causes
- Update training, procedures, and risk assessments accordingly
- Share learnings to prevent recurrence

This approach ensures that risk control remains live, proactive, and adaptive.

Key Enhancements Introduced in This Revision

Improvement	Benefit
Clearer assessment categories	Easier compliance & documentation
Dynamic risk assessment recognised	Reflects real sport delivery
Greater participant inclusion focus	Improves safeguarding & inclusivity
Stronger reporting culture expectations	Supports prevention

WORKPLACE ENVIROMENT & WELFARE STANDARDS

IGA and all affiliated clubs commit to providing and maintaining safe, healthy, and appropriate environments and welfare-facilities for all staff, volunteers, gymnasts, visitors and other users of our premises. This includes ensuring that all buildings, workspaces, and common areas meet required standards for environment, hygiene, comfort, access, and maintenance.

Scope & General Principles

- **All facilities used by IGA** — training halls, club premises, changing rooms, offices, communal areas, toilets, spectator/viewing areas, storage and equipment rooms — must meet the requirements described in this section.



- Facilities and environment shall be designed and maintained so as to be accessible and safe for everyone, including children, disabled persons, volunteers, parents/carers, and visitors.
- Environmental and welfare standards must comply with applicable legislation (see Legal & Regulatory Framework) and reflect good practice relevant to gymnastics and sport facilities.
- Clubs must carry out regular inspections and maintenance to ensure continued compliance, and correct any hazards or defects without unnecessary delay.

Environmental Standards & Facility Requirements

To meet legal and good-practice obligations, clubs must ensure the following minimum standards (where applicable):

1. Ventilation, Air Quality & Temperature

- Enclosed indoor spaces must have a sufficient supply of fresh or purified air (natural ventilation or mechanical systems as needed).
- Working spaces should be maintained at a reasonable and comfortable temperature, especially when used for gymnastics training or prolonged occupancy. According to guidance, a minimum of ~16°C indoors is recommended under normal working conditions (or ~13°C for strenuous activity, where appropriate).
- Ventilation and heating systems must be regularly checked and maintained to ensure effectiveness and avoid stale air, condensation, or excessive humidity.

Lighting (Natural and Artificial)

- Workspaces — including halls, training areas, offices, and common areas — must have suitable and sufficient lighting so that tasks can be carried out safely and comfortably. Natural light should be used where possible; artificial lighting must be adequate and properly maintained.
- Emergency lighting must be provided — especially in areas where there is a risk to safety if lighting fails (e.g. stairways, emergency exits).
- Lighting should be maintained, cleaned, and checked regularly to ensure fixtures remain functional, covers intact, and illumination levels sufficient for safe movement and activity.

Space, Layout & Movement

- Work and activity areas must be of sufficient size to allow safe movement, appropriate spacing for equipment, safe flow of people, and safe ingress/egress. Overcrowding or cramped spaces must be avoided.
- Floors, traffic routes, stairs, doors, gates, windows, and transparent/glazed panels must be maintained in a safe condition, kept free of obstacles, slip or trip hazards, trailing cables, debris, or broken floor surfaces.
- Safe access and egress points must be clearly defined and maintained — especially in halls, change rooms, storage areas, and in event of emergency or evacuation.



Cleanliness, Hygiene & Waste Management

- All premises — including floors, walls, ceilings, furniture, fittings — must be kept clean, maintained, and in a condition that supports hygiene and safety.
- Adequate waste disposal containers must be provided and emptied regularly. Spillages or waste build-up must be cleared promptly.
- For venues with changing facilities, showers, washrooms or similar amenities, provision must include clean and accessible sanitary conveniences, running water (hot and/or cold as required), soap or appropriate cleaning agents, hand-drying or alternative drying facilities.

Welfare Facilities — Toilets, Washing, Rest & Refreshment

- Provide an adequate number of toilets and washbasins for users expected to use the facilities — ensuring that queues are avoided and facilities meet demand.
- Where appropriate (e.g. for extended sessions, camps, clubs with many participants), provide separate changing rooms, toilets, washing/changing facilities, and, if necessary, shower facilities — especially when work involves physical activity or potential exposure to dirt, sweat, or hazardous materials.
- Provide access to safe, clean drinking water at all times.
- Provide somewhere clean and suitable for rest and, when required, eating or rehydration during breaks (especially in longer sessions or events), with opportunity for staff / participants to sit, rest, and hydrate.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Facilities and environment must be designed or adapted so that they are accessible and suitable for people with disabilities or special needs (including accessible toilets, ramps, accessible routes, accessible changing / washing / sanitary facilities).
- Safety, welfare and hygiene provisions apply equally to all persons — staff, participants, coaches, volunteers, visitors — regardless of age, ability or status.

Maintenance, Inspection & Continuous Review

To uphold these standards, clubs must commit to:

- Conduct regular environmental inspections (lighting, ventilation, surface condition, flooring, hygiene, welfare-facilities) on a scheduled basis.
- Maintain a maintenance log for premises, equipment, fixtures (lights, ventilation, plumbing), welfare-facilities (toilets, washrooms, showers) and repair issues — and address defects promptly.
- Review welfare and environmental facilities as part of periodic risk-assessment reviews (or when usage or occupancy changes, e.g. increased membership, new classes, events).



- Consult with staff, coaches, users, and other stakeholders about environment and welfare issues — encourage reporting of hazards, defects, discomfort, or welfare concerns.
- Ensure that welfare and environmental standards meet or exceed any relevant legal/regulatory requirements for the jurisdiction in which the facility operates.

