



SAFE ATHLETICS

TRACK & FIELD SAFETY

GUIDE FOR COMPETITION

[2026] - Supersedes 2018 UKA Safe Code of Practice

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SAFE ATHLETICS

Track and Field embraces a wide range of disciplines from sprints to endurance, pole vault to long jump and hammer throw to steeplechase. As with any sport, each discipline carries some form of injury risk both for participants and also for those involved in, or affected by, the activity:- coaches, officials, facility staff, media, spectators or the general public.

Safe Athletics is a document developed by UK Athletics and Home Country Athletics Federations that helps bring the safety critical elements out of the rulebook and supports competition providers and officials to deliver athletics within good practice guidance and information made freely available to anyone involved in its delivery.

As a framework Safe Athletics helps provide specific requirements on the set-up and operation of equipment at competition. Licenced competition, benefits from the quality afforded by TrackMark inspections. However it is for competition providers and officials to use their skills, knowledge and experience to ensure, at competition, that equipment is acceptably safe at the time of competition.

For coached activity, whilst a Track Mark inspection gives an assurance of standards, it is understood that coaching innovation requires a licenced coach to adapt activities for the athletes need with consideration of the equipment, environment and others. Whilst Safe Athletics may be helpful in general competition preparation, the codes of practice under which coaches operate as per the terms and conditions of their licence are often more relevant.

Simply put, following the guidance contained within **Safe Athletics** resources will allow those in a track and field environment to make informed decisions on "good" and help ensure the safety of everyone involved in our great sport.

FOREWORD

Whilst track and field activities are not inherently dangerous, substandard facilities and poor supervision during both training and competition can increase the risk of injuries. **Safe Athletics** encourages all those involved in the delivery of athletics to firmly position safety at the heart of everything that they do.

Although the guidance is focused primarily on those who deliver track and field facilities and activities, the behaviour of athletes and participants themselves is a key factor in ensuring that their own health and safety is protected; and it is hoped that facility operators, coaches, officials, volunteers and all those involved in the administration of the sport will adopt **Safe Athletics** publications and communicate key safety messages to all those who participate in the sport.

WHERE DOES THIS APPLY?

Safe Athletics is guidance for the "field of play" that is the area used for Athletics activities.

Increasingly we see athletics facilities accommodating other activities. This requires venues to integrate athletic activity with other activities. As much as Safe Athletics provides more structure than the rulebook on what "Good" looks like, this document should be used to encourage knowledge, discussion and consultation between competent people (often licenced officials) for the delivery of competition. In training, this consultation between competent people is even more important.

Because sports facilities often have other pressures or uses, this means that other objects are close to areas defined within rules or Safe Athletics. This document does not define standards for areas adjacent to the field of play, but it is expected that activities, surfaces or objects in the area would be managed not as to foreseeably cause injury. This is normally well controlled by the venue operator/owner, but anything obvious noted by those using the area should be reported.

For example;

- it would not be acceptable to have a javelin rack 1.2m away from the pole vault bed,
- lighting stands close to the 1m separation area from the track may require additional padding
- A strength and conditioning area adjacent to an indoor track may require additional barriers to prevent collisions

The initial design, installation or set-up of equipment should be undertaken by a competent person. This should be someone who is trained and familiar with the equipment and manufacturers instructions. Independent contractors are routinely used for these activities and should be considered as a normal way to install and test equipment safety. This provides professional, third party assurance that equipment is fit for use.

Temporary facilities have the same requirement to ensure safety, and for this reason often are expensive to operate in a safe way. e.g. installing and testing a raised runway for pole vault needs to be done to meet the same expectations of the installation of a permanent structure.

WHOSE JOB IS SAFETY?

Safety is everyone's responsibility and whether you are a facility owner, event organiser, official, coach, athlete or spectator; safety should always be the number one priority above all else. Often, other pressures can mean in all sports there is a balance to be struck between risk and reward; and varying perceptions of risk means that this "balance" is sometimes viewed differently by different people. In Athletics we have an expectation that everyone has the right to call a temporary "STOP" to anything that may be unsafe.

Final safety decisions at competition should not be made in isolation and that there is consultation with competent (e.g. licenced) others. This enables local solutions to be put in place, where no one venue, competition, group of athletes or conditions are the same. Recording these variations, requires a risk assessment.

RISK ASSESSMENT

THE IMPORTANCE OF RISK ASSESSMENTS

A risk assessment is a required and important part of step in protecting everyone who is affected by athletics activities, including facility operators, athletes, spectators, coaches, volunteers and officials. Risk Assessments help to focus in on the risks that really matter – the ones with the potential to cause significant harm.

For athletics competitions the responsibility for safety is shared between the venue (the provision of safe, well maintained facilities and equipment) and the event organiser (the conduct of safe, well managed competition events and activities).

An Risk assessment guidance for Event organisers is covered in the "Safe Athletics - Track & Field Safety Guide for Event Organisers", but in essence the event organiser should:

1. Request facility risk assessments from the host venue that will include many "day to day" risks such as access, traffic management, fire and evacuation and;
2. Carry out competition specific risk assessments which focus on the activities that will form the competition programme. For example for an evening Sprints Festival the Event Organiser would need to conduct risk assessments that considered any potential hazards relating to: warm-up, track, kerb, starting blocks, movement of athletes/officials, spectators, adequate sports lighting floodlighting etc

OFFICIALS AND DYNAMIC RISK MANAGEMENT

On the day of competition there is no requirement to conduct formal, documented risk assessments. However, officials do have a duty of care to ensure that participants do not suffer any unreasonable level of harm.

