



# Rules and Safety Handbook

Those running a society or committee have a **duty of care** in law to ensure the safety of its members and any other people who may be affected by its activities and events. Therefore, if you organise an activity for people, you need to take the necessary precautions to keep the activity safe - otherwise the society could be liable for any accidents and injuries which occur as a result. You must also report any accidents/incidents to the Students' Union.

At the beginning of the year, all committee members are asked to read and accept this Rules & Safety Handbook (this is a tick box on your online committee details form). This is to agree that you've read through this guide and you understand the necessary steps you need to take to ensure that your activities are safe and sound!

We also ask that you read the extract from Students' Union Health & Safety Policy at the end of this handbook and follow its recommendations.

## **Society and Committee Insurance**

Your society or committee is covered for its 'usual activities' under the Students' Union's public liability insurance. Member-to-member cover is included (e.g. one ballroom dancer crashes into another, causing injury) but Members are not insured against accidental injury or loss, nor for loss or damage to personal effects. (Members can obtain their own personal accident insurance if they wish.)

Public liability insurance provides cover for injury or damage to people or property, however it would only pay out if negligence can be proved against your society or the Students' Union.

## **What is negligence?**

Doing something a reasonable person would not do - such as exposing someone to unnecessary danger.

OR

Not doing something a reasonable person would do - such as not warning another person of danger.

Successful claims increase the cost of premiums and potentially damage the reputation of the Students' Union.

This insurance is essential for your society or committee in case:

There is an accident or injury in your society/committee,

**AND**

Your society/committee is blamed

**AND**

The person involved is seeking compensation.

***IMPORTANT: This insurance only covers your society or committee for its 'usual activities' - these are the activities that were detailed in the original 'new society application form' and in your Constitution, as well as any other conditions that were applied at the time of approval/registration.***

***You can find your Constitution on the [Society Support Hub](#).***

## **Society Email Security**

Society secretaries are required to take on the responsibility for their society account & its security and to adhere to the CiCS Code of Practice:

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/cics/codeofpractice>





### **Equipment**

It is your responsibility and legal duty of care to ensure the any equipment that your society or committee owns and/or uses is safe and regularly inspected. If you fail to regularly inspect your equipment or if your equipment is not safe for use, you're putting your participants at risk.

Remember that:

- 1) You should visually check/inspect your equipment regularly (e.g. every 3-12 months depending on the type of equipment)
- 2) If you are using electrical equipment as part of your activities, it must be PAT-tested (Portable Appliance Testing). PAT-tests certify that your electrical equipment isn't faulty and is safe to use. Such equipment should be taken at least 48 hours prior to use to the Facilities Office in the Graves Building where it can be checked.
- 3) The people using your equipment should be adequately experienced or trained to do so.
- 4) <http://bit.ly/COSHHsymbols>: if you have anything with one of the first six symbols on the packaging then you need to let us know so we can ensure they are stored correctly, whether here or in the University. If you see the EXPLOSIVE symbol on a substance you want to use then it is mandatory that you let us know before you purchase or use it.

If you have any concerns about the safety of your equipment, or training needed to use it, please contact

[society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk).

Most society or committee equipment belongs to the Students' Union and is therefore insured by the Students' Union. All your equipment must be listed annually on your Committee Details Form Part A. You can insure any additional equipment that you buy throughout the year by submitting details of the item(s) to [society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk). If this equipment is damaged, lost or stolen, a claim can be made (so long as reasonable

precautions have been taken to protect the equipment).

The insurance excess the society or committee would pay is £250. However, equipment is not covered if:

- It is damaged during use.
- It is left overnight (7pm-8am) in an unattended vehicle.
- It is left visible in a locked vehicle during the day Hint: put it in the boot or trunk!
- It is not locked away (e.g. in a house/locker/cupboard).
- It does not belong to the Students' Union, even if it belongs to society or committee members.

*External Equipment:* If you wish to hire or borrow equipment externally, contact [society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk) to arrange extra insurance cover.

Items from outside the EU that don't carry the CE symbol must not be used.

All ladders, scaffold towers, step-ladders, step-stools must be registered and tagged. If your society have one of these items please let us know and we will help to arrange this.

