

Academy of Historical Arts



Health and Safety Policy

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The Academy of Historical Arts asserts its right
to change this policy at any time.

1 Introduction and Common Abbreviations

The purpose of this document is not to place a bureaucratic burden on groups, instructors or participants, but rather to set out clearly and definitively what the senior instructors within the Academy of Historical Arts believe to be safe and healthy ways of undertaking activities.

Groups and/or instructors may develop their own health and safety policies or may feel free to adopt this document for their own activities. It is important that groups, instructors and participants do have a comprehensive health and safety policy that covers all activities that will be undertaken; any new activities not covered by the document should be assessed by way of a risk assessment and then a suitable policy governing the safety of the activity should be drawn up and aggregated into the central health and safety policy.

Health and safety should always be of paramount importance throughout every activity. If ever an activity becomes inherently unsafe then it should be stopped immediately and soon afterwards a debriefing should be held to examine how and why this activity became unsafe, and what lessons can be learned from it to make future activities more safe.

Some common abbreviations found throughout this document are as follows:

Academy	-	Academy of Historical Arts
AHA	-	Academy of Historical Arts
COSHH 2002	-	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Act 2002
DPA 1998	-	Data Protection Act 1998
GP	-	General Practitioner (at a local clinic)
HEMA	-	historical European martial arts
HSE	-	Health and Safety Executive
HSW 1974	-	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
H&S	-	health and safety
PT	-	physical training
RIDDOR 1995	-	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995

2 Uniform Requirements

This chapter will discuss the Academy's policy regarding uniform and why the senior instructors of the organisation believe uniform to be an important part of the health and safety policy.

2.1 Club Uniforms

Clubs should choose and implement a uniform for club meetings. This brings several benefits to the club:

- a) Club members feel more unity with their fellow members, leading to a greater *esprit de corps*;
- b) The club looks more professional and organised;
- c) Certain items of uniform may be chosen for their protective value;
- d) Certain items of uniform may be chosen (or other items forbidden) in order to allow participants to move with as little restriction as possible;
- e) Certain items of uniform may be chosen to designate different levels of skill, thus conveying valuable information about what to expect from an individual when training with them;
- f) Club instructors (or other people with important roles) may become easier to identify during meetings.

Additionally, there may be further benefits to the club, depending on what uniform is chosen and how the requirement is implemented.

The Academy does not mandate what the uniform must be for its affiliated clubs. Individual clubs are free to choose whatever uniform suits the club, its members, budgets, and aesthetics. The only rule is that every club has an appropriate uniform and requires it of its members.

2.2 Footwear

Participants are required to wear sensible footwear for activities. Footwear lacking in grip or that is otherwise inappropriate for the activity should be avoided. Participants must wear some kind of footwear; the only exception is when practising grappling, in which case participants may practise with bare feet, and must ensure that their feet are clean and that toenails are cut short and rounded.

3 Safety During Martial Arts Training

This chapter will discuss the Academy's health and safety policy that is to be followed when engaging in martial arts training.

3.1 Warm Ups

It is important to run a brief but effective warm up at the start of each practice to ensure that all participants are in a fit state to proceed with the session. The warm up should be limited solely to improving the body's blood flow and heart rate, and loosening off joints ready for motion. A good warm up should not include strength-training exercises (such as press ups or squats, for example) as these belong in a different part of the session; the purpose of the warm up is simply to warm the body and prepare it for the coming exercise.

Stretching in a warm up should be dynamic in nature, not static. Static stretching is fine at the end of sessions as a cooling down method, but should not be done at the start of the lesson. Every part of the body can be stretched in a safe and dynamic fashion, just as well as (if not better than) through static stretches, and so this option is the Academy's recommended practice.

When undertaking the warm up, individuals should be encouraged to participate as much as possible, but should also be told outright that they should bow out of any part of the warm up that would cause harm or damage due to illness or existing conditions or injuries. No part of the warm up should be mandatory, and individuals should be encouraged to do *something* to keep the body moving rather than not do anything.

3.2 Physical Training

Physical training (often shortened to PT) and other strength or stamina based exercises (such as press ups, crunches, club bells etc.) may be done as part of a session, but should be separate from the warm up. The warm up should always be performed first in order to raise the body's heart rate and to loosen off the body, ready for whatever exercise may follow. Once the warm up is complete, only then may PT begin.

PT is not a requirement for sessions, as opposed to warm ups which are very much required for reasons of preventing injury.

When undertaking PT, individuals should immediately cease to do any activity that would cause harm or damage to the body. PT is

supposed to improve the body and its health, not to damage it.

Individuals leading a PT session must be aware of the risks associated with demanding physical activity and must conduct the session as safely as possible. It is irresponsible and unsafe to push participants beyond their limits.

PT should be limited to appropriate exercises for improving the ability of the participants to take part in historical fencing and HEMA activities. Doing other exercises "just because they are fun" is not covered by the organisation's insurance policies and therefore should be avoided.

The final measure of what is or is not safe during PT sessions is not determined by the person leading the session, nor by the participants; rather, it is determined by the appointed health and safety officials (including first aiders) and also the staff of the Academy of Historical Arts. If the senior instructors and/or health and safety officials within the Academy believe that the session or exercises are unsafe, then the Academy's insurance policies will not cover the activity.

3.3 Receiving Instruction

When a class or an individual is receiving instruction, weapons should always be held in an appropriate "safe position". Instructors should make it clear what their preferred safe position is, and clubs may develop their own policy on safe position holding training weapons. No one should ever be waving weapons about, or flipping daggers in hands, or doing anything that could result in loss of control of the tool. The safe position should be comfortable, and anyone physically unable to hold the safe position for any reason should be allowed to modify the position to suit their circumstances.

The instructor has a duty to ensure that he or she does not abuse this rule. Requiring a class to stand in an uncomfortable safe position for half an hour while receiving a lecture is not acceptable, for example. Instructors should give as much instruction as necessary, but should not hold the class in a single position for too long.

While giving and receiving instruction, both the instructor and the participants have a duty to ensure that a suitable space is given to the instructor (and a demonstration partner if required) so that techniques may be demonstrated safely without endangering a member of the audience.

3.4 Drilling / Exercising

When weapons are used, even if just for simple drills or exercises, appropriate safety gear must be worn. **Fencing masks must always be worn if there is any chance that a weapon could go anywhere near a face or head.** If there are not enough fencing masks available, then steps should be taken to ensure that there is no possible risk for individuals without a fencing mask (for example: by splitting the class into halves, with one half using masks and doing the drill, and the other half waiting for their turn to take the masks and do the drill; alternatively, by ensuring that there is no possible chance that the people without masks will have a weapon near the face or head, even if an accident occurs).

Drills and exercises should be constructed in such a fashion that safety is built into the activity.

Levels of force and intensity should remain at a reasonable and acceptable level, where this is determined by the instructor and/or by the person receiving the strikes. Even if speed increases in the exercise, the level of force and intensity should always remain safe.