In order to discharge this duty of care it is important that officials use their skills and experience are aware of the need to constantly conduct "dynamic risk assessments" throughout the event.

Dynamic risk management is the continuous assessment and control of risks throughout the duration of the competition and whilst each and every athlete should take on a degree of responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing the overall responsibility lies with those who manage the activity (i.e. the officials).

It is important therefore, that officials ensure that safe practices are followed at all times and, so far as is reasonably practicable, eliminate or reduce all risks to a minimum.

EXAMPLE

A pre-competition risk assessment has been conducted in relation to a javelin competition which is one event in a full track and field league fixture. Although the edge of the landing sector is in close proximity to the edge of the track previous league results suggest that the furthest distance that would be thrown at the event would be 45 metres which would leave an ample "safety zone" between the infield area and the track.

However, on the day of competition you become aware that one club has entered a 60 metre plus Javelin thrower and that there are strong gusts of wind that have the potential to blow a javelin "off course".

Clearly, in this example, there is a change to the expected risk, and harm may result. Officials undertake a H&S training module and those officiating in Throws will have a Field Official Licence which has more specific training for these activities.

In this example, the field official will need to make a change to the planned arrangements - this will need to be done in consultation with the meeting manager as changes may affect other activities.

AN OFFICIAL'S SAFETY ROLE AT COMPETITIONS

AN OFFICIAL'S SAFETY ROLE AT COMPETITIONS

As stated in the previous section all licenced officials appointed to an event are expected to provide a reasonable and prudent duty of care to all involved during a competition. Officials' must check that equipment and facilities are in good order before use, and that they are following recognised safe practices. If there is doubt - "stop".

By the very nature of their role, Officials are always in close contact with athletes and should always remember that the main focus of athletes is to perform and not be aware of changes that might affect their safety in their immediate environment.

As well as controlling their own specific competition areas, officials should always be aware of other track and field events taking place within the arena, particularly those in the immediate vicinity; whether that be that infield throws landing areas, horizontal/vertical jumps runways/ landing pits or sprint and oval track lanes.

KEY ROLES OF OFFICIALS AT EVENTS

- Understand and be familiar with the role they are undertaking and be confident on the day that their mental and physical capability is suitable for the duty they are undertaking.
- Maintain ongoing dynamic risk assessments throughout the duration of the event to ensure the safety of fellow officials, athletes, coaches and spectators in and around the event through a constant awareness of what is happening around them and how it might impact on what they are doing
- Control competition areas at all times from warm-up to event completion
- Lead by example particularly in the area of safety - saying "STOP" to check or make changes is excellent safety management.
- Check the adequacy of the equipment, implements and the facilities to be used in the competition, including lighting if it is to be used
- Report any safety concerns immediately to those responsible
- Remain alert at all times, not just at the designated event but also of any adjacent activities that may have an impact
- Always look in both directions before crossing the track, sector/infield or any runway to ensure that it is safe to do so
- If officiating in the infield be alert to all implements at all times
- Never enter throwing impact areas unless the officiating role involves marking throws or retrieving implements
- Staying out of infield areas unless permitted to be there
- Ensure any accidents, injuries or near misses are reported - <https://www.uka.org.uk/governance/health-safety/online-accident-incident-report-form/>

Note: For further information on specific roles and responsibilities of officials please review Competition Rules (Part 2) of the UKA rulebook

WARM UP

WARM-UP

Athlete pre-event warm-ups are a time when accidents are more likely to occur because multiple athletes tend to “share” use of available venue space simultaneously. Athletes will be focused on their own preparation during warm-up periods and there can be a risk that officials are less vigilant during this period than during formal competition.

There is also a risk that an official will focus purely upon the safety of athletes in the event they are controlling. Given the nature of track and field athletics and the wide range of activity that takes place within a relatively small area, this is potentially dangerous and officials should always ensure that they are aware of dangers posed by other events in order to protect the safety of both athletes and themselves.

ATHLETE WARM-UP SAFETY GUIDANCE

Officials and event organisers can help to ensure safe, well managed warm ups by considering this specific activity in a risk assessment. list not exhaustive

IT WOULD BE NORMAL TO;

- Ensure that field event warm-ups are supervised and controlled at all times
- Pre warn athletes of important warm-up safety protocols, for example:
 - One way systems
 - Accreditation requirements or stewarding for non-athletes (e.g. coaches) accessing the warm up area
 - Specific Hurdle Lanes or Hurdle Only Areas
 - Designated event warm-up times
 - Restrictions, if in place, on headphones within the main arena
- Warm-ups should not be permitted in any areas deemed unsafe, including:
 - Other event warm-up areas
 - Spectator areas
 - “Live” competition areas
 - Slippery surfaces, banking, car parks etc

TRACK SAFETY

STARTING SAFETY

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR STARTERS

FIREARMS

UKA has made a policy decision that electronic means of starting events should be used wherever possible. Separate guidance for officials using firearms is available and must be adhered to.

This minimises the use of firearms to start events. Starters should only apply for a firearms licence with the support of UKA. Any new licence obtained without UKA sanction will not be deemed acceptable at UKA events.

The use of firearms require additional controls and should only take place under specific firearms protocol and in conjunction with an experienced senior official familiar with working with firearms. Where a starter is correctly licenced to purchase and store the appropriate materials for loading/reloading blank cartridges then ONLY the materials specified on the licence are to be used. These are defined by "UN Number". The materials should be used as purchased and in no way modified.

GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS

Ensure, as the starter, there is a good understanding of the risks specific to the role of starter with the competition manager. e.g. any variations to timetables where the start position might have an increased risk from long throws. Additionally ensure that the track team manage the equipment in a way that keeps the risks reduced for athletes and the start team (e.g. clear expectations for hurdles being installed and "run outs" being controlled).

FOR THE INFRASTRUCTURES CONSIDER:

Cabled false start equipment

1. Position of starter's podium and false start equipment to be agreed prior to start of competition.
2. All cables should be laid in an orderly manner to each of the start blocks
3. The cables from the start blocks to the console should be laid in an orderly manner and routed to avoid as far as possible the 'normal' pathways of all personnel at the start.
4. Cables from the start console to the starter's podium should be laid in an orderly manner and secured as necessary to the podium.
5. Any audio system should be set at a comfortable position and noise level.
6. Electronic gun systems should be set up to the satisfaction of the starter.
7. Movement of start blocks and false start equipment when appropriate before and after a heat or final.

Wireless false start equipment

1. Any audio system should be set at a comfortable position and noise level
2. Electronic gun systems should be set to the satisfaction of the starter.
3. Position of starter's podium and false start equipment to be agreed prior to start of competition.
4. Movement of start blocks and false start equipment when appropriate before and after a heat or final.

PHOTO FINISH SAFETY

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR PHOTO FINISH

Although the supply and rigging of Photo finish equipment and is not the responsibility of Technical Officials.. Checks should be made at the planning stage to ensure that expectations are clear about how this will be done.

All systems record a start time, capture a time stamped series of finish line images, and store this data labelled as an identified race. From this the precise time of each finishing athlete and, hence, the finishing order is determined. These times and places are then made available as the 'result' of the race.



FACILITY/EQUIPMENT SAFETY

PHOTO FINISH TOWER

In the case of temporary scaffolding towers, ensure that the tower is constructed to the manufacturer's specifications and correctly tagged. This is expected to be done by a specialist contractor and handed over to an event.

For permanent towers/fixtures ensure that a safety information plate is in place, legible and in date.

1. Ensure that the working platform flooring is securely attached to the tower framework.
2. Ensure that the working platform safety rail is at the regulation height above the level of the platform floor, notwithstanding the camera's line of view.
3. Ensure that the tower is securely braced and stabilised against the ground environment.
4. Ensure that access to the working platform is preferably from within the ground footprint of the scaffold tower.
5. Ensure that the working platform access device is safe and secured to both the working platform and ground environment.
6. Ensure that high visibility tape is wound around the lower tower extremities from ground level to a height of 2 metres.
7. Ensure that the aperture through which the PF camera points towards the track has a suitable safety rail(s) to prevent PF operatives from falling on to structures below the camera location.
8. Ensure that all PF technical officials are aware of the opening facility.

TEMPORARY STAND ALONE VIDEO CAMERA MOUNTING TRI-POD

1. Ensure that the tri-pod is securely positioned.
2. Ensure that the tri-pod is of a contrasting colour to its surroundings.
3. Ensure that when accessing the camera, a suitably trained and competent person does so, if using ladders.

PF EQUIPMENT INSTALLATION

1. Ensure that all mains power supply outlets have switches and power 'ON' indicators.
2. Ensure that all mains power supply plugs and associated cables have in-date safety labels.
3. Ensure that all electrical, networking and data cables are routed away from the operating area and, as far as is possible, from the floor in main thoroughfares. Where cables are required to be laid on the floor, they should be protected by rubber cable mats to maximise electrical protection and to minimise the trip hazard.

PF WORKING ENVIRONMENT

1. A PF operating area / timing room is filled with electrical, networking and other data cables. They are typically installed, temporarily, for the duration of the competition and, as such, can be often found affixed to tables (and other surfaces), laid on the floor and rigged through open windows. On arrival, Technical Officials required to work in this environment should receive an H+S briefing from the Chief PF. Officials should also take time to survey the room to gain an understanding of potential trip or other hazards. Any safety concerns should be raised immediately to the Chief PF official.
2. In the process of executing their duties, the Technical Officials in the Photo Finish team are often required to move around the PF operating area / timing room and/or leave the area to interact with officials based in other locations around the competition. Due care and attention should always be taken and, even when under time pressure, under no circumstances should officials run.

RESULTS CLIPS

1. Ensure that the area below the PF operating position, in which a results clip is dropped, is cordoned and warning notices displayed.
2. Ensure that the area below the PF operating position is clear of all personnel before a results clip is dropped.

FACILITY/EQUIPMENT SAFETY

TEMPORARY STAND ALONE VIDEO CAMERA MOUNTING TRI-POD 1. 2. 3.

1. Ensure that the tri-pod is securely positioned.
2. Ensure that the tri-pod is of a contrasting colour to its surroundings.
3. Ensure that when accessing the camera, an 'A' frame ladder is used suitably braced and steadied by a competent person.

VIDEO PHOTO FINISH EQUIPMENT INSTALLATION 1. 2. 3.

1. Ensure that all mains power supply outlets have switches and power 'ON' indicators.
2. Ensure that all mains power supply plugs and associated cables have in-date safety labels.
3. Ensure that all electrical cables are routed away from the operating area and protected on the floor by rubber cable mats.

AUTOMATIC STARTING DEVICE(S) INSTALLATION 1. 2.

1. Ensure that all electrical cables are routed via dedicated cable ways, near to the inside of the inside track kerb and protected from athletes/general pedestrian traffic by rubber cable mats.
2. Ensure that where no special provision is made for the egress of cables from manholes, notices are displayed warning of raised manholes.

RESULTS CLIPS 1. 2.