Responsibilities under this Section

- **Club Leadership & Management** — ensure buildings/facilities meet standards; provide resources for maintenance; ensure inspections and remedial work; ensure welfare facilities are adequate and accessible.
- **Health & Safety Officer (HSO)** — coordinate regular inspections, log maintenance, schedule reviews, ensure hygiene and welfare compliance, report defects, coordinate remedial actions.
- **Coaches / Session Leaders / Staff** — report hazards or defects (floor surfaces, lighting, ventilation, hygiene), ensure safety during activity, ensure participants use welfare facilities appropriately, support cleanliness and hygiene standards.
- **All Users** (gymnasts, volunteers, visitors, parents/carers) — use facilities responsibly, report hazards or welfare concerns, cooperate with hygiene and safety instructions.

WORK EQUIPMENT, MANUAL HANDLING & FACILITY SAFETY

GA and all affiliated clubs must ensure that all work equipment, gymnastics apparatus, and facility fixtures are safe, maintained, and used correctly to prevent injury and ill-health. This includes safe storage, handling, installation, setup, manual movement, and supervision of equipment and apparatus.

Work Equipment & Apparatus Safety

The term “work equipment” includes all gymnastics equipment (e.g., beams, bars, vault tables, trampolines, crash mats), spotting blocks, office and cleaning equipment, and any tools used within facilities.

IGA-affiliated clubs must ensure:

- All equipment is fit for purpose, meets safety standards, and is used only as intended
- Gymnastics apparatus complies with FIG safety and equipment norms where applicable
- Only trained and competent staff assemble, adjust, or relocate major apparatus
- Equipment is installed correctly, with appropriate clearance and safety zones
- Loose equipment (e.g., boxes, benches, portable items) is stored safely to prevent collapse, obstruction, or trips
- Equipment is not modified, adapted, or repaired without proper approval and assessment



⚠ Unsafe, damaged, or incomplete equipment must be immediately withdrawn from use, labelled clearly, and reported to the Health & Safety Officer.

Inspection, Maintenance & Servicing

Each club must maintain an inspection schedule covering:

- Daily pre-use checks by coaches before activity
- Documented periodic inspections by the Health & Safety Officer
- Annual servicing by competent external providers (where required)

Inspection records must be retained and used to plan repair or replacement.

Areas to check include:

- Frame integrity and fastenings
- Stability and support structures
- Surfaces, padding and springs
- Wear, tearing or compression in mats
- Loose, sharp, or protruding components

Manual Handling & Equipment Movement

Moving and positioning large equipment can cause musculoskeletal injuries if done incorrectly.

Therefore:

- Manual handling risks must be assessed and reduced
- Only trained individuals may move large or heavy apparatus
- Use appropriate team lifting or mechanical aids where needed
- Clear walkways must be maintained during equipment transitions
- Staff must consider the safety of gymnasts and public when moving apparatus

Techniques must consider:

- Posture (avoid bending/twisting)
- Load stability and grip
- Path of travel and visibility
- Coordination with teammates

Where children are involved in assisting, supervision must be close and role assignments safe and age-appropriate.



Facility Fixtures & Structural Safety

Clubs must ensure that building elements and fixtures do not present hazards. This includes:

- Floors must be level, clean, dry, and well-maintained to reduce slips/trips/falls
- Walls, radiators, beams, and obstructions must be padded or guarded where collision risk is present
- Heating/cooling and ventilation systems must not create hazards (e.g., hot surfaces, restricted airflow)
- Mirrors, glass, and windows must be shatter-safe or protected
- Storage areas must be secure, organised, and not overloaded

Emergency exits and routes must remain unobstructed at all times.

Lifting & Height-Related Safety

- Any work at height (e.g., installing suspended equipment, adjusting high bars, rigging) must be performed by trained, competent persons using appropriate equipment
- Safe access (e.g. step ladders, platforms) must be used as designed
- Free-climbing on structures is not permitted
- Crash mats must be used when working above floor level where fall risk exists

Responsibilities Under This Section

Role	Responsibility
Leadership/Management	Provide safe, compliant equipment and facility infrastructure; ensure maintenance & servicing resources
Health & Safety Officer	Maintain equipment logs, checks, defect reports, manuals, and servicing records
Coaches & Session Leaders	Conduct pre-session checks; ensure safe setup and supervision; report hazards immediately
Staff/Volunteers	Follow manual-handling guidance and training when moving equipment
All Users	Avoid misuse of equipment and report defects or hazards



Key Advantages of This Updated Section

Enhancement	Benefit
Aligns with equipment and manual handling legislation	Stronger legal compliance
Adds inspection and servicing requirements	Prevents failures and injuries
Specific to gymnastics equipment	Higher sport-specific safety
Clear role accountability	Better operational control

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES / COSHH COMPLIANCE

This section applies where IGA-affiliated clubs use, store, handle or dispose of substances that might be hazardous to health (e.g. cleaning chemicals, disinfectants, maintenance substances, aerosols, solvents, dust, etc.).

Purpose

- To protect all staff, volunteers, gymnasts, visitors and other users from health risks arising from hazardous substances.
- To ensure compliance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) — and equivalent legislation/regulations in jurisdictions outside Great Britain where the club operates.
- To ensure safe handling, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous substances, minimising exposure and preventing ill-health or incidents.