Participants should always do precisely as instructed by the instructor. It is not permissible to modify drills or exercises without first discussing it with the instructor. If the instructor gives clear instruction that drills are to be modified by the participants, then this is fine; otherwise, whatever the instructor has described is what must be done.

At any time, someone who is consistently posing a safety hazard may be asked to leave.

3.5 Sparring

When sparring, **everyone must always wear appropriate safety equipment**, including fencing mask and appropriate gloves. The instructor must enforce this rule.

Individuals with existing injuries or conditions should inform partners before beginning to spar, so that mistakes and accidents can be avoided. For example: "I have a knee injury, so please don't hit my leg."

Levels of force and intensity should remain at a reasonable and acceptable level, where this is determined by the instructor and/or by the person receiving the strikes. Even if speed increases in the exercise, the level of force and intensity should always remain safe.

If both participants are wearing a greater amount of protective gear, and the instructor allows it, then the participants may increase the level of force and intensity as long as the activity remains reasonable and safe.

At any time, if a participant in sparring feels unsafe and no longer wishes to spar against a particular opponent, then the individual should stop the sparring match and should not be forced to continue or to partner with this particular person again until the individual feels it is safe to do so again.

Sparring is a privilege and not a right. Individuals who consistently hit too hard or who exhibit unsportsmanlike behaviour should have their sparring privileges revoked until they can learn to improve their behaviour.

If the phrase "Hold!" is called by anyone, then everyone should freeze until the instructor gives further instruction.

At any time, someone who is consistently posing a safety hazard may be asked to leave.

3.6 Grappling

Grappling may be permitted when all parties have been trained properly (both in how to grapple safely and how to fall safely) and when the environment is safe for grappling and throws (with soft floors, preferably padded with mats).

The instructor should pause grappling if ever it becomes unsafe. This should be done immediately when grappling occurs between people who have not practised how to grapple or fall safely, or if the environment is unsuitable for this activity.

Even more so than sparring, grappling is a privilege and not a right.

The Academy's insurance policies only cover grappling where the senior instructors and relevant first aid officials deem it to be safe. This means that most often, if individuals decide to engage in grappling without permission and instruction of the instructor, any and all liability will rest with the individuals themselves.

If the phrase "Hold!" is called by anyone, then everyone should freeze until the instructor gives further instruction. Any locks or holds should be loosened instantly and all resistance should cease once pressure is taken away from joints.

Different clubs and instructors may have different signals for indicating a submission during a grappling match, and this should be made clear to everyone before grappling begins. The standard Academy signals to stop a match and loosen all pressure instantly are to call "Hold!" or to give a double tap with the hand against the floor (loudly) or against the person applying the lock, choke or hold.

At any time, someone who is consistently posing a safety hazard may be asked to leave.

3.7 Melee Exercises

When engaging in melee games and exercises, individuals must always wear appropriate safety equipment, including fencing mask (preferably with back of head protection) and appropriate gloves. The instructor must enforce this rule.

Levels of force and intensity should remain at a reasonable and acceptable level, where this is determined by the instructor and/or by the person receiving the strikes. Even if speed increases in the exercise, the level of force and intensity should always remain safe.

Even more so than sparring, melee games are a privilege and not a right.

The environment is very important when engaging in melee exercises. **If the environment is unsuitable for any reason, the exercises should be stopped, or should not be started in the first place.**

First aiders with first aid kits handy should be at the sidelines, ready to rush in and deal with a casualty if something goes wrong.

If the phrase "Hold!" is called by anyone, then everyone should freeze until the instructor gives further instruction.

At any time, someone who is consistently posing a safety hazard may be asked to leave.

3.8 Training with Sharp Swords

When a class or an individual engages in a cutting practice, everyone involved should be made very aware of the danger posed by a live and sharp weapon. Whenever holding a sharp weapon, it should be held in an appropriate "safe position" and should only be held in any other fashion when directed explicitly by the instructor.

When preparing to make a strike against a target, the individual with the weapon should listen carefully to instructions given by the instructor, and there should be silence from everyone else present. The individual should follow all instructions given, and should not make the strike before given permission to do so by the instructor.

When someone has a sharp weapon in hand, everyone else should stay at a safe distance away from the individual and the target. Under no circumstance should anyone approach the individual or the target unexpectedly.

If anyone involved in the practice notices something that could be unsafe, the call "Hold!" should be given and the problem addressed.

If the phrase "Hold!" is called by anyone, then everyone should freeze until the instructor gives further instruction.

Due attention should be paid to the environment. If the ground becomes dangerous for any reason due to the debris from previous targets then the environment should be made safe again before any activity continues.

At any time, someone who is consistently posing a safety hazard may be asked to leave.

3.9 Private Tuition

When giving private tuition, all the normal rules and procedures should be followed. It is never excusable to omit safety equipment or ignore safety rules just because it is a private lesson.

Both instructors and students have the right to a safe private lesson, so the environment and venue should be appropriate for the activity. Furthermore, at no point in time should either instructor or student feel coerced or pressured into doing anything that might be unsafe.

3.10 Equipment Requirements

It is important that participants are aware of what equipment is suitable for use in the session and what minimum levels of equipment are required. While different clubs and instructors may require different amounts or types of equipment for different activities, nothing less than the following requirements will be considered safe by the senior instructors of the Academy:

3.10.1 Broadsword / Backsword / Sabre

(drilling with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- back of head protection (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*

(sparring with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- back of head protection (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*
- groin guard (recommended)*
- padded gloves (recommended)*
- forearm & elbow protection (recommended)*
- knee & shin guards (recommended)*

(drilling & sparring with higher intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *back of head protection*
- * *torso padding such as padded jacket*
- * *groin guard (for men; recommended for women)*
- * *padded gloves*
- * *elbow protection*
- * *knee & shin guards*
- CEN level 2 mask (recommended)*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*
- forearm protection (recommended)*

3.10.2 Arming Sword (with or without Buckler etc)

(drilling with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- back of head protection (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*

(sparring with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *padded gloves*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*

internal padding inside mask (recommended)
back of head protection (recommended)
throat protection (recommended)
groin guard (recommended)
forearm & elbow protection (recommended)
knee & shin guards (recommended)

(drilling & sparring with higher intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *back of head protection*
- * *torso padding such as padded jacket*
- * *groin guard (for men; recommended for women)*
- * *padded gloves*
- * *elbow protection*
- * *knee & shin guards*

CEN level 2 mask (recommended)
external padding over mask (recommended)
internal padding inside mask (recommended)
throat protection (recommended)
forearm protection (recommended)

3.10.3 Longsword

(drilling with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*

external padding over mask (recommended)
internal padding inside mask (recommended)
back of head protection (recommended)
throat protection (recommended)
well-padded gloves (recommended)

(sparring with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *well-padded gloves*

external padding over mask (recommended)
internal padding inside mask (recommended)
back of head protection (recommended)
throat protection (recommended)
groin guard (recommended)
heavy-duty gloves (recommended)
forearm & elbow protection (recommended)
knee & shin guards (recommended)