1. Ensure that the area below the PF operating position, in which a results clip is dropped, is cordoned and warning notices displayed.
2. Ensure that the area below the PF operating position is clear of all personnel before a results clip is dropped.

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR POLE VAULT

FACILITY/EQUIPMENT SAFETY

1. In terms of athlete safety the pole vault landing bed is extremely important. In recent years the required size and padding of the landing area has increased for safety reasons. Pre training/ pre event checks of the -event runway, box, uprights, crossbar, landing area and upright and poles checks must always be carried out to ensure that all aspects of the Pole Vault event are safe and conform to the specification laid out in the current compliant with the UKA rulebook (TR28.6 - TR28.12)
2. No vaulting should be allowed to commence unless ALL the pads and padding are in place. This includes padding around the box as well as the padding for the uprights.
3. Bed units must be made of suitable foam and – if made up of several sections - must be securely fastened together. The entire area must be covered by an attached spike-proof wear sheet. No gaps or separations should exist.
4. Landing beds should be a minimum of 0.8m in depth (measured from the pole vault runway level) 800mm in depth.

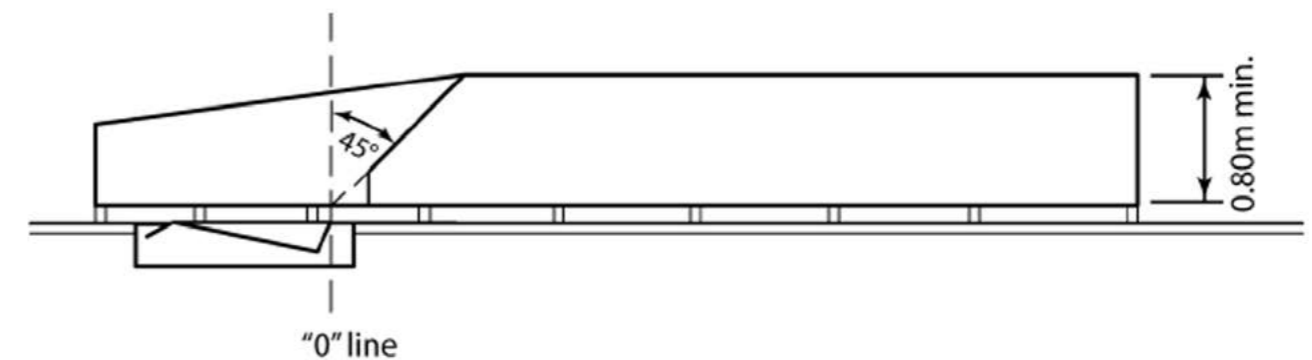
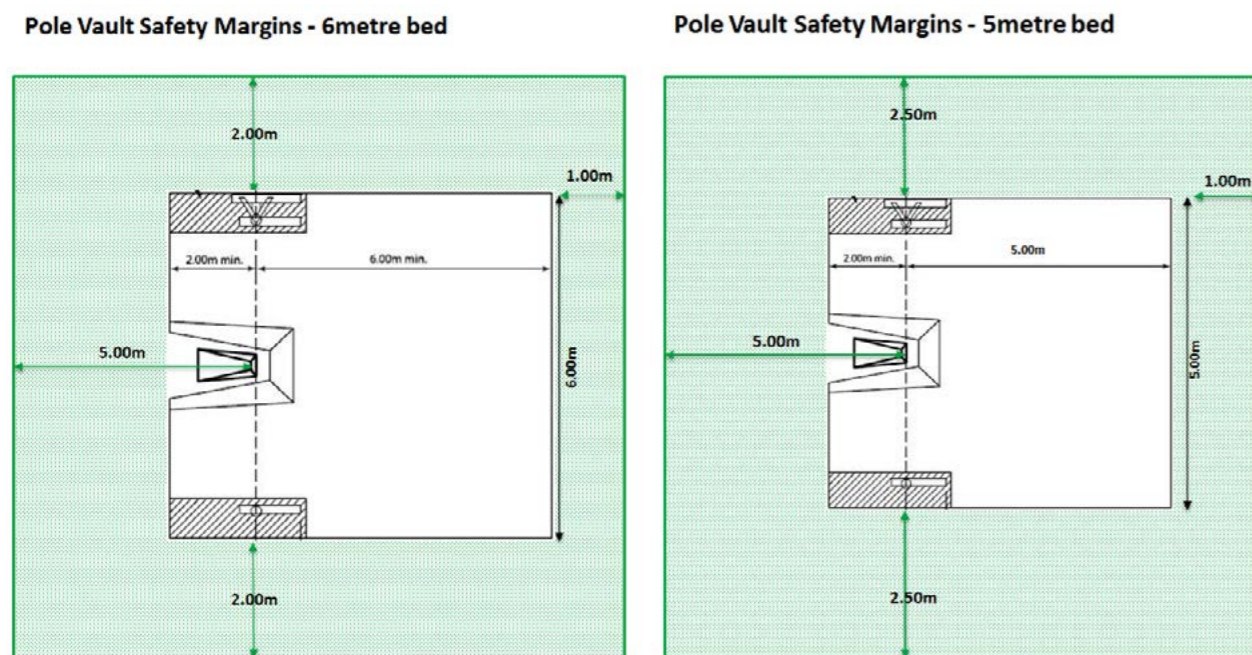


Figure (c) TR28- Pole Vault landing area

5. The landing area should be not less than 0.80m high but may be placed on a base or pallets to increase ventilation. This base should not be more than 0.10m high and should not protrude beyond the edges of the landing bed. The section immediately behind the box should be closed.
6. All areas around the landing mat (minimum 1m side and rear), must be kept clear of any structures and/or items that could cause an injury. The area immediately around the landing mat should adequately protect an athlete dismounting the bed from a free height fall equivalent to the height of the top of the mat. It is important to note that for outdoor activity the suitability of the surrounding surface could vary depending on local climatic conditions (for example in either extreme dry/cold conditions). In some situations additional protection may need to be introduced. This protection should follow the principles laid out in BS EN 1176-1:2017.
7. Existing structures fences in the immediate vicinity of the landing area safety margin (e.g. fence, walls, lighting columns, hurdle trolleys etc) should be moved or if this is not possible, covered in suitable padding. Existing structures fences in the immediate vicinity of the landing area safety margin (e.g. fence, walls, lighting columns, hurdle trolleys etc) should be either be moved or if not possible, re-located or covered in suitable padding.

