

# **JWR Risk Assessment Advisory Note**

## **Advice to Dojo's:**

This document provides advice to members of Jersey Wado Ryu (JWR) concerning Risk Assessments. It explains why Risk Assessments have to be carried out, the purpose they serve, and aims to simplify, the process for instructors.

## **Why do we have to carry out risk assessment?**

The answer is simple, it's the law (Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 3). Briefly put, organizations and individuals who carry out an undertaking have duties under health and safety legislation to assess risks arising from that undertaking.

In addition to these duties under health and safety legislation, as with other organizations that carry out activities of a sporting nature, JWR and club instructors owe a duty of care to people who are involved, and may be affected, by karate training (this includes members of the public as well as karateka).

Instructors should not worry about meeting these duties. The law does not expect you to eliminate all risks, in fact, eliminating risks is often difficult to achieve. Usually, all you can do is take measures to reduce the risks and most of these measures are relatively simple.

## **What is a risk assessment?**

Most of us don't realise it but risk assessments are probably made by everyone, everyday. You weigh up risks and make decisions on what to do, and what not to do, whenever you cross a road, overtake while driving your car etc. In this sense, it's a dynamic process, something that we all carry out, unconsciously, on a regular basis and doesn't require any paperwork.

Where training in the dojo is concerned, while individual karateka will still carry out unconscious risk assessments, e.g. what they can / can't do when nursing injuries etc, instructors need to adopt a more considered approach because they are looking at a bigger picture. Simply put, instructors are supervising the activities of the karateka in the dojo. They also need to consider the possible presence of others e.g., members of the public who may be visiting or spectating.

In order to assess the risks to a large group of people, a thoughtful, more structured approach is required so the risk assessment should be made in writing. However, just because you now have to deal with paperwork, this does not mean that it has to be complex or time consuming. Instructors need to bear in mind that a risk assessment is a means to an end. In essence, it's a tool, a process to help you examine activities connected with training in the dojo that may cause harm to people. It also helps you to consider the suitability of the

precautions you have already taken to prevent harm occurring and whether you should do anything more.

## **How do we do it? What does it look like?**

JWR has produced four basic risk assessments to help instructors. They are generic, in other words, they identify hazards, risks and controls that are common in most dojos, while one risk assessment deals specifically with competition.

After careful consideration, some instructors may decide that these generic assessments address the hazards and risks in their own dojos and are suitable for use without any need of alteration. However, if certain dojos have hazards and risks that are not covered by the generic assessments, then further work is required. It will probably mean that instructors have to alter the assessments to reflect these unforeseen hazards and risks and introduce measures to control them.

All instructors must be aware that these generic assessments are nothing more than an aid to help them assess hazards and risks in their own dojos. Instructors must decide for themselves if these generic assessments are all that is required.

When considering hazards and risks that are not covered by the generic assessments, instructors need to adopt a sensible approach. They need to be aware that they do not have to risk assess everything. Furthermore, they can only really carry out assessments of matters over which they exercise a degree of control. For example, there is little point in assessing the risk to students crossing the road to get to the dojo because instructors are not likely to exercise control outside the dojo, nor do they have responsibility for managing traffic.

The Approved Code Of Practice (ACOP) for the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, provides guidance on how to satisfy the legal requirement to risk assess. It says that the "significant findings of risk assessments should be recorded and that insignificant risks can be ignored". So when instructors mentally assess the risks and conclude that they are trivial and there are no significant findings, they don't have to put anything in writing.

So what is and is not significant? In order to help instructors decide, JWR recommends that an activity based system is used for risk assessment. Using this approach, the hazards associated with an activity can be grouped together.

### **The generic assessments have simplified the activities into two broad categories:**

1. Physical injuries and ill health during training from contact
2. Physical injuries and ill health during training from non-contact

A third category has also been included:

3. Physical injuries from environmental hazards

When this system is used to carry out a risk assessment the activity is the first matter to be considered. You start by asking what is it that you actually do? This provides focus and helps to identify the hazards that are actually related to the dojo. Once this has been done, it also makes it easier to identify the risks associated with the hazards. In deciding what is and is not significant you need to consider the degree of harm that can be caused and the likelihood of it occurring. Examples of insignificant risks might be the following;

A missile thrown by hooligans and smashing through a window of the dojo while training is underway would be a hazard that could cause a great deal of harm, but the chances of it occurring are low. On the other hand, it is very likely that students will frequently experience blisters and bruising while training, but the degree of harm caused is low.

Remember, if the risk is insignificant it does not need to be recorded.

## Conclusion

Risk assessment is not a form that has to be filled in. It is a process to stimulate a way of thinking. Any forms that result from this process are merely a record of what you have decided.

JWR hope that the generic risk assessments and this advisory note will help its instructors to adopt a sensible approach to the assessment of risk in the dojo.