(drilling & sparring with higher intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *back of head protection*
- * *torso padding such as padded jacket*

- * *groin guard (for men; recommended for women)*
- * *heavy-duty gloves*
- * *elbow protection*
- * *knee & shin guards*
- CEN level 2 mask (recommended)*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*
- forearm protection (recommended)*

3.10.4 Staff Weapons

(drilling with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *well-padded gloves*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- back of head protection (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*

(sparring with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *torso padding such as padded jacket*
- * *well-padded gloves*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- back of head protection (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*
- groin guard (recommended)*
- heavy-duty gloves (recommended)*
- forearm & elbow protection (recommended)*
- knee & shin guards (recommended)*

(drilling & sparring with higher intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *back of head protection*
- * *torso padding such as padded jacket*
- * *groin guard (for men; recommended for women)*
- * *heavy-duty gloves*
- * *elbow protection*
- * *knee & shin guards*
- CEN level 2 mask (recommended)*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*
- forearm protection (recommended)*

3.10.5 Dagger

(drilling with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- back of head protection (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*

(sparring with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *padded gloves*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- back of head protection (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*
- groin guard (recommended)*
- forearm & elbow protection (recommended)*
- knee & shin guards (recommended)*

(drilling & sparring with higher intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *back of head protection*
- * *torso padding such as padded jacket*
- * *groin guard (for men; recommended for women)*
- * *padded gloves*
- * *elbow protection*
- * *knee & shin guards*
- CEN level 2 mask (recommended)*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*
- forearm protection (recommended)*

3.10.6 Rapier / Smallsword

(drilling with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- external padding over mask (recommended)*
- internal padding inside mask (recommended)*
- back of head protection (recommended)*
- throat protection (recommended)*
- 350N rated jacket or underplastron (recommended)*

(sparring with low intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *padded gloves*

external padding over mask (recommended)
internal padding inside mask (recommended)
back of head protection (recommended)
throat protection (recommended)
torso padding such as padded jacket (recommended)
350N rated jacket or underplastron (recommended)
groin guard (recommended)
forearm & elbow protection (recommended)
knee & shin guards (recommended)

(drilling & sparring with higher intensity)

- * *CEN level 1 mask*
- * *back of head protection*
- * *torso padding such as padded jacket*
- * *groin guard (for men; recommended for women)*
- * *padded gloves*
- * *elbow protection*
- * *knee & shin guards*

CEN level 2 mask (recommended)
external padding over mask (recommended)
internal padding inside mask (recommended)
throat protection (recommended)
350N rated jacket or underplastron (recommended)
forearm protection (recommended)

3.10.7 General Remarks

It should never be considered a problem to raise the safety requirements for any given activity.

The safety requirements are listed by and alter depending on the intensity of the activity.

It is relatively unimportant whether the training tool is made from wood, plastic, or steel. As far as the senior instructors of the Academy are concerned, plastic swords are just as dangerous as steel swords if they are used inappropriately. The key thing is to keep the intensity of the practice suitable and appropriate for the skills of the participants and for the amount of protective equipment that is worn.

The strength of striking should therefore be significantly lower against someone who is only wearing a mask and a t-shirt, regardless of whether the sword is made from plastic or steel. Against someone who is wearing a mask with padded overlay, a padded jacket and well-padded gloves, the strength of striking can of course be higher, but should still not become inappropriate,

unsuitable, or unsafe.

Light gloves can be defined as gloves that do not have much padding. Examples would include welding gloves, gardening gloves, kali gloves, and modern foil fencing gloves.

Well-padded gloves can be defined as gloves that have enough padding to protect the hands against low to medium intensity impacts. Examples would include hockey gloves, lacrosse gloves, and the Red Dragon HEMA gloves.

Heavy-duty gloves can be defined as gloves that offer enough protection to keep the hands safe against high intensity impacts. Examples would include the SPES Heavy gloves, the Sparring Gloves, and the Neymann Fencing gloves.

Steel gauntlets may be suitable for some activities, at the discretion of the instructor, although the Academy tends to recommend against wearing them. Not all steel gauntlets are made from high-quality steel, nor are they all padded sufficiently beneath the steel. Injuries can still happen from strikes against steel gauntlets, so they should not be regarded as any better than gloves designed specifically for high intensity HEMA.

3.11 Maintenance of Equipment

All equipment used in martial arts lessons should be maintained safely. Training weapons should be filed smooth to remove burrs and other rough edges. Steel equipment should be kept free of rust as much as possible.

It is up to the instructor leading a lesson to ensure that the equipment is fit for purpose. Participants bringing their own equipment also have a duty to ensure that their own equipment is fit for purpose; all participants have a duty to ensure that the equipment that they are using is fit for purpose.

Equipment that is not fit for purpose should be retired until it can be made safe again.

3.12 Standard and Non-Standard Equipment

The use of modified and non-standard equipment is allowed within the Academy, as long as it is fit for purpose and is safe to use. Instructors have the right to refuse the use of any particular non-standard piece of equipment if it is deemed unsafe; common sense and safety should be the two deciding factors in whether or not to

allow it.

Tournament organisers and event organisers may choose to specify that non-standard equipment is not suitable for the event, and may choose to specify which types of standard equipment are permissible. This decision would be to ensure that all equipment used by participants meets a minimum recognised level of performance, and so it is up to the event organisers to decide what the rules will be for any given event.

3.13 Environment

Participants should give due respect and thought to the environment and venue in which the session takes place. Damage to the venue and environment should be avoided at all costs.

Behaviour such as pushing people into corners during sparring, or otherwise putting the environment at risk during the session, should not be tolerated. The Academy's insurance policies do include public liability, but individuals who damage the environment willfully will bear full liability for all costs that ensue. If an instructor encourages participants to show this sort of behaviour then the instructor will bear full liability.

4 Safety During Archery and Other Missile Practices

This chapter will discuss the Academy's health and safety policy that is to be followed when training with missile weapons.

4.1 Appropriate Safety Briefings

Participants should be given general safety instruction before being allowed to use the missile weapons. An instructor or other knowledgeable and responsible person should be appointed to attend to this at the start of any lesson or event, and any newcomer to the activity after the briefing has been given should not be allowed to participate until another briefing can be given to the individual.

4.2 Retrieving Spent Missiles

Once an individual has spent all of his or her missiles, **the individual should pause and wait until all individuals on the range have finished.** Then all of the individuals should retrieve the spent missiles at the same time.

The target should be approached obliquely, not directly from the front. The reason for this is that missiles such as arrows have very small profiles and suffer from foreshortening, leading to a reduced ability to judge precisely where any individual arrow is in space. By approaching targets obliquely, missiles sticking into a target may be observed safely.

No one should stand near someone who is removing missiles from a target. Sometimes the missiles leave the target very suddenly, and the shaft of the missile can be dangerous to people standing close behind.