JUMPS SAFETY

FIG. 4.0 POLE VAULT LANDING AREA SPECIFICATION AND SAFETY MARGINS



8. Any style of uprights or posts may be used provided they are rigid.
9. If a base is used this must be well secured, and well maintained.
10. Uprights must be checked for loose wheels, broken or slipping tapes, securing pins/screws, winding handles, bar supports.
11. When used droppers are used these must be rigid and firmly fixed.
12. The base must be well secured, and well maintained free from rust and lubricated.
13. Examine runways to ensure they are well maintained and free from any obstructions or debris.

ACTIVITY SAFETY

IMPORTANT: THE LIST BELOW IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE BUT OUTLINES COMMON AREAS TO CONSIDER.

BEFORE THE EVENT	WARM-UP	DURING THE EVENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that weather conditions / sports lighting levels are suitable for the activity. ▪ If you are the head official at the pole vault or high jump, double check to ensure that the foam landing beds are securely fastened together prior to warm-up and during warm-up and competition. ▪ Ensure vaulters are sufficiently competent to avoid injury to themselves and others. A track meeting should not be an unsupervised pole vault practice session for inexperienced athletes. ▪ Monitor the zero point line and the marking on the pad to ensure they align. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure supervision of athletes during warm-up. ▪ Care must be taken to ensure vaulting poles do not constitute a tripping hazard during warm-up and competition. ▪ Ensure the runway is kept clear when vaulters are about to start their approach. ▪ Beware of falling poles. ▪ Ensure run up is kept clear when athletes are waiting. ▪ If a dedicated pole rack is not available poles should be located in a safe area and officials should ensure that poles do not protrude onto any track/runway areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regularly check poles for damage. ▪ Beware of falling poles. ▪ Ensure run up is kept clear when athletes are waiting. ▪ Officials should ensure that poles do not protrude onto any track/runway areas.

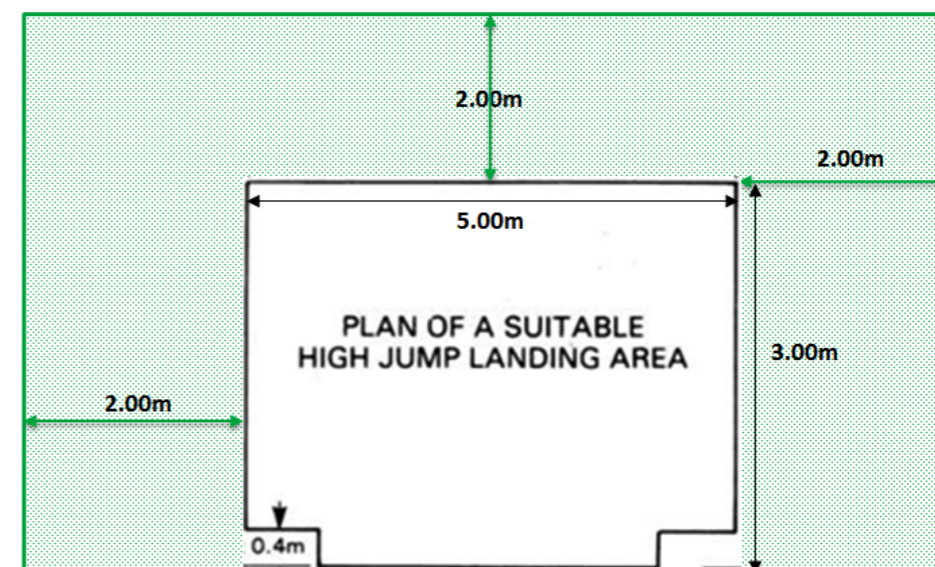
Stop any activity where safety might be compromised whether it is your event or another.

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR HIGH JUMP

FACILITY/EQUIPMENT SAFETY

1. The landing bed is the most important safety item in the High Jump and pre training/ pre event checks of the high jump fan, uprights, crossbar and landing area must always be carried out to ensure that all aspects of the High Jump event conform to the specification laid out in the current UKA rulebook (TR27.3 - TR27.10)

FIG. 5.0 HIGH JUMP SAFETY MARGINS (5M X 3M UKA LANDING BED)



