



Safe Practice Policy

Fighting Falcons School of Martial Arts | Andover, Tidworth and Amesbury

Owner: Head Coach | Effective: 27 September 2026 | Next review: September 2027

This policy sets the minimum safe practice standards for Falcons classes, sparring, test fights and competition entries. Coaches must adapt activity to each participant's age, size, experience, fitness and medical needs. Kickboxing GB rules and event regulations also apply; where this club policy sets a stricter limit, follow the club limit.

1 Supervision and training environment

- Run every session under a suitably qualified and experienced coach, with sufficient supervision for the activity and group. The coach may stop or modify any unsafe activity.
- Inspect mats before use, particularly joins in jigsaw mats. Remove sharp or hard objects and check the space around the matted area, equipment and emergency access.
- Start with an activity appropriate warm-up that progresses gradually to the movement and intensity planned. Finish with an appropriate reduction in activity; stretching may be used where suitable.
- Demonstrate and explain strength and conditioning equipment, including every circuit station, before use. Set loads and exercises appropriate to age, technique and ability.
- Use suitable protective equipment for contact work, including gloves for bag work and regulation discipline specific equipment for sparring. Check fit and condition before activity.

2 Sparring and contact

Sparring is coached practice, not a contest to win. Contact must be controlled and appropriate to the discipline, participant and learning objective. There must be no deliberate follow-through on head strikes. Head contact in training is kept to the minimum needed for development, must remain touch or light contact as specified below, and is permitted only with the protective equipment required by the relevant WAKO rules. A coach must stop sparring if control deteriorates or a participant shows distress, fatigue or symptoms of injury.

- Novices: no head contact during continuous sparring. Other novice sparring permits only technical touch contact where the coach judges the participant ready.
- Intermediate athletes: no kicks to the head during continuous sparring. Any permitted head contact must be touch contact.
- Advanced athletes: light, controlled head contact may be used where genuinely needed for the discipline; it is never an invitation to train at competition intensity.
- Use structured breaks in novice and intermediate continuous sparring, such as stepping apart after a short exchange. Match partners by age, size, ability, experience and the planned level of contact.
- Across age groups or genders, spar only in non-competitive technical formats with touch contact. Competitive intensity sparring requires appropriately matched partners, normally within the relevant WAKO age categories.

3 Recovery and training load

Allow 24 to 48 hours between routine training sessions involving head contact, with the longer interval where the session was more demanding. Do not schedule sparring for at least 48 hours after a competition or a competition intensity test fight. These are club workload rules for athletes without suspected concussion; they do not clear an injured athlete to return.

Coaches should monitor total bouts, rounds, contact, fatigue and recovery across a day, including entries in multiple divisions. For under-18 athletes in continuous disciplines, the club ceiling is six competitive rounds in a day, and a

coach must set a lower limit when appropriate. Competition organisers' medical rules and any suspension take precedence. A coach may withdraw an athlete even when an event would permit another bout.

4 Test fights and competition readiness

A test fight at competition intensity must follow the relevant discipline rules, use required safety equipment, be directly supervised and have a planned response to injury. Limit an athlete to six rounds in a day, normally no more than two three-round test fights. Enforce at least 48 hours without sparring afterwards, subject to longer injury or medical restrictions.

An under-18 athlete may enter a Light Contact competition only when the Head Coach has assessed and recorded advanced sparring readiness, including control, defence, fitness, composure, recovery and suitable experience. Discuss the entry and the expected contact with the athlete and parent or carer. Limit divisions or withdraw an athlete where cumulative rounds or recovery present a risk.

For all Kickboxing GB sanctioned tatami and ringsport competitions, a junior athlete must be at least 18 years old on the day of competition to enter a senior division. Being 18 during the calendar year is insufficient if the athlete is still 17 on the day. This applies to domestic and international events when representing a club or national team under KBGB sanction. Coaches must check the athlete's date of birth, category and event rules before entry.

5 Head injury and concussion

If concussion is suspected, remove the athlete from activity immediately and do not permit a same-day return. Arrange appropriate medical assessment and urgent help for red flags. Give the athlete and, for a child, their parent or carer clear written and verbal advice and record the injury, symptoms, actions and handover in the accident record. Follow the current UK grassroots concussion return guidance, Kickboxing GB guidance and applicable WAKO medical suspensions. The applicable longer restriction governs return to training or competition. No 48-hour routine rest rule overrides concussion restrictions.

6 Other activities and safeguarding

- During weapons training, supervise closely. Junior and intermediate grades use safety training weapons only. Any live weapon use is restricted to senior grades in a separate class without junior grades present, following a specific risk assessment.
- Make self-defence teaching age appropriate. For school-age children focus on avoidance, seeking help, managing bullying and personal safety rather than encouraging confrontation.
- Follow the club Child Safeguarding Procedures, Adult Safeguarding Policy, codes of conduct and incident reporting route when training raises a welfare concern.

Sources and related policies

Kickboxing GB Safe Practise Policy (2025), kickboxinggb.com/safeguarding/; Kickboxing GB Concussion Guidelines, kickboxinggb.com/concussion-guidelines/; UK Concussion Guidelines for Non-Elite Sport (2023). Read alongside the Falcons child and adult safeguarding procedures.