



UKBJJA Risk Management & Safety Policy

The UKBJJA recognises that there are sporting risks of injury or even death for participants in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, as with many sports/physical activities. These risks are present regardless of UKBJJA involvement and engagement and it is essential for individuals to understand the role that they can play in minimising risks to their safety and maximising the positive effects on their health and wellbeing.

Individuals must take personal responsibility for their own safety every time they step onto the mats and participate in the sport, and coaches must make sure that individuals understand the gravity of their responsibility in their first classes and regularly thereafter.

Coaches must ensure that they are properly qualified and able to deliver classes in a safe manner and if they have any doubts in the area of risk management they should contact the association for advice and guidance.

Instructor qualifications

All instructors should be

- Enhanced DBS/ PVG / ACCESS NI checked so that academy owners and the UKBJJA can make an assessment of suitability for teaching BJJ. All checks must be carried out by the UKBJJA, the only exception being checks which are registered with the disclosure update service as these can be checked at any time given permission is granted by the holder.
- First aid trained in an in person (or blended learning) course delivered by a registered provider. This should be a minimum of a 1 Day EFAW or specialized sport First Aid Course. This must be within a 3 year validity period as with all first aid qualifications.
- Safeguarding trained within a 3 year validity period delivered by a recognised provider (e.g. NSPCC, UKBJJA or UKCC)
- Minimum purple belt in BJJ
- Valid instructor insurance policy from the UKBJJA.

Risk assessment

All coaches should carry out a risk assessment that encompasses the training area, the number of students and their level of experience whenever they teach a class and apply the guidelines of the UKBJJA in their delivery of the class. A sample risk assessment is attached to this document.

Accident reporting

Any incident that results in the administration of first aid should be recorded in an accident book. This should be assessed regularly to see if there are patterns that might be addressed to minimise risks going forwards.





Training area

A safe training area is essential to manage the risks associated with BJJ. The recommended mats for safe practice of BJJ are 230 kg per cubic metre density tatami with non slip base. However, UKBJJA accepts that there are many different types of mat constructions and surfaces that are suitable for training areas but mats should be firm underfoot and have adequate shock absorbing properties. Care must be taken to avoid gaps in mats or torn surfaces as these can present a significant injury risk.

The training area must be assessed for potential risks, with particular care taken to identify sharp edges that might cause serious injury or fatality (e.g. plug socket or radiator)

A fully stocked and available first aid kit must be provided to treat minor injuries and abrasions.

The training area must be of a suitable size for purpose, with a recommended area of 2 square metres per person for live sparring.

Student numbers should not exceed 24 per qualified coach in the training area.

The building should hold valid third party liability insurance.

The building should comply with all applicable building regulations and fire regulations.

Tapping Out (Submission techniques)

Understanding tapping out or submission is essential to the safe practice of BJJ.

Tapping is training! All beginners must understand that tapping out is a normal and healthy part of BJJ and is essential for safe enjoyment of the sport.

All beginners must be made aware of how tapping out works and the importance of understanding that tapping out is the personal responsibility of every BJJ player and essential to the safe practice of BJJ.

It is essential for beginners to understand that they must always apply techniques in a controlled manner and give their opponent time to submit and that holds must be released immediately upon submission.

All students must be covered by third party liability insurance that covers litigation.

Illegal/foul techniques

All beginners should be made aware of the rules of BJJ and what constitutes a foul technique (e.g. grabbing fingers, fingers in mouth or eyes) so that basic knowledge of the rules is understood in the first class.



Slams represent a very real risk of injury and beginners must be educated about the rules on slamming an opponent, especially in the guard position or to escape submissions.

The UKBJJA follows IBJJF rules for competition – a copy of the current IBJJF rule book is in Appendix 3

Falling

Learning how to roll and breakfall is a key part of minimising risk of injury and must be part of any beginners introduction to BJJ.

Chokes and strangles

Coaches must be aware of the dangers of chokeholds and strangles and should advise someone who has been rendered unconscious not to participate further in the class. The person should also be advised not to train for at least a week in case of damage to blood vessels that may result in serious consequences such as a stroke.

Beginners must be educated as to the significant dangers of practicing a sport that involves chokes and strangles and made aware of the potential consequences that not tapping might have on their personal safety and wellbeing. It is essential for all beginners to understand the signs that a training partner might be unconscious (for example snoring/rasping breath, limpness or convulsions)

Joint Hyperextensions

Beginners must be made aware of the potential for damage to their joints when practicing BJJ. It is essential that all participants understand they have a responsibility to submit BEFORE there is pain or injury.

Declaring medical conditions

Pre existing injuries and medical conditions present one of the greatest risks to participant safety in BJJ and new participants should be asked clearly to state any medical condition that may be relevant (e.g. asthma or diabetes) They should always have any relevant medication with them in the event that it is needed in an emergency.

If there is any doubt as to whether a pre existing injury or condition might present a significant risk of harm then the student should be advised to seek the advice of their GP before participating.

Warm-up

There should always be an appropriate warm up before engaging in any strenuous activity. Commencing live sparring without a warm up dramatically increases the chance of injury.

Hygiene

Good hygiene is an essential part of training in close proximity to others and risks associated with communicable diseases must be managed carefully.

Any open wound must be treated immediately and nobody should participate in training or sparring when bleeding or with an open wound. Any blood on mats must be cleaned up with disinfectant and nobody should train in clothing that is blood stained.

Nobody should train or compete with a skin infection and coaches must be educated on recognising signs of skin infections. It should be a subject that is discussed openly and BJJ practitioners must be made aware of the symptoms of skin infections and feel able to seek advice from coaches and officials about diagnosis and treatment.

Jewellery and piercings

Jewellery and piercings present an increased risk of injury to all participants and should not be allowed. In the event that someone is unable to remove a piercing or piece of jewellery it may be taped at the discretion of a qualified coach

Juniors

For full details of risk management in relation to Juniors please see our Junior Policy

Competitions

Competitions should have a minimum of one paramedic onsite at all times

All the guidelines from this risk management document should be applied and full risk assessment carried out for each tournament.