2. Bed units must be made of foam, securely fastened together and the entire area should be covered by an attached spike-proof wear sheet.
3. The landing area should be not less than 0.70m high but may be placed on a base or pallets to increase ventilation. This base should not be more than 0.10m high. 3. All areas around the landing mat (minimum 1m side and rear), must be kept clear of any structures and/or items that could cause an injury. The area immediately around the landing mat should adequately protect an athlete dismounting the bed from a free height fall equivalent to the height of the top of the mat. It is important to note that for outdoor activity the suitability of the surrounding surface could vary depending on local climatic conditions (for example in either extreme dry/cold conditions). In some situations additional protection may need to be introduced. This protection should follow the principles laid out in BS EN 1176-1:2017.
4. Existing structures fences in the immediate vicinity of the landing area safety margin (e.g. fence, walls, lighting columns, hurdle trolleys etc) should be moved or if this is not possible, covered in suitable padding.
5. Any style of uprights or posts may be used, provided they are rigid.
6. Bases must be stable and joined onto the upright.
7. Crossbar supports should face each other and must be easily adjusted and level.
8. The high jump uprights and cross bars should be checked for stability to ensure that if a high jumper lands in the middle of the cross bar the uprights do not topple inward and cause injury.
9. Examine the high jump fan to ensure it is well maintained and free from any obstructions or debris. (e.g. pin, tacks, tape).
10. In wet weather sponge rollers/brushes should be utilised to remove surface water and prevent slipping.

ACTIVITY SAFETY

IMPORTANT: THE LIST BELOW IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE BUT OUTLINES COMMON AREAS TO CONSIDER.

BEFORE THE EVENT	WARM-UP	DURING THE EVENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that athletes are wearing suitable footwear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure each athlete jumps in turn and does not encroach on other athletes' run whilst waiting their turn. Make sure the landing beds and surrounding areas remain clear of items that might cause injury. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure each athlete jumps in turn and does not encroach on other athletes' run whilst waiting their turn. If an athlete commences their approach run from the track the athlete and officials must be aware of the potential hazard from other track events. Continuously monitor the landing beds to make sure they aren't moving; readjust them as needed. Make sure the landing beds and surrounding areas remain clear of items that might cause injury.

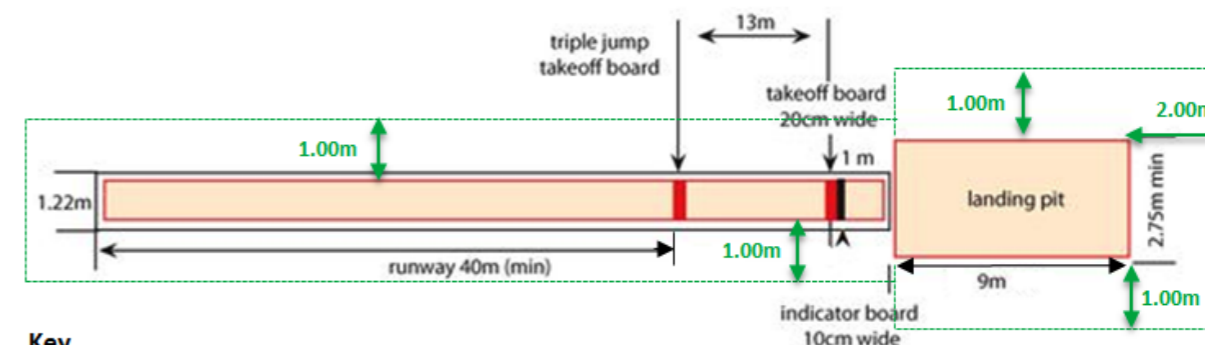
Stop any activity where safety might be compromised whether it is your event or another.

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR LONG & TRIPLE JUMP

FACILITY/EQUIPMENT SAFETY

- The minimum length of the runway, measured from the relevant take-off line shall be 40m with a width of 1.22 m.
- For Long Jump the distance between the take-off line and the far end of the landing area should be a minimum of 10 m.
- For Triple Jump the distance between the Men's take-off line and the far end of the landing area should be a minimum of 21 m.
- The landing area should have a minimum width of 2.75m and a maximum width of †3 m.
- For both warm-up and competition the sand should be:
 - Dug over and loosened to a minimum depth of at least 0.30m (measured 0.30m in from the edge of the pit).
 - Raked to create an even, level surface
- The edges of the landing areas should be covered with an impact-absorbing material and rounded off.
- There should be no objects or obstructions within 1metre of the sides of the runway/landing area and 2 metres to the rear of the landing area (See fig. 6.0)

FIG. 6.0 LONG/TRIPLE JUMP SAFETY MARGINS



Key

Safety Zone ———

- When distance indicator boards are used these must be positioned at least 1metre away from the edge of the landing area.
- A 1 m x 1.22 m chalked square should be marked at the take-off for visually impaired athletes.
- All take-off boards shall be installed so that their surface is level with the surface of the runway. They shall be rectangular, made of wood or other suitable rigid material in which the spikes of an athlete's shoe will grip and not skid.
- Take-off boards should be checked before every activity/event for excess wear and tear. Note: It is important to make sure that the take-off boards to be used are close enough to the sand pit to meet the level of competition.
- Blanking Boards: All take-off-positions not in use shall be filled by solid, firmly fitting blanking boards of metal or any other suitable material covered with synthetic material identical to the runway. They should fit firmly in the foundation trays and may be fitted with adjustable legs to ensure that, when in position, the surface of the boards are level with the surrounding runway.
- If constructed of metal, the support legs or base of the tray should be coated with rubber, PVC or other sound absorbing material.

†The width of the landing area can be increased to 3.50 m for visually impaired athletes T11/T12

ACTIVITY SAFETY

BEFORE THE EVENT	WARM-UP	DURING THE EVENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ensure that all athletes are wearing suitable footwear.▪ Where possible flag/rope off run-up areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Confine warm-ups to safe, managed areas, usually on the runway(s). Pay particular attention during the warm-up period since the time between jumps is much shorter and attention may be diverted with multiple activities occurring.▪ Do not let another jumper start their jump until the last jumper has cleared the pit.▪ Rake the pit during warm up when the surface becomes rutted with deep holes or every 10 jumps.▪ Rakes and brushes used for levelling and cleaning should be kept away from landing area and prongs of rakes should face the ground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Do not let another jumper start their jump until the last jumper has cleared the pit.▪ Do not cross runways during a competition and keep your eye on the runway at all times.▪ Caller and/or guides should stand in a safe place that does not impede the view of the officials.▪ Rakes and brushes used for levelling and cleaning should be kept away from landing area and prongs of rakes should face the ground.