Key Obligations & Controls

1. Identification & Risk Assessment

- Clubs must identify all hazardous substances present (cleaning agents, disinfectants, adhesives, paints, solvents, sprays, aerosols, bodily fluid disinfectants, etc.).
- A written COSHH (or equivalent) risk assessment must be carried out before any substance is used, stored or handled.
- The assessment should consider: the hazardous properties of the substance; the tasks or activities involving it; the number of people potentially exposed (staff, volunteers, gymnasts, visitors); routes of exposure (inhalation, skin contact, splashes, etc.); storage and disposal; and any special controls needed.

2. Prevention or Control of Exposure - Wherever reasonably practicable, the use of hazardous substances should be avoided or substituted with a safer alternative (less hazardous product, lower toxicity, safer process).



- If substitution is not possible, exposures must be controlled to a safe level using a hierarchy of controls: engineering controls (ventilation, enclosed handling), process controls (safe handling procedures, limiting quantities used), organisational controls (planned use, scheduling, restricted access), and — only if needed — provision of appropriate PPE (e.g. gloves, aprons, eye protection, masks).
- Ensure that control measures are properly used, and that all persons handling substances understand and follow instructions.

Safe Storage, Handling & Disposal

- Hazardous substances must be stored in a designated, secure location — ideally locked or out of reach of children, gymnasts or unauthorised persons.
- Storage must respect manufacturer instructions (e.g. away from heat, direct sunlight, moisture, incompatible substances), and containers must be kept sealed, labelled clearly, and in good condition.
- Waste or leftover substances, including contaminated materials, spill residues or disposables, must be disposed of safely and in accordance with local regulations. Spill kits or containment materials should be provided when relevant.

Information, Instruction & Training

- Before any substance is used, all relevant persons (staff, volunteers, cleaners, maintenance personnel) must be given information and instruction about the hazards, safe handling, storage, disposal, emergency procedures, and use of control measures/PPE.
- Safety Data Sheets (SDS) or manufacturer's hazard information must be obtained for every hazardous substance and made accessible in the club (storage areas, cleaning cupboards, maintenance rooms).

Health Surveillance and Monitoring (if required)

- For certain hazardous substances (e.g. those that may cause respiratory illness, skin conditions, allergies, repeated exposure risks), clubs should consider whether health surveillance or additional monitoring is needed.
- Records of usage, exposure, incidents, and health monitoring must be maintained and reviewed regularly.

Emergency Procedures & Incident Management

- Procedures must be in place for spills, accidental exposure, ingestion, inhalation, splashes or other hazardous substance incidents, including first aid measures, spill containment, decontamination, and reporting.



- Clear signage should be used in areas where hazardous substances are stored or used; appropriate warnings should be displayed where needed (e.g. “COSHH - hazardous chemicals stored here”, “No unauthorised access”) and access restricted to authorised personnel.

Review & Documentation

- COSHH risk assessments and control procedures must be reviewed at least annually, or whenever there is a change in substances used, working practices, premises, or after an incident.
- Maintain a COSHH register (or equivalent log) listing all hazardous substances, their SDS, risk assessments, storage location, responsible person, and usage records. This ensures traceability and oversight.

Responsibilities

- Club Leadership / Management — ensure resources, policies and adequate supervision are provided; implement COSHH procedures; ensure safe storage and disposal; allocate responsibility.
- Health & Safety Officer (HSO) — maintain COSHH register; conduct and review risk assessments; ensure SDS and documentation are up to date; monitor compliance; coordinate training and emergency arrangements.
- All Staff / Volunteers / Maintenance Personnel / Cleaners — follow the COSHH procedures strictly; use PPE and control measures correctly; handle, store and dispose of substances safely; report concerns or incidents immediately.
- Coaches, Users, Visitors — where relevant (e.g. cleaning chemicals in common areas), follow instructions, avoid unauthorised access to substance storage, report leaks/spills/hazards.

Application in a Gymnastics / Sports Club Context

In the context of IGA and affiliated gymnastics clubs, hazardous substances may include:

- Cleaning and disinfectant agents for mats, apparatus, changing rooms, toilets
- Detergents used for uniforms or kit cleaning
- Maintenance products (e.g. lubricants, adhesives, paints), where equipment is maintained or repaired
- First-aid or hygiene products involving antiseptics, cleaning solutions
- Sanitising sprays or aerosol products used for hygiene or cleaning

Given that many users include children, vulnerable adults, and frequent turnover of participants (gymnasts, parents, visitors), strict adherence to COSHH procedures and safe storage/access restrictions is essential.



PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) may be required where risks cannot be adequately controlled by other means. IGA and its affiliated clubs will ensure that appropriate PPE is provided, maintained, and used correctly in accordance with applicable legislation across the jurisdictions in which we operate.

Purpose

To ensure that:

- PPE is used as the last line of defence when risks cannot be eliminated or reduced by engineering or administrative controls
- Staff, volunteers, and participants are protected from residual hazards during activities, cleaning, maintenance, or emergency response
- PPE selection, use, and upkeep meet recognised safety standards

When PPE Must Be Used

PPE may be required for:

- Cleaning and disinfecting equipment and facilities (e.g. gloves, masks/goggles if using sprays or chemicals)
- First aid response (e.g. gloves, CPR masks/shields)
- Handling or disposing of bodily fluids or contaminated materials
- Setting up, inspecting, or maintaining equipment where injury hazards exist
- Manual handling of heavy or awkward items (e.g. grip-improving gloves)
- Certain environmental risks (e.g. cold outdoor venues, construction areas)

PPE must never be used as a substitute for safer alternatives when risks can be eliminated or controlled more effectively.