### **Safety Fund**

This pot of money exists to help societies and committees run activities that relate to their core aims and objectives in the safest way possible. The money can help fund equipment, training or specific first aid/safety supplies that you may need. Applications are reviewed by the Student Groups Coordinator and Head of Student Groups Support on a weekly basis.

- Available to Societies, Working and Representative Committees
- A Students' Union fund
- Applications taken throughout the year

Email: [society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk) if you have any questions.





### **First Aid**

If you require First Aid cover for an event, then contact the St. John's Ambulance Society (Sheffield Links) for a quote on providing first-aid cover:

[sheffieldlinks@gmail.com](mailto:sheffieldlinks@gmail.com) If you feel your members would benefit from First Aid training to make things safer for your society or committee (e.g. for your usual activities or your trip abroad) then contact [society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk) who may be able to place you on a free course, giving you an accredited First Aid qualification.

***N.B. For events which require extra safety, you can borrow First Aid kits and high visibility jackets – just ask at the Activities Zone Desk.***

### **Recording Accidents & Near Misses**

Any accidents, incidents or near misses (unplanned events that did not result in injury, illness, or damage – but had the potential to do so) that occur during society or committee events or practice sessions must be reported within 24 hours. You must complete an Accident Reporting Form (you can find this on the Society Support Hub) and submit this to [society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk).

### **Participation and Medical Statements**

For some activities involving risk, it is advisable to ask members to complete a Participation & Medical Statement. This is to make it clear they agree to take part in an activity which involves an element of possible risk and asks them to inform activity organisers of any medical conditions which may affect their safe participation in activities. However, this still means you have a duty of care in law to ensure any activities you arrange are as safe as possible, with a risk assessment being submitted.

**\*Please see the example 'Participation and Medical Statement' for a useful template which can be adapted, located**

**in the Society Support Hub:**

**[www.sheffieldsu.com/societysupport](http://www.sheffieldsu.com/societysupport)**

### **Non-student Members and Associate Membership of the Students Union**

Society and committee constitutions *do* allow non-students to become members; however non University of Sheffield students must become 'Associate' members. This costs £10 and can be done by submitting an application form at the Welcome Desk. There is no charge for Sheffield Hallam University students if they apply showing their Hallam Cards. However, as with claims made by student members, if such a person were to cause injury to someone else or damage their property, then a claim under the Students' Union's public liability cover would only succeed if negligence could be proved against the Students' Union, not the person.

***N.B. All committee members must be registered students of the University of Sheffield - i.e. with an [@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:@sheffield.ac.uk) email address.***

### **What is a Risk Assessment?**

As organisers of activities, societies and committees have a duty of care in law to assess the risks associated with the activity or event and take appropriate measures to reduce those risks as far as is reasonably and practicably possible. This is where a risk assessment form comes in! This is a written checklist which ensures that you are conducting everything as safely as possible, so that the chance of accidents is minimised or avoided – you'll submit to your relevant SU staff member. In the event of an accident or incident, you'll be asked to produce this documentation. There may be some instances where you simply need to 'adhere' to a risk assessment that's already on the Society Support Hub.





### **Higher-risk (or red) activities**

If your Society or Committee is listed below, then your risk rating is 'Red' – this is because your usual or regular activities will likely require more staff support and resources than other groups. Therefore, you must:

- a) **submit an annual risk assessment;** and
- b) **attend risk assessment training or arrange a meeting with Tim:**  
[society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk).

As well as your annual risk assessment, you may also need to submit a risk assessment for one-off higher risk activities throughout the year.

As an example, Dance Society will produce an annual risk assessment detailing their usual classes (as a 'red-risk' society) but will also submit a specific risk assessment for a national competition.

