



Health and Safety Policy

Fencing • Character • Excellence

Together we show up, give our best, support others and keep improving.

Organisation	Cambridge Sword Ltd
Policy title	Health and Safety Policy
Policy number	Policy 02
Version	V4
Policy owner	Club Manager, with Head Coach and venue/session leads
Created	Drawn from existing Cambridge Sword policies and procedures
Updated draft	August 2026
Next review	August 2027, or sooner if guidance, law, club practice or safeguarding requirements change

At a glance

- Fencing involves weapons, movement, protective clothing and shared spaces, so safety must be actively managed.
- Coaches should check the venue, kit and activity before and during sessions.
- Fencers must wear the required protective kit and follow coach instructions.
- Risk assessments should be reviewed dynamically when conditions change, including weather, heat, venue issues or participant needs.
- Incidents, injuries, near misses and hazards should be recorded and escalated as appropriate.

Purpose

This policy explains how Cambridge Sword manages health and safety across sessions, camps, competitions, school activities and other club events.

Responsibilities

The Club Manager has overall responsibility for health and safety arrangements.

Lead coaches and event leads are responsible for checking session safety and making dynamic decisions during activity.

All coaches, volunteers, fencers, parents/carers and spectators have a responsibility to follow instructions, report hazards and act safely.

Venue and activity checks

Coaches should check that the activity space is suitable, clear, well lit and free from obvious hazards before fencing begins.

Walkways, exits and emergency routes should be kept clear.

Any venue concerns should be raised with the venue and recorded where needed.

Equipment and protective clothing

Fencing equipment and protective clothing must meet the required safety standard for the session or competition.

Damaged or unsuitable kit should be removed from use where it may create a risk.

Fencers must not take part unless they are wearing the protective clothing required for the activity.

Weather, heat and venue conditions

The club should check weather warnings and venue information where adverse weather or high temperatures may affect safety.

Where heat, poor ventilation or other conditions increase risk, sessions may be adapted, paused, shortened or cancelled.

Parents/carers, fencers and staff remain responsible for assessing whether travel to and from a venue is safe for their own circumstances. If a school or sports centre confirms that a venue is closed, the club session or event at that venue will not run.

First aid and medical information

Relevant medical information should be available to the responsible coach or event lead in a secure and proportionate way.

First aid arrangements should be appropriate for the session or event.

Participants who are unwell, injured or unable to take part safely should stop or be removed from activity.

Incidents and near misses

Injuries, significant incidents, near misses and hazards should be recorded and reviewed.

Where an incident raises safeguarding, welfare or conduct concerns, the relevant policy should also be followed.

Coach Ratios, supervisions and electric scoring control

Cambridge Sword will apply the current British Fencing Safety Guidelines when planning and delivering fencing activity. Coaches, instructors and event leads should ensure that fencers are safely attired and equipped for the activity being delivered.

The normal maximum supervision ratio during Cambridge Sword coaching sessions is one coach to twelve actively participating fencers (1:12). This ratio should be adjusted down where the age, experience, needs of the fencers, venue layout or activity risk makes this necessary.

Where electric sparring is taking place in regular club sessions, a maximum of twelve electric scoring boxes may be in use at any one time, allowing a maximum of twenty-four fencers to fence simultaneously where the venue layout, staffing and participant ability make this safe. Where attendance exceeds this number, additional fencers should rotate into the session using a managed relay system.

During structured non-electric coaching sessions, it may be appropriate for all attending fencers to participate at the same time rather than wait in rotation, provided the coach can maintain safe oversight and adapt activities to the number, age and experience of participants.

In exceptional circumstances, more than twelve fencers may be supervised by one coach during a structured coaching session. This may only happen with the express permission of the Head Coach in advance, taking account of the age and experience of the fencers, the activity, whether electric or non-electric equipment is used, the venue layout, the experience of the coach and any additional responsible adults present.

Additional responsible adults may support general supervision, smooth running, arrival/collection, kit or behaviour management, but they do not replace the role of a suitably qualified or authorised coach unless this has been specifically agreed.

For after-school sessions using electric scoring equipment, fencers must have completed at least one half term of coaching, and the supervising coach must be satisfied that they have appropriate weapon control, safety understanding and ability to follow instructions before electronic scoring is introduced. A maximum of six fencers may participate in electric sparring at any one time in an after-school session unless this is reassessed and expressly approved by the Head Coach.

When electric fencing equipment is used during after-school sessions, fencers must wear full-length tracksuit bottoms or fencing breeches. Leggings and shorts are not suitable. Fencers not wearing fencing breeches will normally use Size 0 blades; use of a Size 3 blade without breeches must be agreed in advance by the Head Coach and only where the coach knows the class and fencers well and considers it safe for that session.

Related policies and guidance

This document should be read alongside:

- Risk Assessment Management Policy
- Equipment, Kit Loan and Armoury Policy
- Arrival, Collection and Supervision Policy
- Safeguarding and Welfare Policy
- Fencer Code of Conduct
- Coach/Volunteer Code of Conduct
- British Fencing Safety Guidelines

Review

This document will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there is a safeguarding concern, complaint, incident, near miss, change in club practice, change in guidance, or change in relevant law or governing body requirements.

Approval and review record

Prepared by	Emily Lucas, Operations Manager	Date	August 2026
Reviewed by	Sarah Paveley, Club Director / Head Coach	Date	

Reviewed by	Hannah Jones, Welfare Officer	Date	
Next review due	August 2027, or sooner if required	Date	