Selection & Provision of PPE

- Clubs must conduct a PPE needs assessment to determine where PPE is required
- PPE must be:
 - ✓ Appropriate for the task and hazard
 - ✓ Correctly fitted to the user (including children where relevant)
 - ✓ Compatible with other PPE or equipment being worn
 - ✓ Certified and in good condition
- PPE must be provided free of charge to those who need it
- Disposable PPE must be replaced after single use or contamination



Training, Use & Supervision

All persons required to wear PPE must be:

- Trained in correct fitting, use, safe removal, and disposal
- Instructed on when and how PPE must be worn
- Supervised to ensure compliance during activities where PPE is mandatory

No one should undertake a task requiring PPE without the correct protective items.

Maintenance & Storage

- PPE must be checked before each use and stored hygienically
- Damaged, contaminated, or defective PPE must be removed from service immediately
- Maintenance records must be kept where relevant (e.g. reusable masks, specialist equipment)

Hygiene & Disposal

- Used PPE must be disposed of in designated waste containers
- Clubs must provide adequate facilities for handwashing or sanitising after PPE removal
- Where contamination has occurred (e.g. bodily fluid spill), appropriate decontamination must follow club and public-health guidance

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Club Leadership & Management	Provide suitable PPE, ensure availability & funding
Health & Safety Officer	Conduct PPE assessments, maintain records, ensure training
Coaches & Staff	Use PPE correctly, report issues, model safe behaviour
First Aiders & Cleaners	Follow enhanced precautions and disposal protocols
All Users	Comply with PPE instructions where required

PPE in a Gymnastics Context

While gymnastics does not routinely require protective clothing or helmets, PPE is integral in:

- Hygiene control
- First aid incidents
- High-risk manual handling



- Emergency response
- Maintenance / cleaning activities

For all other risks, safe practice, supervision, and equipment standards remain the primary form of protection.

DSE & ERGONOMIC SAFETY (FOR OFFICE/SCREEN-BASED ROLES)

While gymnastics environments are primarily activity-based, many staff, volunteers and contractors carry out administrative duties using computers or other display screen equipment (DSE). Poor workstation design, posture, screen glare, or prolonged static positions can lead to musculoskeletal disorders, eye strain, headaches and fatigue. This section ensures appropriate protections for anyone engaging in screen-based work.

Purpose

To ensure that all individuals who regularly use DSE as part of their role:

- Work in ergonomically safe environments
- Are protected from risks of discomfort and long-term injury
- Receive appropriate information, assessment, and support

Who This Applies To

This applies to anyone who:

- Uses a computer, laptop, tablet or other screen-based device for one hour or more per day as part of their work
- Completes administrative duties on-site, remotely, or from home
- Handles club management systems, safeguarding logs, incident reporting, or communications

Workstation Setup & Assessment

IGA-affiliated clubs must:

- Conduct DSE assessments for all regular screen users
- Ensure each workstation meets minimum ergonomic standards
- Provide appropriate adjustments where required

A safe workstation includes:

- A stable, adjustable chair with back support
- Screen at eye height and an arm's length away
- Keyboard and mouse within easy reach, without wrist strain
- Feet flat on the floor or on a footrest
- Adequate lighting and reduced screen glare
- Sufficient desk space for equipment and documents



Adjustments may include: monitor risers, keyboard trays, wrist supports, additional lighting, or alternative seating solutions.

Work Routines, Breaks & Behaviour

- Screen-based work should be interspersed with short, frequent breaks — ideally a few minutes every hour
- Promote regular posture changes and movement
- Encourage staff to raise concerns at the early stages of discomfort

Remote / Home-Working Considerations

Where remote administrative work occurs:

- Risk assessment must cover home workstation arrangements
- Clubs must provide guidance and reasonable support for safe setup
- DSE safety principles apply equally off-site

Training & Information

IGA-affiliated clubs must ensure:

- All DSE users receive training on safe workstation setup and working posture
- Users know how to adjust equipment properly
- Users understand how to report issues such as discomfort or equipment concerns

Monitoring, Review & Symptoms Reporting

- DSE assessments should be reviewed at least annually or when workstations change
- Staff are encouraged to report early signs of discomfort, strain or fatigue
- Adjustments must be implemented promptly

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Club Leadership	Provide compliant workstations and ergonomic equipment
HSO / Admin Leads	Conduct and record DSE assessments; monitor compliance
Staff/Volunteers	Use good posture, take breaks, report concerns immediately

Commitment

IGA acknowledges that administrative work is critical to safe club operations. We will proactively ensure that workstation arrangements support comfort, productivity, and long-term musculoskeletal health, wherever work takes place.



TRAINING, SUPERVISION, AND COMPETENCY

Ensuring that all individuals involved in IGA activities are appropriately trained, supervised, and competent is fundamental to preventing injury and promoting a positive culture of safety. Training must be proportionate to each role, activity, and risk level.

IGA and all affiliated clubs will ensure that:

- Everyone understands their health and safety responsibilities and how to carry them out
- Staff, coaches, and volunteers receive adequate and timely training to maintain safe practice
- Supervision arrangements ensure gymnasts and users are always safe and supported

This commitment supports legal compliance and helps create a professional and safe gymnastics environment.

Mandatory Training Requirements

The following training must be completed by staff and volunteers, as appropriate to their duties:

- **Health and Safety Induction** for all new team members before duties begin
- **Safeguarding & Child Protection** training, refreshed annually for those working with children/vulnerable adults
- **Emergency First Aid** — at least one qualified first aider must be present during all activities
- **Fire Safety & Evacuation** awareness training
- **Manual Handling training** for anyone moving equipment or lifting loads
- **Role-specific qualifications** (e.g., recognised coaching qualifications for coaches)

Refresher training schedules must be maintained, monitored, and actioned proactively.