If a missile does not go down the range properly, and only flies for a few inches before falling to the ground, it should not be retrieved. Crossing the shooting line and moving forward to retrieve a missile is exceptionally dangerous and should not be done until the range is clear and safe for retrieving spent missiles.

4.3 Range / Area

The range and missile area should be marked adequately so that no one may stumble upon the range by accident. The target should always be facing away from where any individuals might happen to be.

If a range or shooting area is set up in a public area for an event, then it should be in the form of a covered tunnel so that missiles cannot escape in a random direction and be a danger to a member of the public.

There should always be a back net behind any archery target.

4.4 Safety Equipment

Individuals should be encouraged to wear appropriate safety equipment for the missile discipline. For example, for archery, a leather bracer (or some form of covering) for the forearm is advised.

If the missiles are being used in a melee setting then everyone involved in the activity should wear fencing masks; even archers or non-combatants on the field. Needless to say, missiles used in a melee setting should be safe and not capable of dealing damage.

4.5 Maintenance of Equipment

All equipment used in missile sessions should be maintained safely. Training weapons should be filed smooth to remove burrs and other rough edges. Steel equipment should be kept free of rust as much as possible. Wooden shafts should be examined to ensure that they are unlikely to split in use.

It is up to the instructor leading a session to ensure that the equipment is fit for purpose. Participants bringing their own equipment also have a duty to ensure that their own equipment is fit for purpose; all participants have a duty to ensure that the equipment that they are using is fit for purpose.

Equipment that is not fit for purpose should be retired until it can be made safe again.

Missiles and lurching devices that become slippery or otherwise dangerous to use should be retired until they can be dried or cleaned and made fit for purpose again.

5 Safety During Martial Arts Demonstrations

This chapter will discuss the Academy's health and safety policy that is to be followed when organising and performing in combat demonstrations.

5.1 Combatants

Combatants should wear appropriate safety equipment, even for choreographed routines.

During choreographed routines, participants should not deviate from the practised routine, even if something spectacular or "cool" comes to mind. The routine is what both parties have practised, and is what the other combatant(s) will expect to happen, so deviations are to be avoided.

Un-choreographed sparring should be avoided during demonstrations, if at all possible, since it can look less impressive and actually quite boring for onlookers, and because it has a higher chance of something going wrong and leading to an accident. Semi-choreographed sparring with a definitive ending is much better and much safer for demonstrations.

5.2 Arena

The arena should be marked with a barrier so that members of the public do not stray into the fighting area. Ideally there should be one barrier, then a second barrier six feet out from the first barrier. This second barrier should be lower, at child height, to stop children from running freely beneath the barriers.

The ground in the arena should have good grip, if at all possible; or if demonstrating outside, then the arena should be free of mud and other slippery substances. The ground should always be free of protrusions and obstacles that could trip a combatant.

5.3 Officials

There should be at least one official at the demonstration, who can keep watch on the proceedings and make sure that no member of the public wanders into the arena.

It is also the job of any officials present to ensure that combatants wear appropriate safety equipment.

5.4 Maintenance of Equipment

All equipment used in martial arts demonstrations should be maintained safely. Training weapons should be filed smooth to remove burrs and other rough edges. Steel equipment should be kept free of rust as much as possible. Wooden shafts should be examined to ensure that they are unlikely to split in use.

It is up to the instructor leading a lesson to ensure that the equipment is fit for purpose. Participants bringing their own equipment also have a duty to ensure that their own equipment is fit for purpose; all participants have a duty to ensure that the equipment that they are using is fit for purpose.

Equipment that is not fit for purpose should be retired until it can be made safe again.

5.5 Members of the Public

Members of the public are not entitled to touch or hold any piece of equipment unless given permission to do so by the owner of the equipment. Also, it may be inappropriate to let people pick up and handle pieces of equipment (depending on the venue, the age and ability of the audience, etc.). Finally, the Academy's insurance does not cover members of the public touching or holding any of the equipment, so liability rests with the member of the public in question.

Members of the public are not allowed to enter the demonstration arena unless invited to do so by the instructor leading the demonstration.

Members of the public are not allowed to participate in any martial arts activities under any circumstances, other than joining a lesson taught and supervised by an appropriate person.

6 Safety During Martial Arts Tournaments

This chapter will discuss the Academy's health and safety policy that is to be followed when organising and running martial arts tournaments.

6.1 Equipment Requirements

Tournament organisers should decide what sort of tournament is going to happen, for what discipline(s), with what weapons and what skill level of participants, and then perform a risk assessment over these decisions. As a result of the risk assessment, an appropriate set of minimum requirements for safety equipment should be set for the event. Certainly nothing less than the requirements in the "Safety During Martial Arts Practices" chapter should be accepted!

6.2 Combatants

Combatants should ensure that (at least) the minimum requirements for protective gear are worn when preparing to enter the arena.

Individuals with existing injuries, illnesses or other medical conditions should ensure that the event organisers are aware of the problems. Combatants should not be allowed to use these issues to make tournament participation easier (for example, by saying to an opponent "by the way, I have a dodgy knee, can you avoid leg shots?" before a match begins); the rule should be that if a combatant cannot participate fully in the tournament for reasons of safety, then the individual should not participate.

All combatants should be able to make the assumption that all opponents in the tournament are healthy and able to defend themselves to a fair and reasonable extent, and therefore should have a relatively even playing field where no combatant is receiving special treatment due to injuries or medical conditions.

Combatants must follow the guidelines for the level of force and intensity set by the event organisers. Combatants must also follow the rules for grappling set by the event organisers, and must be aware of any techniques that are banned by the rules.

If the phrase "Hold!" is called by anyone, then everyone should freeze until the duty official gives further instruction.

Participation in a tournament is a privilege and not a right.

Individuals who consistently hit too hard or who exhibit unsportsmanlike behaviour may be disqualified from the event.

At any time, someone who is consistently posing a safety hazard may be asked to leave.

6.3 Arena

The tournament arena must be marked in such a fashion that no one is likely to stray into it by accident. There should be a clear way for people to move about without passing through the arena.

The floor of the arena should be clean and with good footing if at all possible. If possible there should be mats on the floor in case of trips and falls.

Ropes should not border the arena, since ropes must be suspended from poles or other fixed objects. Fixed objects should be avoided where possible, and there should be clear space around the arena to which fighters or officials may retreat as required.

6.4 Officials

Different tournament rule sets will call for different judging team compositions, and so the tournament organiser should consider which rule set will be employed at the event and must be able to fill all the roles. Ideally, officials should be people who have undertaken some amount of training; even just an afternoon of preparation time is considerably better than nothing at all!

At the tournament there should be a first aider who does not have any other duty needing his or her attention, who can administer first aid immediately without needing to find a convenient break in another activity. The first aider should have instant and easy access to a well-stocked first aid kit. Everyone should know where and how to find the first-aider at all times.

Officials should ensure that all combatants present themselves with the correct safety equipment for the event, and in the interests of safety must be able to refuse participation to anyone whose safety equipment does not meet the minimum standards. Officials may allow such an individual a specified length of time during which to acquire or borrow all of the necessary protective gear; this is at the discretion of the officials on the day.