Stop any activity where safety might be compromised whether it is your event or another.

THROWS SAFETY

SAFETY IN THROWS

OVERVIEW

All of the implements that are thrown at athletics training sessions and during competitions have the potential to be lethal weapons if their use is not properly managed and supervised at all times. Throwing events should always be properly managed and supervised and safety **MUST ALWAYS** come first. Impact or contact from an "in-flight" hammer, discus, club, javelin or shot will almost certainly result in a serious or fatal injury.

To help avoid accidents the central throwing area or the specific safety sector must be roped off as a unit at a height of approximately 1 metre. Shot throwing sectors must be roped off at a height of approximately 1 metre and at a minimum distance of 2 metres outside the sector lines.

COMPETITION

During licensed competition, **ALL THROWS** should be preceded by a warning signal which shall be acknowledged by the event officials before the throw commences.

To ensure you own personal safety and that of participants and bystanders, event officials **MUST BE**:

MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY ALERT

Many of the serious injuries that have occurred during throwing events in the past have identified a lack of attentiveness by an official(s) as a major cause. The nature of the event dictates that throwing event officials must be extremely alert and concentrate on what and where they are, and where the athletes are at ALL times. Officials positioned in or near implement impact areas should ensure that they are aware of the abilities of the athletes so that they know who the long and potentially wayward throwers are and can adjust their position on the field accordingly.

FOCUSED ON THE EVENT

It is vital that officials are fully focused on the event and remain undistracted by other activities. Field event programmes are fast moving and it is important that quick and accurate decisions and actions can be taken.

AGILE

Those officiating in the infield must be able to move quickly in all directions and have good balance and mobility. In addition for their own personal safety all officials must have:

- Good eyesight in order to see implements in the air
- Good hearing so that they can hear the warning horn and any other warning signals

For those who officiate during throwing events it is essential to remain vigilant at all times as bystanders, spectators and even athletes are not always as aware of the dangers associated with their event. It is the responsibility of officials to inform and educate them (sometimes firmly), both for their own safety and for your own peace of mind.

COMPETITION TIMETABLE

When selecting venues and planning timetables meeting organisers should take into account all aspects of the day and endeavour to ensure that officials are not put in a position where they may become excessively tired. Enough officials should be appointed to the meeting to ensure that they can all have sufficient breaks during the day. Note: In accordance with the UKA Rules for Competition (Rule CR2 S2) the maximum time allowed for a track and field competition held under a UKA Licence must be 8 hours unless a new team of officials is provided.

JUDGING LONG THROWS (HAMMER, DISCUS, JAVELIN, WEIGHT THROW, CLUB)

In accordance with UKA Rules of Competition, officials cannot judge in the landing sector in any throwing event until they have completed a UKA Track & Field Health & Safety module.

In all cases of Long Throws the event must be controlled by a Chief Judge who is a qualified Technical Official at Level 2 or above. They may position themselves in the landing sector or be the controlling judge at the throwing area, depending on the distances likely to be thrown.

The following may judge within the landing sector:

- Qualified Technical Officials at Level 1 and above.

The following may judge or assist outside the landing sector, entering the sector only after the implement has landed (e.g. as implement retrievers or Validity Judges).

- Qualified Technical Officials at Level 1 and above.
- UKA Assistant Officials who have attended a UKA Health & Safety course.
- Helpers over the age of 16 who have been fully briefed in the safety requirements of athletics events before competition commences by the Meeting Manager and / or Field Referee.

The following may only judge or assist outside and behind the mouth of the throwing cage, or behind the scratch line of the javelin runway or circle. Example roles include; Circle/runway judge (there are several duties associated), pull-through tape, arm action, implement control, scoreboard, card judge, EDM operator, clock operator, Athletes' Steward

- UKA Assistant Officials who have not attended a UKA Health & Safety course.
- Helpers over the age of 16 who have not been fully briefed in safety requirements of athletics events before competition commences by the Meeting Manager and / or Field Referee.

Note: These requirements are applicable to ALL competitions held under UKA Rules at all levels (including leagues & open meetings)

THROWING SAFETY ESSENTIALS

1. For the safety of athletes, officials and spectators Hammer, Discus and Weight Throw **MUST ALWAYS** be thrown from within a TrackMark compliant and fit for purpose safety cage.
2. Only the athlete throwing the implement should be permitted into the cage/circle during a throw.
3. When officiating at venues with throws facilities ALL officials (regardless of the event they are officiating), must remain alert to any throws activity that is taking place, even when this is conducted in areas with a safety cage.
4. Officials **MUST NEVER** turn their back on a throws cage/circle or javelin runway.
5. Those officiating in infield areas must be suitably qualified, be able to move quickly in all directions and have good eyesight, hearing, balance and mobility.
6. †A warning horn **MUST** be used for all hammer, discus, club and javelin, both during warm up and competition.
7. For their own safety and that of others, coaches and officials should always follow the throws safety guidance contained within the UKA Safe Codes of Practice for Track & Field

† The **ONLY** exception to this is for competitions broadcast by Television where event-specific safety procedures have been introduced to ensure the safety of all participants and officials.