Competence Expectations

A competent person is someone with the necessary skills, knowledge, training, and experience to perform their role safely.

GA clubs will:

- Confirm that coaches delivering sessions hold approved and current coaching qualifications
- Ensure volunteers do not operate outside their competence
- Validate additional training/qualifications when roles or responsibilities expand
- Require direct supervision of trainees or unqualified assistants

Competence will be monitored through observations, reviews, and training records.



Supervision Standards

Clubs must ensure:

- Appropriate supervision ratios based on age, ability, activity and safeguarding requirements
- Coaches maintain constant line-of-sight supervision where reasonably practicable
- Gymnasts are never left unsupervised in training or changing areas
- Additional supervision is provided during high-risk skills or busy periods

Where staffing levels change unexpectedly, session plans must be adjusted to maintain safe supervision.

Volunteer Induction & Training

All volunteers must complete an induction programme that includes:

- Health & safety expectations
- Emergency procedures and communication routes
- Safeguarding responsibilities
- How to report concerns or incidents

Volunteers must only engage in tasks for which they have been properly trained.

Record Keeping

IGA clubs must maintain:

- Centralised training matrices for all staff and volunteers
- Expiry alerts for qualifications (e.g., First Aid)
- Records of inductions, CPD, refresher training, and competency evaluations

Training records must be reviewed regularly to ensure all personnel remain up to date.

Responsibilities:

Role	Accountability
Club Leadership	Ensure funding, access, and time for required training
Health & Safety Officer	Maintain training records, coordinate refreshers and compliance checks
Coaches	Maintain qualifications, model safe behaviour, supervise responsibly
Volunteers / Staff	Follow instruction, attend training, work within competence



COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION & WORKER ENGAGEMENT

IGA recognises that effective communication and meaningful engagement are essential to maintaining a positive health and safety culture. Everyone involved in delivering or taking part in gymnastics has a valuable role in identifying hazards and helping improve safety practices.

IGA-affiliated clubs will ensure that:

- Information about health, safety, and safeguarding is accessible to all
- Staff and volunteers are consulted on matters that affect their safety
- Gymnasts, parents/carers, and visitors have clear routes for feedback and reporting

A collaborative and open approach ensures that decision-making is informed by those closest to the activities and environments involved.

Communication of Safety Information

Clubs must:

- Clearly communicate relevant health & safety requirements, roles and emergency procedures to staff, gymnasts, and visitors
- Share updates on policy changes, new risks, training opportunities and lessons learned from incidents
- Use multiple communication methods (e.g., briefings, signage, email bulletins, digital platforms) to ensure information reaches all users

Safety information must be provided in language and formats suitable to the individuals involved, including young people and those with additional needs.

Worker Consultation

Clubs must:

- Consult employees, volunteers and representatives before making decisions that impact their health or safety
- Encourage input during risk assessments, procedure reviews and issue resolution
- Ensure staff feel comfortable raising concerns without fear of blame or retaliation
- Hold regular safety discussions, staff forums, or debriefs where feedback can be shared

Where required by law or good practice, worker consultation must include representation mechanisms.



Encouraging Reporting & Ideas for Improvement

To foster continuous improvement, clubs must:

- Provide clear reporting routes for hazards, near misses and concerns (including anonymous options where appropriate)
- Acknowledge and respond to reports and suggestions in a timely manner
- Encourage gymnasts and parents to speak up if they see something unsafe
- Treat all concerns seriously and escalate when necessary

A positive reporting culture is central to proactive risk management.

Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Key Responsibilities
Club Leadership	Ensure open communication structures exist and are maintained
Health & Safety Officer	Lead engagement activities, capture feedback, escalate concerns
Coaches & Staff	Communicate risks, listen to feedback, encourage reporting
Volunteers, Gymnasts, Parents & Visitors	Speak up about safety issues, follow advice and signage

INCIDENT REPORTING AND MANAGEMENT

Prompt reporting, response, and investigation of incidents is essential to safeguarding gymnasts and staff, reducing future risk, and ensuring that legal obligations are met. All incidents, near misses, and unsafe occurrences must be recorded and acted upon without delay.

IGA-affiliated clubs must create a culture where reporting concerns is encouraged, supported, and free from blame.

What Must Be Reported?

The following must be reported and documented:

- Injuries — including minor injuries, head impacts, fractures, soft-tissue injuries, and any incident requiring first aid or external medical assistance
- Ill-health events (e.g., asthma attacks, fainting)



- Near misses — unplanned events that could have caused harm but did not
- Equipment or facility failures
- Safeguarding concerns or injuries with safeguarding elements

No matter how minor, every incident provides valuable learning.

Immediate Response

When an incident occurs:

1. Ensure safety of participants — stop activity and secure the area
2. A qualified first aider must provide initial treatment immediately
3. Call emergency services when needed (e.g., suspected fractures, head trauma, unconsciousness)
4. Contact parent/carer for any incident involving a minor

If there is a serious hazard, remove defective equipment from use and isolate the area.

Recording Requirements

A formal IGA Incident Report Form must be completed within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

Where a minor is involved, their parent or guardian must be informed and asked to co-sign the report.

Incident records must include:

- Names and roles of those involved
- Date, time, and location
- Description of events leading to the incident
- Nature of injury or damage
- Equipment or environmental factors
- Immediate action taken
- Names of witnesses
- Any safeguarding indicators

All records must be stored securely and kept for a minimum of 6 years.