Officials must make it clear to all participants what levels of force and intensity are acceptable and unacceptable. Once this is

announced, it must be upheld across all the combatants in the tournament, and individuals may not be given preferential treatment in terms of being allowed to hit harder than others. If a combatant is ignoring warnings and still hitting hard then the officials can (and should) remove the problematic combatant from the tournament or impose other sanctions.

Officials must make clear to combatants what rules are in effect with regard to grappling, and must also make clear what techniques (if any) are explicitly disallowed in the event.

Officials should be aware that different clubs and organisations have different perspectives about what is expected and reasonable in a tournament setting, and so any ambiguities should be explained and made clear to everyone before any fighting happens.

If at any point any official (in whatever capacity) sees something unsafe then the command "Hold!" should be called and the issue dealt with.

There should be an official present who has received some amount of training to be able to break up unruly combatants. If two combatants enter a standing grappling match with each other or exchange furious blows with each other without breaking or listening to the referees' calls for a hold, then it is up to this official to insert himself or herself safely into the fight and separate the two combatants. It is recommended that the official wears protective equipment and carries an implement (like a staff or other long item), with which he can force the combatants apart.

6.5 Maintenance of Equipment

All equipment to be used in the tournament must pass inspection by an appointed official before the event begins. Throughout the tournament, equipment should be kept maintained to a high level of safety. If maintenance or repairs need to be effected then this should happen immediately; for example, if a steel blade needs to be filed to remove burrs, then this should happen as soon as the burrs are noticed.

There should be suitable maintenance tools available at the event for competitors to use as necessary.

If at any point a piece of equipment becomes unsuitable for use then the equipment should be retired until it can be made fit for purpose again. If this means that a combatant can no longer compete in the tournament, so be it.

7 Safety During Crafting Sessions

This chapter will discuss the Academy's health and safety policy that is to be followed when practising traditional crafting or any of the Academy's crafting-based activities.

7.1 Hand Tools

Individuals who are using a hand tool (such as needles, hammers, saws, etc.) should be made aware of the safety guidelines for the tool and should ensure that the tool is used in the appropriate safe manner.

If a tool is particularly dangerous (for example, a saw or a heavy hammer) then inexperienced practitioners should be supervised while using it.

Tools should only ever be used for an appropriate purpose.

7.2 Power Tools

Individuals who are using a power tool (such as electric drills, belt sanders, etc.) should be made aware of the safety guidelines for the tool and should ensure that the tool is used in the appropriate safe manner.

A power tool tends to be more dangerous than a hand tool; so inexperienced practitioners should be given appropriate training to use it by a competent person, and then supervised while using it.

Tools should only ever be used for an appropriate purpose, and should be set up in an appropriate and safe fashion.

7.3 Maintenance of Equipment

Tools, safety equipment and other equipment should be maintained in a safe fashion. If ever a piece of equipment becomes unsafe then it should be marked as such and retired from use until it can be made safe and fit for purpose again.

7.4 Chemicals

Sometimes chemicals may be required in crafting projects. When chemicals are involved, the project should be undertaken in a well-ventilated space and appropriate safety equipment should be worn. Inexperienced practitioners should receive training in how to handle and use the chemicals and should be supervised while using the

chemicals.

Chemicals should only ever be used for an appropriate purpose and should not be mixed without due care and reason.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Act 2002 (COSHH 2002) should be followed at all times when dealing with chemicals. The instructor and the duty first aider should be aware of the contents of this act and should implement its safety protocols within the crafting session and with regards to the storage and transport of chemicals.

More information about COSHH 2002 can be found here:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/>

7.5 Storage and Transport

All equipment should be stored in an orderly and safe fashion. Related items should be kept with each other where possible. Anything that comes in a box or case should be kept in its box or case.

Any equipment with sharp parts should be stored in such a fashion that if someone reaches for a tool, there should be no risk of contact with a sharp part.

Chemicals should be stored in accordance with their instruction labels or booklets.

With transporting chemicals, care should be taken to ensure that the chemical containers are fastened securely and the chemicals have no opportunity to spill. Chemicals that should not be shaken should be transported in such a fashion that they cannot be shaken.

When transporting crafting equipment, care should be taken to ensure that tools with sharp parts are not a hazard to anyone or anything; tools should not be allowed to damage other equipment in transit.

7.6 First Aid

There should always be access to some form of first aid kit and trained first aider during crafting sessions. Plasters and bandages should be plentiful in supply as small cuts and scrapes are the most regular form of minor injury that results from the use of hand tools.

When chemicals are involved in the crafting activity, the first aider

should make a point of reading the instruction labels or notebooks and should be aware of how to deal with poisoning and chemical burns.

7.7 Aftermath of a Crafting Session

After a crafting session has finished, all tools and equipment should be cleaned (if necessary) then put away and stored safely. All offcuts and leftovers that have no possible reuse should be disposed of safely and ethically.

The crafting area should be tidied and cleaned to remove any residue such as sawdust, metal filings, loose threads, etc. The area should be made pleasant and safe for people to use again.

Any safety equipment that has been used should be disposed of or cleaned and stored as appropriate.

7.8 Private Tuition

When giving private tuition, all the normal rules and procedures should be followed. It is never excusable to omit safety equipment or ignore safety rules just because it is a private lesson.

Both instructors and students have the right to a safe private lesson, so the environment and venue should be appropriate for the activity. Furthermore, at no point in time should either instructor or student feel coerced or pressured into doing anything that might be unsafe.

8 Risk Assessments

This chapter will discuss the Academy's policy with regard to undertaking and preparing risk assessments.

8.1 Needs and Requirement for Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are a necessary evil. While they do take time to prepare, and can be quite dull work, they are nonetheless an important part of ensuring that activities have been thought through with regard to safety and that there are plans to mitigate risks in every part of an activity.

It is the Academy's policy that every event should have appropriate risk assessments carried out on the activities and environment, along with the activities of each affiliated club and all one-off activities.

By undertaking and preparing a risk assessment, event organisers / club leaders should be able to identify potential risks and take steps to lessen the severity and chance of occurrence of these risks. Developing the risk assessment as a meditated and written exercise is the best way to approach this task; while experienced instructors are often good at performing a visual risk assessment on the spot, taking the time and effort to do a thorough written assessment will help to ensure that everything is thought about and that nothing is missed.

Finally, having a risk assessment on paper gives the organiser or instructor the ability to prove that safety has been considered, which often allows a venue booking to go ahead if the venue managers are satisfied with the assessment.

8.2 AHA Example Risk Assessments

Example risk assessments will be available for download from the Academy's website.

Affiliated groups are welcome to take and modify these risk assessments for their own purposes. Note that just downloading and adopting one of these examples is not quite enough; a bit of work must be put into modifying the assessment to fit the conditions in which the club operates!