<b>ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS</b>			
Significant Hazards	People at risk	Controls / precautions	Review
1. Slips and trips	Students, instructors, members of the public, sports centre staff etc	Ensure floor is in good condition and free of obstacles. Significant wet patches should be dried. Segregate if necessary.	Visual check by instructor before start of training session
2. Fire	As above, especially new students and visitors	Provision of means of fire escape. Persons in dojo to be aware of evacuation procedure	As above
3. Electric shock	Students, instructors, members of the public, sports centre staff etc	All electrical equipment to be properly maintained and if not isolated unplugged and removed	As above (if electrical equipment is not owned by the instructor then he should report the matter to the owner / keeper and check it has been made safe)
4. Lighting / visibility	As above	To be adequate for the purposes of safe training,	Club instructor before start of training session

		entry to and exit from, the dojo	
5. Cuts / punctures from sharp objects	As above	Ensure floor is in good condition and clear of obvious debris i.e. that which can be easily seen	As above
6. Impact from unstable objects that may fall	As above	Ensure objects e.g. stacked chairs etc are removed / segregated from training area and spectators / public	As above

**PHYSICAL INJURIES/ HEALTH RISKS DURING TRAINING FROM CONTACT**

Significant Hazards	People at risk	Controls / precautions	Review
1. Broken bones	Students, instructor and members of the public	Experience and discipline of students. Careful supervision by instructor. Possible use of Personal Protective Equipment to prevent existing injuries being made worse	Annually by National Executive and Technical Committee
2. Loss of teeth	As above	As above	As above
3. Dislocation of joints	As above	As above	As above
4. Concussion	As above	As above	As above
5. Strains and sprains	As above	Thorough warm up before training	As above
6. Cuts / broken skin	As above	Training / experience and discipline of students. Careful supervision by club instructor. Keep nails short. Remove items of jewellery	As above
7. Health effects linked to over exertion e.g. feeling faint, seizure, breathlessness	As above	Existing health problems e.g. Asthma should be made known to club instructor before training. Rest, take medication e.g. inhaler. If necessary arrange to go to hospital	By club instructor as necessary and before individual trains again

<b>PHYSICAL INJURIES/ HEALTH RISKS DURING TRAINING FROM NON-CONTACT</b>			
Significant Hazards	People at risk	Controls / precautions	Review
1. Broken bones	Students and instructor	Training / experience and discipline of students. Careful supervision by instructor. Possible use of Personal Protective Equipment to prevent injuries being made worse	Annually by National Executive and Technical Committee
2. Dislocation of joints	As above	As above	As above
3. Strains and sprains	As above	Thorough warm up before training	As above
4. Cuts / broken skin	As above	Training / experience and discipline of students. Careful supervision by club instructor. Environmental factors most likely to cause this.	As above
5. Health effects linked to over exertion e.g. feeling faint, seizure, breathlessness	As above	Existing health problems e.g. Asthma should be made known to club instructor before training. Rest, take medication e.g. inhaler. If necessary arrange to go to hospital	By club instructor as necessary and before individual trains again
<b>PHYSICAL INJURIES/ HEALTH RISKS DURING COMPETITION</b>			
Significant Hazards	People at risk	Controls / precautions	Review
1. Fire and other emergencies requiring evacuation	Students, officials, venue staff and spectators	Emergency exits to be clearly signed, unlocked and routes clear of obstructions	Establish exits, routes, alarms etc with venue staff prior to competition. Venue staff to have overall control of evacuation
2. Slips and trips, cuts and punctures	As above	Floors to be kept dry and clear of obstacles Competition areas and 1m safety zone, to be kept clear of e.g. bottles, towels, gum shield cases	Venue to review RE premises are under their control. National Executive and Technical Committee to consider suitability of venue if

		and other items of equipment	serious problems are identified
3. Electric shock, Lighting / visibility and other risks arising from physical aspects of venue	As above	All equipment to be properly maintained and adequate for purpose	Venue to review as above
4. Miscellaneous physical injuries during kumite e.g. broken bones, loss of teeth, dislocations, concussion, strains and sprains, cuts / broken skin	Competitors	Refer to risks during training from contact risk assessment. Officials emphasize good control. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (mitts, gum shields compulsory)	Annually by National Executive and Technical Committee
5. Impact from competitors forced out of area	Competitors, spectators, officials and venue staff	Maintain clear 1m safety zone around competition areas. Persons in zone to be kept to a minimum e.g. other team members and one instructor	As above
6. Health effects linked to over exertion e.g. feeling faint, seizure, breathlessness etc	Competitors	Refer to risks during training from contact risk assessment. Existing health problems to be made known to club instructor before entry. Doctor and 1 <sup>st</sup> aid personnel can assist if necessary	As above
7. Infection from body fluids e.g. blood	Competitors, officials, venue staff	Medical or Venue staff to clear up	Venue to review as above