Reporting Serious Incidents to Authorities

Clubs must notify IGA Head Office within 24 hours for:

- Hospital treatments
- Serious head injuries
- Potential insurance claims
- Safeguarding-related injuries / concerns



Where required, serious incidents must be reported externally (e.g., to HSE under RIDDOR for Great Britain, HSENI/ROI equivalents).

Insurance providers must also be notified when necessary.

Investigation & Root Cause Analysis

After initial response:

- Investigate the incident to identify underlying causes
- Review environmental conditions, equipment safety, supervision standards, and adherence to risk assessments
- Interview involved parties and witnesses if needed
- Identify corrective and preventive measures
- Share learning with coaches and volunteers to prevent recurrence

Incident data must be monitored for trends to guide ongoing risk management.

Follow-Up & Support

Where injuries or psychological harm occur:

- Provide recovery support and welfare check-ins
- Review return-to-activity safety
- Update risk assessments and training where required
- Notify safeguarding leads if concerns arise

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Club Leadership	Ensure effective incident procedures, resources, and compliance
Health & Safety Officer	Maintain logs, investigate causes, lead follow-up actions
Coaches & Staff	Report promptly, provide accurate information, cooperate in investigations
Volunteers, Gymnasts & Parents	Raise concerns, follow instructions, support prevention efforts



CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

IGA and all affiliated clubs are fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of every child and vulnerable adult participating in gymnastics. Protecting individuals from harm, abuse, and exploitation is a legal, ethical, and moral priority and forms a core part of a safe environment.

Safeguarding must underpin all decision-making and daily practice, ensuring that every individual is respected, listened to, and supported.

Safeguarding Leadership & Structure

- Each club must appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) responsible for managing safeguarding concerns and acting as the primary point of contact.
- The DSO must be clearly identified to staff, volunteers, gymnasts, and parents.
- The DSO must complete role-specific safeguarding training and maintain regular updates.

IGA Head Office will provide oversight and support for safeguarding matters and may intervene in serious cases.

Safer Recruitment & Vetting

To prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children:

- All regulated roles require enhanced DBS (or jurisdiction-equivalent) checks before duties commence
- Pre-engagement screening must include qualifications verification and reference checks
- Safeguarding responsibilities must be clearly stated in all role descriptions

Unauthorised adults must not have unsupervised access to gymnasts.

Training & Standards of Conduct

All staff, coaches, and volunteers must:

- Complete initial and annual refresher safeguarding training
- Understand signs of abuse, safe working practices, and reporting routes
- Follow IGA Codes of Conduct for adults, gymnasts, and parents
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times

Breaches of conduct will be investigated promptly and may lead to disciplinary action or referral to external authorities.



Recognising & Responding to Concerns

Anyone can raise a safeguarding concern. As soon as a concern, suspicion, or disclosure arises:

- Concerns must be recorded objectively and accurately
- The DSO must be informed immediately
- Concerns may be referred to external agencies such as:
 - Children's Social Care
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
 - Police

The safety of the child is the primary consideration in all situations.

Information Sharing & Confidentiality

- Safeguarding information must only be shared on a strict need-to-know basis
- All records must be stored securely and separately from general club records

Confidentiality must never override child protection concerns.

Whistleblowing

IGA promotes a culture where staff, volunteers, gymnasts and parents can raise concerns about adult behaviour or unsafe practices without fear of retaliation.

Whistleblowing routes must be visible, accessible, and taken seriously.

Safeguarding Compliance & Monitoring

IGA will:

- Audit safeguarding practices across clubs
- Monitor emerging risks and develop updated guidance
- Intervene where safeguarding standards are not met

Clubs must demonstrate compliance with statutory frameworks such as Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government).

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

IGA recognises that safety includes not only physical protection but also psychological well-being. A supportive environment helps gymnasts and staff perform at their best, enjoy participation, and feel safe to speak up. Psychological safety means everyone feels respected, included, and free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, or emotional harm.

We are committed to promoting a culture where mental well-being is understood, valued, and supported as part of our duty of care.



Core Principles

IGA-affiliated clubs must ensure:

- A positive and encouraging training atmosphere, free from fear or humiliation
- Coaching methods that prioritise emotional well-being as well as technique and performance
- Early identification and support for mental health needs
- Clear escalation routes for concerns, including safeguarding pathways
- A “speak-up” culture where concerns are welcomed, respected, and acted on

Unacceptable Behaviour

All forms of psychological harm are prohibited, including:

- Bullying or threatening behaviour
- Shaming, coercion, or humiliation
- Excessive pressure to perform or train while distressed
- Discriminatory language or behaviour
- Retaliation for raising a concern

Any such behaviours must be reported and investigated promptly and may lead to disciplinary action or referral to statutory agencies.

Supporting Athlete Well-Being

Coaches and staff must:

- Promote positive reinforcement and empowerment
- Listen to athletes’ views and respect individual differences
- Allow athletes to take breaks if distressed or overwhelmed
- Encourage healthy relationships within squads and teams
- Consider emotional needs during injury recovery, progression, or transitions

Parents/carers must be included in discussions where psychological concerns arise.

Staff & Volunteer Well-Being

IGA acknowledges that coaches and staff may also experience stress or anxiety in demanding environments. Clubs should:

- Provide access to support resources and signposting
- Encourage open communication with leadership and safeguarding teams
- Promote work–life balance and reasonable expectations
- Monitor workloads and support those experiencing challenges

A healthy workforce fosters a healthier athlete community.