8.3 How to Perform a Risk Assessment

Take the blank example risk assessment template and fill in the general information (to help distinguish this risk assessment from any other assessment).

Consider the venue and environment first. What hazards are posed by the venue and environment to the event participants? What hazards do the event participants pose to the venue and environment? Make a list of all possible hazards.

Think of all the activities that are likely to happen, and then consider each activity in turn. What hazards could possibly occur in each activity? Make a list of all possible hazards for all activities, and append this to the previous list of hazards.

Think of all the equipment that is likely to be used, and consider each in turn. What unique hazards could be caused by these pieces of equipment? For example, Hanwei federschwerter are known for their blades breaking in sparring; if these are likely to be present, then this is a unique hazard worth considering. Another example: Hanwei Hutton sabres have butter-knife-sharp points, even though the blade is blunt; if these are likely to be present, then it presents a unique hazard worth considering. Add each unique hazard to the list of hazards.

Once a list of potential hazards has been compiled, it is time to evaluate the risk of each hazard occurring, and the severity with which it can manifest. This should be as honest as possible - there is nothing to be gained from marking a hazard as "unlikely to happen" if it occurs every other week, and it would be distinctly unhelpful to mark the potential severity of sparring powerfully without appropriate gloves as "not severe". The risk assessment can only be beneficial if the assessments are performed fairly and honestly. If the end result does not look very comfortable then there is clear need to do something to mitigate the risks!

The suggested scale of likelihood is as follows:

- very unlikely (for example: might happen once per 100 sessions)
- unlikely (for example: might happen once per 50 sessions)
- possible (for example: might happen once per 25 sessions)
- likely (for example: might happen once per 10 sessions)
- very likely (for example: might happen once per 5 sessions)
- regular (for example: does happen more often than it should)

The suggested scale of severity is as follows:

- very low (for example: a nuisance)
- low (for example: causes a bruise)
- medium (for example: causes someone to trip and fall)
- high (for example: causes someone to need first aid)
- very high (for example: causes someone to visit the hospital)
- catastrophic (for example: could result in death)

Once the likelihood and severity of each hazard has been assessed in an honest fashion, then the final step is to work out how to mitigate and lessen each of these hazards. Sensible and achievable solutions should be found for as many of the hazards as possible. If there is no possible solution for a hazard (perhaps some environmental issue) then simply making participants aware of the potential hazard is a form of mitigation.

Sometimes the mitigations may involve another party. For example, there is an issue with an overhead pipe that drips and causes moisture to collect on the floor, resulting in a slippery surface that might create the hazard of people slipping and falling. This is the type of problem that should be reported to the owner / factor / landlord of the venue, and it would be his or her responsibility to resolve it. In such cases, the mitigation should be "report to landlord" and the final column should be ticked when the report is made to the landlord (and the date should be noted as well).

The final column should be used for noting when mitigations are achieved. The risk assessment should be an ongoing concern and not just something that is written once and then forgotten about for years.

8.4 Further Information

There are two useful resources about risk assessments that are worth providing for further reading:

- Health and Safety Executive in the UK
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

- British Federation for Historical Swordsmanship health and safety policy, a guide to risk assessment
<http://thebfhs.org.uk/resources>

(these links are correct at the time of writing this document)

9 AHA Insurance

The Academy of Historical Arts is covered by several insurance policies that have been designed to work for the various activities carried out by the organisation. For more detailed information about the policies, please see the *AHA Insurances* document; this chapter will simply provide a brief overview of the subject.

Individuals and clubs who are affiliated to the Academy may sort their own insurance policies; there is no requirement that anyone must be covered by the Academy's insurance.

It is the Academy's policy that when a group affiliates, the Academy will formally engage the club's instructor(s) to deliver one of the Academy's educational programmes on behalf of the organisation. This constitutes a contract and so the Academy's insurance will be extended to cover the activities of the named instructor(s) when delivering the programme. People who do not have possession of a formal letter stating that the Academy has extended its insurance to cover the teaching activities of the individual are not covered by the Academy's insurance policy.

The Academy's insurance includes public liability and employer's liability policies, and when the contracted instructor is teaching a class, these policies cover his or her activities. Therefore, participants acting under direction of the instructor are covered by the policies that cover the instructor; participants who do their own thing and do not follow the instructions given by the contracted instructor are not covered by any insurance policy.

The contracted instructor may engage individuals to teach on his or her behalf, perhaps involving advanced students in the teaching or coaching process. Individuals engaged in such a fashion are covered by the insurance policies that cover the contracted instructor; likewise, participants following the direction of the engaged individual are covered by the same insurance policies.

The insurance cover "trickles down" and provide cover to people who are engaged by the organisation or who are engaged by people who are in turn engaged by the organisation. People who have no such engagement lineage to the organisation cannot benefit from the Academy's insurance.

Guests and members who attend an affiliated club, who follow the directions of the teacher, will always benefit from the teacher's insurance cover.

10 First Aid in the Organisation

This chapter will discuss the Academy's policy with regard to first aid provision.

10.1 Presence of First Aiders

During Academy events there should be at least one qualified first aider present. All participants at the event should know who the first aiders are and how to find first aid in case of an emergency.

The Academy recommends that affiliated clubs have a first aider present at every training event, if at all possible, but recognises that this is not always possible. If a first aider is not present in the group then the participants should know what to do if an emergency does occur: for example, find the official first aider for the venue, or call 999 immediately. The group should have its own first aid policy based on circumstances if there are no qualified first aiders at the club, and the club should try to remedy this situation as soon as possible

10.2 Duty First Aider

At events, first aiders may be engaged with other duties or activities. However, there should always be at least one first aider (the "duty first aider") who has no other role or activity to perform, who should be available to respond immediately to any emergencies that arise.

During the course of the event, the role of duty first aider may change between people so that everyone has the chance to participate in the event, or the role may remain with the one individual if the person would prefer it to remain so.

The duty first aider should not be engaged with teaching a lesson or minding a shop; the duty first aider must be able to respond instantly to any emergency that arises without having to make alternative arrangements to cover the other activity first.

At clubs, if possible, a duty first aider should be nominated so that it is not the teacher who is holding this role. This may not always be possible, but if it can be arranged then it should be done this way.

10.3 First Aid Kits

A first aid kit should be present at all events and practices. The duty first aider should know where the first aid kit is located at any given

time, and the first aid kit should be easily accessible.

After an event or training session when a first aid kit has been used, the kit should be restocked immediately. Clubs are responsible for restocking their own first aid kits, even if the kit is issued by the Academy; clubs should therefore keep some funds available in case restocking is necessary and items need to be purchased.

An empty hard plastic box with a lid should accompany the first aid kit. This should be used as a temporary disposal box for problematic medical waste (such as epipens) until the waste can be disposed of properly and safely later. The box should be marked clearly as a disposal box so that people do not open it and rummage about inside it!

10.4 Pain Killers

First aid kits may contain aspirin, but this may only be issued to individuals who are not allergic to aspirin AND who are suffering a suspected a heart condition (to thin the blood). Aspirin may not be given to anyone for any other reason or condition.