**Red-Risk Societies & Committees 2019-20:** Afro Latin Dance, Airsoft, Allotment, Assassin's Guild, Bake Soc, Beekeeping, Bellydance, Benchball, Bhangra, Bionics, Burlesque, Capoeira, Ceilidh, Chinese Classical Dance, Conservation Volunteers, Dance,, Darts, Duke Of Edinburgh, East European Folk Dance, EWB, Ethical Hackers, Film Unit, Flying Teapots, Forge TV, Forge Press, Forge Radio, Guild of Change Ringers, Irish Dance, K-Pop, Latin & Ballroom, Light Entertainment (USLES), Lishi Tai Chi, Man-Hunt, Med Aid, Medieval Re-enactment, Mental Health Matters, Morris Dance, Nature & Wildlife, Nightline, Performing Arts (SUPAS), Photo, Pickling Soc, Pole Fitness, Quidditch, Real Ale & Cider, Roboteers, Save Our Sandwiches, Science Brainwaves, Scouts and Guides, Simurq Aeronautics, Skateboarding, Slacklining, SMSA, Space, St. John's Ambulance, STAR, Student Market, Students for Estelí, Surgical, Swing, Theatre Company (SUTCo), Wellbeing Café, Wilderness Medicine, Yoga and Pilates, Zumba.

### **"One-off" activities**

If you're planning on undertaking a "one-off" activity, you may need to complete a risk assessment and/or take specific precautions in order to keep those affected by your activities safe - and to comply with SU's insurance requirements.

There's a big range of activities that may require a risk assessment. To help you, please look at the list below for the rules

relating to some of the most common activities. Just click on the activity that your Society or Committee wants to do for the rules or guidance around this.

If you need further advice or support, or want to do something that isn't on the list below and hasn't already been risk assessed as part of your usual activity as a 'red risk' society, please contact:  
[society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk).

#### **Activity:**

[Activities Involving Food: e.g. cake sales, baking, BBQ & picnics, cooking \(member to member\).](#)

[Balls: e.g. Society & Committee Balls.](#)

[Campaigning Activities: e.g. stalls, awareness-raising & petitions – our Campaigns team are here to help.](#)

[Consent for Photographic/Filming at Society events](#)

[Creative Activities: e.g. craft activities, make-up & beauty, cocktail-making, circus skills.](#)

[Dance Rehearsals, Performances & Competitions: e.g. for all dance styles, rehearsals & performances, attending competitions.](#)

[Education & Self-help.](#)





[Events in the SU: e.g. our Events Team are here to help.](#)

[External Speakers.](#) (please note: at least 3 weeks notice and advanced approval required)

[Film Screenings](#)

[Fire Safety for Student Groups](#)

[Fitness and Mind & Body Activities: e.g. yoga, pilates, zumba, lishi tai chi.](#)

[Fundraising Activities: e.g. fundraising and RAG.](#)

[Hazardous Activities: e.g. fireworks, bonfires & inflatables.](#)

[Hiring a Vehicle and Driving Cars & Minibuses](#)

[Making a Claim under the Students' Union's Insurance Policy: guidance](#)

[Manual Handling](#)

[Meetings, Workshops & Debates: e.g. meetings, workshops, revision meetings, debates.](#)

[Receiving Payments for Services Provided](#)

[Social Activities: e.g. board-games, paint-balling & laser-quest, film screenings, meals out, religious activities.](#)

[Socials Involving Alcohol: e.g. bar crawls.](#)

[Sport](#)

[Trainers and Instructors](#)

[Trips Abroad: e.g. with & without a Tour Operator.](#)

[Trips in the UK: e.g. day-trips, residential trips, camping, hiking.](#)

[Volunteering with Under-18s and Vulnerable Adults](#)

[Wellbeing & SU/University Support Services](#)

### **How Do I Complete a Risk Assessment?**

Think of a risk assessment as a checklist form of how safe your activities are. You are, quite literally, assessing the risks. There are some real-life society examples below and a blank template at the end of the handbook.

**First**, you'll need to complete the basic information at the top of the risk assessment. This includes your group name; date; the name and location of your activity; the name and contact details of the person completing the risk assessment; the names of anyone else consulted.

- If your risk assessment is covering a variety of dates, make sure all dates are covered, e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> June 2020;
- Be specific: remember that your risk assessment will need to be produced in the event of an accident, so ensure all your dates are correct and contact details are accurate.