Reporting and Response

Concerns relating to psychological safety must be:

- Reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (if involving minors)
- Documented in line with incident and safeguarding procedures
- Managed confidentially and sensitively
- Addressed in a timely manner with appropriate follow-up

Where a disclosure indicates risk of harm, safeguarding procedures apply immediately.

Responsibilities

Role	Accountability
Club Leadership	Promote positive culture; ensure policies and training reflect psychological safety
Coaches & Staff	Model respectful behaviours; identify and address concerns early
Health & Safety Officer	Support reporting pathways; review psychological risk indicators
Safeguarding Officer	Lead on concerns involving minors/vulnerable individuals
Gymnasts & Parents	Speak up about emotional safety concerns

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

IGA and its affiliated clubs must be fully prepared to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies in order to minimise harm, protect life, and ensure the safety of everyone involved.

All clubs must implement clear, rehearsed, and well-communicated emergency arrangements that reflect their facilities, activities, and specific risks.

Emergencies may include, but are not limited to:

- Serious injuries requiring medical attention
- Fire or smoke-related incidents
- Missing child/vulnerable person situations
- Medical emergencies (e.g. asthma attack, seizure, anaphylaxis)



- Structural or equipment failure
- Extreme weather or environmental hazards
- Violence, abuse, intruder threats, or disorder

Emergency Action Plans (EAPs)

Each club must maintain a written Emergency Action Plan that:

- Is specific to the venue and the activities undertaken
- Includes evacuation routes, assembly points, and communication procedures
- Identifies responsible persons and deputies
- Is reviewed annually and after any significant changes
- Is readily available and visible to staff and volunteers
- Includes procedures for disabled access and vulnerable persons

Copies must be included in coach and first-aid briefing packs.

First Aid Provision

Clubs must ensure:

- At least one qualified first aider is present during all activities and events
- First aid kits are fully stocked and easily accessible
- First aid supplies are checked routinely and replenished as needed
- An AED (Automated External Defibrillator) is available where possible, with trained operators

Records of all first aid interventions must be completed and retained.

Communication

Emergency communication must be:

- Clear, fast, and reliable
- Supported by access to a working phone at all times
- Understood by all staff, volunteers, and relevant users

Parents/carers must be notified immediately in the event of a child emergency.

Emergency services must be called without delay if life or safety is at risk.

Evacuation Procedures

Clubs must ensure that:

- Fire detection and alarm systems are tested regularly
- Fire exits remain unobstructed at all times
- Assembly points are clearly marked and known to staff



- Evacuation drills are carried out at least annually
- Personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) are in place for those who require assistance

Managing Serious Incidents

If a serious incident occurs:

1. Stop activity and secure the area
2. Provide first aid and call emergency services where necessary
3. Do not move injured persons unless safety requires it
4. Record the incident and notify IGA Head Office within 24 hours
5. Preserve evidence for investigation (do not reset or return equipment to use)

Welfare & Debrief

After any emergency:

- Emotional support and welfare checks must be offered to those involved
- Coaches and staff should debrief and record lessons learned
- Risk assessments and procedures must be updated

Sharing of learning is essential to prevent recurrence.

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Club Leadership	Develop EAPs, ensure adequate resources and compliance
Health & Safety Officer	Maintain emergency procedures, conduct drills, ensure equipment readiness
Coaches & Staff	Act promptly, follow procedures, know emergency roles
First Aiders	Deliver immediate care and support emergency communication
All Users	Follow instructions calmly and report hazards

CONTRACTOR, VISITOR & THIRD-PARTY SAFETY

IGA and its affiliated clubs have a duty to ensure that all persons entering or interacting with club environments — including contractors, spectators, parents/carers, and external partners — are safe and do not create additional risks. This duty also extends to ensuring that third-party organisations operating on-site maintain appropriate health, safety, and safeguarding standards.



Contractors

Clubs must ensure that contractors working on or around premises:

- Are approved and appointed by Club Leadership or building management
- Provide evidence of competence, insurance, and any required qualifications
- Receive a site-specific safety induction, including hazards, emergency procedures, and restricted areas
- Are supervised where appropriate, especially when children are present
- Conduct work in a manner that does not endanger gymnasts or other users

Where work involves significant risk (e.g., electrical work, structural changes, working at height), a specific risk assessment and method statement must be reviewed before work begins.

Equipment and materials brought on site must be controlled and stored safely at all times.

Visitors

Visitors may include parents/carers, spectators, prospective members, officials, media, or community guests.

Clubs must ensure that visitors:

- Sign in where systems require
- Are given information about safe access routes and viewing areas
- Do not enter activity or staff-only areas unless authorised and supervised
- Comply with venue rules, safety signage, and instructions from staff
- Keep personal belongings secure and out of activity spaces

Children must remain under the supervision of their parent/carer unless signed into an activity with coaches responsible.

External Organisations & Partners

Where third-party individuals or organisations deliver services on club premises (e.g., physiotherapists, photographers, event operators):

- Safeguarding, H&S compliance and insurance checks must be completed
- Activity boundaries and responsibilities must be clearly agreed in writing
- They must follow all club safety and safeguarding policies when on site
- Any incidents must be reported to club leadership immediately and recorded

No external organisation may operate independently of safety oversight.

Supervision & Safeguarding Expectations

- Visitors and contractors must not be left in unsupervised contact with children unless they are DBS-checked (or equivalent in other jurisdictions) and authorised to do so



- Photography or video must be compliant with club safeguarding policies
- Contractors must not carry out high-risk work while gymnasts are training nearby, unless risks are fully controlled

Where a person poses a safeguarding or security concern, site access must be restricted or refused.