Under no circumstances should first aid kits contain any other pain killers, and under no circumstances should pain killers be prescribed by first aiders unless the first aider in question is a trained and qualified pharmacist.

Individuals attending events should be encouraged to bring their own pain killer medication if they may need it. For example, an individual with recurring joint pains who has been prescribed a particular pain killer by a doctor should bring this medication to the event and take it if it is necessary; the first aiders at the event cannot provide any pain killers for any reason.

10.5 Diabetes and Hyperthermia (Heat Stroke)

At events where there are set meal times, this may clash with the blood sugar schedule for a sufferer of diabetes. Diabetics should therefore make their condition known to the duty first aider, and should excuse themselves from activities to eat as and when this is necessary. It is the responsibility of each diabetes sufferer to ensure that the issue is dealt with.

However, especially at larger events, the first aid kit should contain a few bottles of Lucozade and some packets of dry Ryvita bread. If a diabetic has a hypoglycaemic episode, then the first aider should provide a bottle of Lucozade to introduce sugar back into the

individual's bloodstream. Eating some Ryvita bread to provide carbohydrates and prevent a sugar crash should then follow.

A bottle of Lucozade should also be issued if individual develop hyperthermia (heat stroke), although if the individual has his or her own bottle of isotonic drink then that should be the first port of call rather than depleting the first aid kit's stock of bottles.

10.6 Varicose Veins

If an individual suffers from varicose veins, then historical fencing activities are probably a very bad idea. It is Academy policy that individuals with varicose veins must seek permission from their doctor or GP before engaging in historical fencing activities and have this qualified professional sign the *AHA Medical Permission Form*.

10.7 Pregnant Women

If a lady is pregnant, then historical fencing activities are probably a very bad idea. It is Academy policy that woman in any stage of pregnancy must seek permission from their doctor or GP before engaging in historical fencing activities and have this qualified professional sign the *AHA Medical Permission Form*. This precaution is to protect the mother, the child and also any training partners.

10.8 Accompaniment of Casualties to Hospital

If an ambulance is called and a casualty needs to go to hospital, then two people should not accompany the casualty: the teacher must remain to keep control of the class, and the duty first aider must remain in case there are any further first aid requirements.

If the casualty does not wish to be accompanied in the ambulance, or if the ambulance crew forbids it, then no one should accompany the casualty and the issue should not be forced.

If the casualty does wish to be accompanied and the ambulance crew allows it, then the role of companion should be given to one of the casualty's friends who are present, willing and able to be the companion. This role should not be forced on anybody; if no one is present, willing and/or able to accompany the casualty then it simply cannot happen.

10.9 Accident Report Book

At training sessions and events, there should be an accident report

book beside the first aid kit. If a first aid incident occurs, then afterwards the duty first aider should fill out a page in the report book to make an official record of the incident. The completed form should then be removed from the book and kept securely for appropriate filing.

At the end of the event, the duty first aider should collect all completed forms from the book, enclose these in a secured envelope and hand/send them to a health and safety representative of the Academy for proper and secure filing in accordance with the *AHA Data Protection Policy*.

The blank forms in the accident report book should always be available for first aiders to complete at events; the filled out forms may contain sensitive information, so these should be dealt with securely and appropriately.

When the Academy health and safety representative receives the forms, these should be dealt with in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidelines, with due respect for the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA).

Useful links for further information:

- RIDDOR 1995

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/>

- HSE

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

- DPA 1998

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents>

10.11 Participants with Existing Injuries/Conditions

Participants with existing injuries or medical conditions should ensure that at the very least the duty first aider is made aware of potential issues. This information will be kept in confidence and only those individuals who need to know about conditions or injuries will be informed. For example, an instructor should know if a member of his or her class has some kind of attention deficit disorder, or some kind of learning disability, so that the instructor can provide the necessary support without becoming frustrated with an individual without knowing the cause of the problem.

Furthermore, individuals should inform the duty first aider of any medications that are being taken. If the duty first aider believes

that any of these medications might compromise the individual's safety or the safety of others then the duty first aider has the right to place restrictions on the activities in which the individual may participate.

It is the duty of the individual with an existing injury or condition to alert drilling or sparring partners to anything that is important. If an individual has a problem with a knee, for example, then it is important to let partners know about it so that they do not attack the knee and make the problem worse.

Individuals who may need to take specialised medications such as inhalers or epipens should always have their medications present in case these are required. If the medication requires administration by another person then the first aiders are not allowed to administer the medication without appropriate training; if a first aider has undertaken such training and has been qualified in the administration of the medication then this is perfectly permissible. If the first aiders have not received such training, then the individual may provide personal training for the first aiders. This does not qualify the first aiders to administer the medication immediately; the individual must then fill out the *AHA First Aid Medication Form* and sign to say that sufficient training has been provided and that the individual is happy to have the named first aider(s) administer the medication. Such permission only lasts for the one event and for that one individual; if several participants require epipens then each participant must give the training to the first aiders and must sign the permission form.

10.12 Duty of Care

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSW 1974) applies to all events organised and run by the Academy of Historical Arts.

Every participant and non-participant present at the event is responsible both for themselves and for others.

Under this law, the Academy must give first aid provision for its employees, but is not legally required to give first aid provision for event participants, there is merely a "moral obligation" to give such provision rather than a "legal obligation". The Academy's stance on this is that first aid provision should be made available to everyone at the event and not restricted to just employees. First aiders should give first aid indiscriminately and without condition.

More information about HSW 1974 can be found here:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm>

11 Safety During Academy Events

This chapter will discuss the Academy's health and safety policy that is to be followed when organising and running an event.

11.1 Preliminary Risk Assessments

The organisers of the event should undertake a risk assessment of the proposed event and activities to ensure that the event and its activities will be safe for the participants.

During the course of planning the event, changes might be made to the proposed venue or activities, and the risk assessment should be updated as required. It is not something to be done on the first day and then forgotten about thereafter; it should be an iterative process to ensure that the risk assessment remains up to date and covers the event that will actually be taking place!

For more information about risk assessments, please see the "Risk Assessments" chapter within this document.

11.2 First Aid Provision

The organisers must arrange suitable first aid provision for the event, which must be in line with the requirements set out in the "First Aid in the Organisation" chapter of this document.

First, the organisers should find out what first aid provision the venue offers, and any first aid policies or health and safety policies that the venue imposes.

If necessary, the organisers should arrange for further first aid provision. If the venue provides qualified first aiders with well-stocked first aid kits, and prefers to have emergencies dealt with through their own first aiders, then there is no need to take this next step. If the venue has limited first aid provision and the organisers believe that better first aid provision would be a good idea, then the next step is to book the services of a first aid provider such as St Andrew's First Aid or the British Red Cross, to have a first aid presence at the event. This is obviously a more expensive option and would have to be budgeted for appropriately, but would allow for a very professional and skilled emergency response team.

