

Health and Safety

New Members and Novices

The greatest duty of care is owed to novices in any activity. They have low levels of hazard perception and are unskilled in avoiding the dangers. This in itself may present additional dangers to other members. It is prudent for committees to treat all new members as novices until their competence has been established. If an otherwise experienced member is introduced to a new aspect of your activities (a new position in the team for example), they are a novice again, although to a lesser degree than a complete beginner.

The following definitions may help Clubs decide who should be considered a novice:

- **Novice:** new to the activity/situation and requires direct supervision (i.e. they cannot take part in the activity without putting themselves or others at risk)
- **Intermediate:** does not require constant supervision and is technically competent to a moderate level (i.e. they take part in the activity in a manner which is as safe as practicable.)
- **Experienced:** able to give suitable supervision and is technically competent to a higher level (i.e. they are able to provide leadership within the activity)

Providing an induction for new members

You need to ensure that you give thought to how you introduce new members into your activities. This is vital in Sports Clubs and Risk Societies, particularly towards the start of each term. Some activities should be organised for the benefit of the new members and to assess their abilities. Typically, this will mean arranging a session where:

- Any paperwork can be completed
- Basic safety information and instruction can be passed on effectively
- Several experienced / qualified members are present to provide information, instruction and supervision
- There are fewer environmental hazards
- Activities are relatively straightforward.
- The aim of safety induction sessions is to raise people's hazard awareness, skill levels and self-sufficiency. Basic information and instruction should include:
 - Identification of main hazards (this helps justify the precautions)
 - Safe use of any necessary equipment plus fault reporting
 - Safe use of any required protective equipment plus fault reporting
 - Warm-ups and stretching routines (for physical recreation)
 - Rules and general activity guidelines
 - Emergency procedures
 - Supervised practice

Please note

All new members of water based Clubs and Societies must attend and pass the "Annual Swim Test" organised by the Students' Union at the University Pool during the first week of term