Communication & Signage

All venues must provide clear information on:

- Emergency exits and procedures
- Restricted zones and hazards
- Behaviour expectations (e.g. “No entry to gym floor”)
- Contact routes for reporting safety concerns

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Club Leadership	Contractor vetting, safe access management, communication oversight
Health & Safety Officer	Site inductions, risk assessment checks, incident monitoring
Coaches & Staff	Monitor visitor activity, report concerns, enforce access rules
Contractors & Visitors	Follow instructions, comply with safety controls and safeguarding rules

DOCUMENTATION, RECORD-KEEPING & AUDIT

Maintaining clear, accurate and secure documentation is essential for demonstrating compliance, supporting incident management, ensuring safeguarding, and driving ongoing improvement. IGA and all affiliated clubs must document health and safety activities in a consistent and auditable manner.

Record-keeping must adhere to legal, regulatory and safeguarding standards relevant in each jurisdiction in which the club operates.

Documentation Requirements

Clubs must maintain up-to-date records for (where applicable):

- Health & Safety Policies and Procedures



- Risk Assessments (facility, activity, individual)
- Incident, accident and near-miss reports
- First aid logs
- Safeguarding concerns and actions
- Equipment inspections and maintenance logs
- Fire safety checks and evacuation drill records
- Training and competency records for all staff and volunteers
- COSHH registers and Safety Data Sheets (where hazardous substances are used)
- DSE assessments for office/administrative staff
- Contractor approvals, inductions and permits to work
- Visitor sign-in or attendance records
- Where insurance conditions require particular documentation (e.g., serious injury logs), these must be followed.

Data Security, Storage & Retention

All health, safety and safeguarding records must be:

- Stored securely (digital or locked physical systems)
- Protected from unauthorised access
- Kept confidential on a strict need-to-know basis
- Retained in accordance with minimum statutory or referral body requirements (e.g. 6 years+ for incident reports; longer for child safeguarding concerns)

Safeguarding records must be stored separately from general club files.

Reporting & Compliance

Clubs must:

- Share required documentation with IGA upon request for monitoring or investigation purposes
- Notify IGA of serious incidents within the timelines set out in the Incident Reporting section
- Ensure documentation supports legal reporting duties (e.g., RIDDOR or international equivalents)

Accurate records help identify emerging risks and inform preventive action.

Monitoring and Audit

IGA will undertake periodic audits of affiliated clubs to:

- Confirm compliance with health and safety requirements
- Assess quality and completeness of records



- Review incident trends and follow-up actions
- Support clubs with improvement recommendations

Clubs must cooperate fully with audits and respond promptly to findings.

Internal checks should also be carried out locally, including:

- Monthly or quarterly reviews by the Health & Safety Officer
- Annual leadership review of health & safety performance
- Spot-checks on specific topics (e.g., PPE availability, evacuation routes)

Audit outcomes must be documented with clear actions and timelines.

Continuous Improvement

All documented evidence — incident trends, feedback, audits and assessments — must be used to:

- Improve risk control measures
- Update training and supervision
- Refresh policies and procedures
- Support ongoing cultural development

A document-driven approach ensures lessons are learned, applied and sustained.

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Club Leadership	Ensure adequate systems for secure record-keeping and compliance
Health & Safety Officer	Maintain logs and registers, coordinate reporting, lead internal auditing
Coaches & Staff	Provide accurate and timely information for documentation
IGA Management	Monitor compliance, conduct audits, support improvements

POLICY REVIEW AND UPDATES

GA is committed to continual improvement in health, safety, and safeguarding standards across all affiliated clubs. To remain effective, this policy must be regularly reviewed, updated in response to emerging risks, and aligned to current legislation, guidance, and best practice.



Review Frequency

This policy will be:

- Formally reviewed every 12 months by IGA
- Updated sooner where:
 - Legislative or regulatory changes occur
 - Incident investigations or audits identify new learning
 - Organisational structure or operational models evolve
 - New facilities, equipment, or activities are introduced

Club-level local procedures must also be reviewed annually, or sooner if significant changes occur.

Approval & Publication

- Policy revisions must be approved by IGA senior leadership
- The current version must be available to all staff, coaches, volunteers, gymnasts, and parents/carers
- Clubs must ensure outdated versions are removed and destroyed to avoid confusion

A Version Control system will be maintained (see separate section).

Stakeholder Feedback

Feedback from the following groups will inform review and improvement:

- Coaches and session leaders
- Volunteers and staff
- Gymnasts and parents/carers
- Designated Safeguarding Officers and HSOs
- Incident investigation and audit findings

Consultation ensures the policy remains practical, relevant, and supportive of safe gymnastics environments.

Monitoring Effectiveness

To ensure the policy continues to meet its objectives, IGA and clubs will:

- Monitor incident trends and near-miss data
- Review audit outcomes and compliance reports
- Track training and competency performance
- Assess engagement, culture, and reporting confidence
- Benchmark against sector and national standards



Findings must be used to update:

- Risk control measures
- Training and supervision arrangements
- Procedural documentation
- Communication mechanisms

Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
IGA Leadership	Lead annual review; approve and publish updates
Health & Safety Officer	Provide feedback, incident data and improvement actions
Coaches & Staff	Engage in consultation and share learning from practice
Club Leadership	Communicate changes locally and update site-specific procedures

USEFUL CONTACTS

Role / Purpose	Contact Details / Notes
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