Whatever the source of the first aiders and first aid kits, the organisers should be well versed in precisely what the arrangements are, and should be able to direct anyone with a

problem to the appropriate source for help if something goes wrong during the event.

11.3 Duty First Aider

There should always be at least one first aider at the event (the "duty first aider") who has no other role or activity to perform, who should be available to respond immediately to any emergencies that arise.

During the course of the event, the role of duty first aider may change from one person to another, so that everyone has the chance to participate in the event, or the role may remain with the one individual if the person would prefer it to remain so.

The duty first aider should not be engaged with teaching a lesson or minding a shop; the duty first aider must be able to respond instantly to any emergency that arises without having to make alternative arrangements to cover the other activity first.

11.4 Nearest Hospital

Although the intention is that no one should ever need to go to hospital as a result of attending an event, the organisers should be prepared for such an occurrence just in case it does happen.

The organisers should find out what hospital is the closest to the event and should try to work out how long it would take an ambulance to get to the event from the hospital if required.

If necessary, this might prompt a re-evaluation of the preliminary risk assessment.

For example, if an activity has a high likelihood of producing broken bones (requiring an ambulance to hospital), but it would take 20 minutes for an ambulance to be able to arrive on scene, then perhaps that activity should be modified to lessen the risk of broken bones, or perhaps it should be removed from the event altogether.

Another example would be an event that is very physically intensive and that puts a great deal of strain on the body; while this is fine for younger or fitter participants, older or less fit participants may find that such activities could prompt heart problems or serious respiratory problems. Such medical problems might require immediate removal to hospital, so if the ambulance response time is uncomfortably long then this should prompt a re-evaluation of the risk assessment.

A third example would be a crafting session that involves power tools or quantities of chemicals. Such equipment has the potential to cause grave injuries or medical problems, and will require removal to hospital. The nearest hospital and the probable ambulance response time should be determined by the event organisers before the event takes place, in case this prompts a re-evaluation of the risk assessment.

11.5 Minimum Equipment Requirements

The event organisers should spend some time considering the minimum equipment requirements for the event. This should take into account the activities that will be happening, the audience for which the event is intended, and of course the mitigations in the risk assessment.

If for whatever reason it is not feasible to require individuals to bring their own equipment for an activity, then the event organisers should consider buying “loaner gear” and budgeting to cover the expense. This may often be the case for martial arts tournaments, where safety equipment such as heavy-duty gloves are often a problem.

Event organisers have a duty to make sure that the minimum requirements are indeed safe for the given activity. It is not good to lower the minimum requirements just so that more people can participate; if the cost and availability of the safety gear is an issue, then consider buying in “loaner gear” and budgeting appropriately. If the minimum requirements are set too low, just so that more people can participate, then the event organisers may bear liability for any accidents that occur as a result of inadequate safety gear.

11.6 Insurance Cover

The event organisers should discuss the event and its activities with the senior instructors and health and safety representatives of the Academy. If everything is safe enough, and helps to deliver one of the Academy’s educational programmes, then the Academy can extend its insurance to cover the instructors and activity leaders at the event. If the event or any of its activities are unsafe then the Academy representatives may refuse to extend the organisation’s insurance to cover the event. The event’s risk assessment will play a key part in this discussion.

If external instructors are coming to teach at the event then an agreement needs to be drafted to make it explicit whose insurance

is covering what. If the external teacher is happy to run their activities under their own insurance, and if their own insurance policy is at least equal to the Academy's insurance, then that is perfectly permissible. If the preference is that all activities will be covered by the Academy's insurance then this is also possible, but the appropriate letters must be written by a senior instructor of the Academy to provide proof that this is the case for the duration of the event. By the time the event takes place, all the organisers, staff members and external instructors must be in clear agreement about whose insurance covers what activities.

Finally, it might be worth looking at a third party one-off event insurance policy to cover the event. The event organisers should look into this option or discuss it with the senior instructors of the Academy.

12 Safety During Transport to/from Events

This chapter will discuss the Academy's health and safety policy that is to be followed when transporting equipment to and from events and training sessions.

12.1 Carrying Training Weapons

Training weapons need to be carried to practices and events, and then back home again afterwards. However, there are some sensible ways of doing this, and some very silly ways to do this.

Training weapons should never be carried openly. This is illegal under British law, and the Academy cannot provide any protection or help if you choose to carry your weapons openly.

Training weapons should be carried in a closed bag of some description. Guitar bags are a very good choice for training swords, as are snowboarding bags and bags designed to carry fencing equipment. Items like staffs that are far too long for guitar bags often have other options. Bags for fishing rods are one option, and in fact some manufacturers make bags specifically for staffs.

Sharp weapons should always be transported in a hard case with locks.

The general rules should be that no one should be able to see the training weapon, you should not be able to access it easily during transit, and it should be carried in a very non-threatening fashion (such as in a guitar bag carried on the back with straps over both shoulders).

When transporting training weapons, you must go directly between your home and place of practice, then directly between the place of practice and home again. Taking a longer route with other stops along the way is not acceptable, according to our understanding of the laws in Scotland.

Obviously, transporting training weapons in a vehicle is a much better option than carrying them, and this should be the manner of transport if at all possible.

Please note that Scotland has a different legal environment from the rest of the UK. You should familiarise yourself with the laws regarding carrying training weapons in your area, and then follow them closely.

12.2 Carrying Crafting Tools

Many crafting tools can count as offensive weapons under Scottish law. Therefore, crafting tools should be carried in precisely the same fashion as training weapons; in a sealed bag or case, carried in a non-threatening fashion.

Dangerous crafting equipment such as chemicals must also be transported in a sensible fashion. It is not good enough just to shove everything into a bag and start walking; the items must be packed sensibly so that there is no risk of the items damaging other items in the bag, the bag itself, or causing any injury to the person carrying the bag or others who might be near to this person.

12.3 Packing Vehicles

When packing vehicles to transport equipment and/or people to events or practices, safety should be an important consideration. The individuals in the vehicle should never be put in danger because of the packing process; individuals must be able to exit the vehicle swiftly in case of an emergency and should never be trapped inside the vehicle.

Equipment should be packed in such a fashion that it does not injure passengers in the vehicle and also so that it does not damage the vehicle or any other equipment. It is worth considering how items will react if the vehicle accelerates or brakes suddenly; the items should not go flying as this could endanger the passengers in the car, or could cause damage to the interior of the vehicle itself.

Fragile equipment, or equipment that might sustain some kind of damage during transit, should be packed in such a fashion that it will be safe from damage. This might involve a hard travel case or placing padding around an item; or it might simply involve thinking about what items go at the bottom of the vehicle and placing the more fragile equipment on top.

Thought should be given to ensuring that the driver can always use mirrors and does not have line of sight blocked by equipment or people.

Vehicles have a maximum load weight that they are legally allowed to carry. Police have the power to stop and weigh vehicles to check if they are overweight, and can confiscate overweight vehicles. For this reason, vehicles should never be loaded so that they approach this weight, and this law must be upheld.