**Next**, your risk assessment checklist will ask you for five pieces of information about each 'risk'. These are:

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>What might cause harm?</b>
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Who might be harmed and how?</b>
<b>Control Measures (Existing and Proposed)</b>	<b>What are you already doing to control the risk? What else do you need to do?</b>
<b>Action by who?</b>	<b>Who is in charge of the making sure control measures happen?</b>
<b>Action by when?</b>	<b>By what date do the control measures need to be in place?</b>

Let's take a look at some real-life risk examples from societies:

**1. Dance Society rehearsal:**

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Wet dance floor</b>
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Participants might slip or trip, causing injury</b>
<b>Control Measures (Existing and Proposed)</b>	<b>The floor will be checked before every practice. If any areas are wet or hazardous, it will be swept and dried before use. Participants will be advised to wear sensible shoes at all times.</b>
<b>Action by who?</b>	<b>The dance teacher.</b>
<b>Action by when?</b>	<b>Every rehearsal.</b>

**2. Duke of Edinburgh Society Peak District walk:**

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Bad weather when walking in the Peak District.</b>
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Participants may get injured from slips, getting cold, hypothermia.</b>
<b>Control Measures (Existing and Proposed)</b>	<b>The walk will be cancelled if weather conditions are bad on the day. Students will be advised to wear appropriate clothing, including sturdy footwear.</b>
<b>Action by who?</b>	<b>Joseph Bloggs (President)</b>
<b>Action by when?</b>	<b>07/06/2019</b>



### 3. History Society trip to York:

<b>Hazard</b>	Large number of students in an unfamiliar city.
<b>Risk</b>	Participants may get lost.
<b>Control Measures (Existing and Proposed)</b>	The trip leader will take all participant names and phone numbers on the coach, and will take a register before departing York, to ensure all participants have returned. All participants have the trip leader's mobile number and a map of York with the coach drop-off point clearly labelled.
<b>Action by who?</b>	Josephine Bloggs (Secretary - trip leader)
<b>Action by when?</b>	08/04/2020

#### Top Risk Assessment Tips

- Think of a risk assessment as a checklist of how safe your activities are;
- Keep an electronic copy for easy updating and send your risk assessment through to [society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk) who will let you know if amendments are needed;
- Don't get bogged down in minor details but think about the *main* risks posed;
- Do your risk assessment as a group, maybe in a committee meeting;
- Be completely honest – don't say you're going to do so something in your risk assessment if you can't do it!

If you have any questions or just need some advice, email: [society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk)

#### Extract from the Students' Union Safety Policy.

You can help Sheffield Students' Union protect your health & safety (and comply with the criminal law) by remembering the following simple responsibilities. You must:

- Take due care of your own health and safety in your activities plus make sure your actions or inactions don't adversely affect others around you. Protect your safety and the safety of your society members and others around you;
- Tell the person in charge of the activity if you believe there is a problem with the task you are doing that may compromise your or others' health or safety;
- Report immediately any unsafe practices, equipment or behaviour which you believe could put others at risk;
- Follow all instructions and training given; if you are unsure ASK rather than taking a chance;
- NOT interfere or misuse anything provided for health and safety purposes;
- Carry out only those tasks you have the necessary training, competence, instruction or authorisation to undertake;
- Attend health & safety related training courses provided;
- Wear your provided personal protective equipment. For example: safety footwear; hearing protection (when in areas where main PA system is in operation); or high visibility tabards (when in the goods yard.);



- Report to supervisory staff any accidents or near misses, whether or not injury is sustained.



## Sheffield Students' Union Activities Risk Assessment

Need help with your risk assessment? Visit [www.sheffieldsu.com/zoneonline/safety](http://www.sheffieldsu.com/zoneonline/safety) or contact your designated staff member (For Societies/Committees: [society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk))

**Society/Committee:**

**Date of Risk Assessment:**

**Event/Activity:**

**Completed by (Name/Position):**

**Event/Activity Location:**

**Contact details (telephone & email):**

**Date of Event/Activity:**

**Other Persons Consulted**

(if any):

<b>SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS</b> <i>What might cause harm?</i>	<b>RISK</b> <i>Who might be harmed and how?</i>	<b>CONTROL MEASURES: EXISTING AND PROPOSED</b> <i>What are you already doing to control the risk? What else do you need to do?</i>	<b>Action by who?</b> <i>Person(s)</i>	<b>Action by when?</b> <i>Date</i>

