



## Head Contact & Concussion Policy

Version: V2

Effective Date: 08th May 2026

Review Date: 08th May 2029

Taekwondo Council UK (TCUK) | [www.tkdngb.co.uk](http://www.tkdngb.co.uk)

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### 1. Introduction

Taekwondo Council UK (TCUK) is committed to promoting:

- participant welfare,
- safeguarding,
- injury prevention,
- safe participation,
- and responsible risk management.

TCUK recognises the nature of Taekwondo as a controlled semi-contact martial art and acknowledges that head contact activities carry an inherent risk of concussion and head injury.

This policy outlines the minimum expectations for:

- safe management of head contact,
- concussion recognition,
- injury response,
- return-to-activity arrangements,
- and participant welfare.

Participant safety and welfare must always take priority over:

- competition,
  - grading outcomes,
  - performance,
  - or training objectives.
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### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- minimise head injury risk,
  - support safe participation,
  - promote appropriate concussion management,
  - establish minimum welfare and safety standards,
  - support safeguarding and duty-of-care responsibilities,
  - and provide consistent operational expectations across TCUK-affiliated activity.
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### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- affiliated clubs and associations,
- instructors,
- assistant instructors,
- officials,
- volunteers,
- safeguarding and welfare personnel,
- event organisers,
- and all participants involved in TCUK-affiliated activity.

This policy applies across:

- training sessions,
  - sparring,
  - competitions,
  - gradings,
  - demonstrations,
  - seminars,
  - camps,
  - and related Taekwondo activities.
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### **4. Duty of Care**

TCUK and affiliated organisations owe a duty of care to all participants.

Individuals responsible for activity delivery and supervision are expected to:

- take reasonable steps to minimise head injury risk,
- manage activities responsibly,
- apply rules and supervision appropriately,
- recognise signs and symptoms of concussion,
- and act immediately where concussion is suspected.

Participant welfare must always take precedence over performance or competitive outcomes.

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### **5. Head Contact in TCUK Activity**

Head contact may be permitted within TCUK-affiliated activity where:

- appropriate to the ruleset,
- age appropriate,
- risk assessed,
- supervised appropriately,
- and delivered in a controlled and safe manner.

TCUK defines semi-contact activity as:

controlled techniques delivered with appropriate restraint and control, intended to demonstrate skill rather than cause injury.

Excessive, reckless, uncontrolled, or dangerous contact is not permitted.

Failure to maintain safe control may constitute:

- a safeguarding concern,
  - a conduct issue,
  - or a safe practice concern.
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### **6. Risk Management**

Affiliated organisations and instructors are expected to take reasonable steps to manage concussion and head injury risk.

Risk management considerations should include:

- participant age,
- experience,
- contact level,
- instructor-to-student ratios,
- supervision levels,
- fatigue,
- participant behaviour,
- mismatches in ability or size,
- protective equipment,
- participant welfare,
- and environmental factors.

Risk assessments should explicitly consider:

- head contact,
- concussion risk,
- and participant safety.

This policy should be read alongside the TCUK Safe Practice, Supervision & Student Ratios Policy and First Aid Policy.

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## **7. Recognition of Concussion**

Concussion is a brain injury and may occur:

- with or without loss of consciousness,
- during legal or controlled contact,
- or following apparently minor impact.

Possible signs and symptoms may include:

- headache,
- dizziness,
- nausea,
- confusion,
- balance problems,
- memory disturbance,
- slowed reactions,
- speech difficulties,
- sensitivity to light or noise,
- unusual behaviour,
- or changes in awareness.

If concussion is suspected, it should be treated seriously and managed as a suspected concussion.

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## **8. Immediate Response**

Any participant suspected of sustaining concussion or significant head injury:

- should be removed from activity immediately,
- should not return to activity on the same day,
- and should receive appropriate first aid and medical attention where required.

This decision should prioritise participant welfare and safety and should not be overridden for performance or competitive reasons.

Emergency services should be contacted where:

- symptoms are severe,
- symptoms worsen,
- loss of consciousness occurs,

- or urgent medical risk is suspected.
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## **9. Medical Assessment and Return to Activity**

Participants suspected of concussion should be advised to seek assessment from an appropriately qualified medical professional.

Return to activity should:

- follow a gradual and welfare-focused approach,
- prioritise participant safety,
- and only occur following appropriate medical advice or clearance where applicable.

If symptoms recur:

- activity should stop immediately,
- and further medical advice should be sought.

Accelerated or unsafe return-to-play arrangements are not permitted.

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## **10. Children and Young People**

Children and young people require a more cautious approach to concussion management.

Parents/carers should be informed as soon as reasonably practicable where:

- a significant head injury occurs,
- or concussion is suspected.

Children and young people should not return to contact activity without appropriate medical advice or clearance where applicable.

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## **11. Recording and Reporting**

Head injuries, suspected concussions, and significant incidents should be:

- documented appropriately,
- retained securely,
- and managed in accordance with safeguarding, governance, and data protection obligations.

Records may include:

- date and activity,
- observed symptoms,
- action taken,
- medical advice received,
- and return-to-activity decisions where applicable.

Safeguarding or serious welfare concerns should be reported through appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Current safeguarding contacts, reporting routes, guidance, and support information can be found via the TCUK safeguarding section of the website:

<https://tkdngb.co.uk/en/members-area/safeguarding>

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## **12. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Instructors and Officials**

Instructors and officials are expected to:

- apply rules and supervision appropriately,
- prioritise participant welfare,
- manage activities responsibly,
- recognise concussion concerns,
- and follow this policy appropriately.

### **Participants and Parents/Carers**

Participants and parents/carers are expected to:

- report symptoms honestly,

- follow medical advice,
  - support safe return-to-activity arrangements,
  - and prioritise participant welfare and safety.
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### **13. Inclusion and Accessibility**

TCUK is committed to promoting:

- inclusion,
- accessibility,
- participant welfare,
- and safe participation.

Concussion management arrangements should consider:

- communication needs,
- participant welfare,
- additional support needs,
- reasonable adjustments,
- and accessibility considerations where appropriate.

Current inclusion guidance and support information can be found via the TCUK inclusion section of the website:

<https://tkdngb.co.uk/en/members-area/inclusion>

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### **14. Non-Compliance**

Failure to maintain appropriate safety, safeguarding, welfare, or concussion management standards may result in:

- safeguarding intervention,
  - additional training requirements,
  - restrictions,
  - disciplinary action,
  - suspension,
  - or removal from recognised activity where appropriate.
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### **15. Governance and Review**

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure continued alignment with:

- participant welfare,
  - safeguarding standards,
  - medical guidance,
  - governance expectations,
  - sport safety guidance,
  - and best practice.
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### **Conclusion**

Taekwondo Council UK is committed to promoting safe, responsible, and welfare-focused participation across all affiliated activity.

All individuals involved in TCUK-affiliated activity share responsibility for helping minimise head injury risk and supporting appropriate concussion management and participant welfare.

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### **Approval**

Approved operationally by: TCUK CEO & Safeguarding Team

Date: 08th May 2026

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Subject to formal Board ratification at the next Board meeting

Next Review Date: 08th May 2029