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR CAGED THROWS (HAMMER/DISCUS/WEIGHT/CLUB)

1. For hammer events a protective cage is a vital part of the safety conditions. However, not all cages 1. For Hammer/Discus/Weight Throw and Club Throw a compliant, protective Cage plays a critical safety role.
2. Throws cage structures and the netting must meet the dimensional requirements of the current UKA rulebook: TR 35 / TR37 .
3. The netting cord must be strong enough so that it does not break under the impact of the implement, abrade where it is attached or deteriorate unduly under the effects of ultraviolet ray exposure.
4. The net should be able to be quickly raised and lowered.
5. There should be a positive attachment of the netting at ground level which maintains the net in correct relationship to the throwing circle(s) particularly in windy conditions.
6. There should be sufficient netting at ground level so that an implement cannot penetrate under the netting.
7. The netting when blown by wind should not impede the athlete making a throw (at no time should netting be tied to the cage superstructure).
8. The whole cage construction, including handling equipment, should be designed so as minimise the possibility of an implement striking a hard surface by suspending the netting well clear of supports and padding hard surfaces where necessary.
9. Cage gate pivot posts and any gate metal frame should not be exposed so that it can be hit by an implement causing damage to both.
10. The cage netting should be hung clear of the support posts by at least 0.60m and arranged so when the gate is closed the posts are not struck by a thrown implement.
11. The volume of netting should be sufficient to minimise rebound of implements but not slack enough to allow implements to push netting against the supporting structure.
12. The gates should be easy to open and close manually quickly with a positive positioning arrangement in the fully open and closed positions.
13. The leading edge of the gate netting must maintain a vertical line in order to maintain the integrity of the danger zone. This means that a tensioning of the leading edge will generally be required at each anchor point i.e. open and closed position.
14. The cage gates should maintain their integrity under long term usage.
15. The supporting frame should be stiff enough so that it does not deflect out of position unduly under the weight of the net and the force of wind.
16. Throws cage gates / curtains should be constructed so that they can be quickly moved during training/competition.
17. In order to ensure the continued integrity of the safety cage, the venue should ensure that the cage is UKA TrackMark inspected and load tested every 3years . (†Prior to the competition the Event Organiser should confirm with the venue that a recent cage/netting check has been carried out).
18. Flags/ropes should be placed well outside the sector lines and spectators and media (photographers/ cameramen) should be kept well outside these markers.
19. Event organisers, meeting managers and referees should ensure that throwing events are programmed so as not to present a hazard to other events.
20. Where long, triple or pole vault runways are located on the infield; throwing must not take place unless a separate risk assessment indicates that the standard of throwers will pose no risk to jumpers.

Note: The above safety guidance relates to throws activity that takes place at a venue with a traditional infield throws area. Where throws facilities and activity are located outside of the main infield, simpler and smaller cages may be adequate for competition of a lower standard and for well-regulated and managed training facilities. All facilities and activities should be subject to a Risk Assessment

ACTIVITY SAFETY

IMPORTANT: THE LIST BELOW IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE BUT OUTLINES COMMON AREAS TO CONSIDER.

BEFORE THE EVENT	WARM-UP	DURING THE EVENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that all event Officials are given a safety briefing prior to the commencement of the event. ▪ The Meeting Manager or Organiser should ensure that all personnel who are liable to enter the infield are made aware of all safety considerations. ▪ At least two of the event judges should be suitably qualified. ▪ If persons who are not suitably qualified are used they must be taken to one side and instructed in the safety procedures before the start of their duties. ▪ For combined cages, check that both throws cage gates/curtains are fully functional and can be securely locked in the relevant position for both left and right handed throwers. ▪ Check all implements before starting the warm up and have the field retriever check them each time they return. ▪ Ensure that there are adequate retrievers and officials to oversee athlete warm up. ▪ Prior to the competition (before warm up), all competitors should be made aware of the safety procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure ALL practice throws take place from the circle, within an WA/UKA compliant cage, and under the supervision of a suitably qualified and competent official. ▪ For combined cages, ensure both cage gates are correctly positioned and locked before each throw in accordance with UKA rules. In particular that the gates are correctly set for right and left handed hammer throws. ▪ Warm-ups need to be well organised, e.g. having throwers warm up in competition order. ▪ The event leader MUST sound a warning horn to alert other officials that a throw is imminent. It must be emphasised to the athletes in the pre event briefing that the warning horn is to warn those within or in the vicinity of the throwing sector that a throw is about to commence and is not a signal for them to commence throwing. ▪ In the case of the longer throwers allow 4 or 5 athletes to take their turns and then have officials pick up the implements and return them. ▪ Officials should never stand nearer than 2metres to the netting when throwing is taking place. ▪ Officials must never turn their back on the throwing athlete. ▪ An event official should retrieve all throws and athletes should not be allowed to retrieve their own implements. ▪ Always keep the impact area clear during warm ups. ▪ During the warm up the Field Referee should observe the distances thrown and how the hammer reacts to the landing area and adjust officials field positioning accordingly. For example: dry, hard infields will cause implements to bounce. ▪ Event officials should carry and implements to the side. ▪ Implements must only be returned by hand, held vertically, or by mechanical device. ▪ Officials should not run within the throwing sector in wet, slippery conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that all throws take place from the circle, within an WA/UKA compliant cage, and under the supervision of a suitably qualified and competent official. ▪ Ensure both gates are correctly positioned and locked before each throw in accordance with UKA rules, in particular that the gates are correctly set for right and left handed hammer throws. ▪ For combined cages, ensure both cage gates are correctly positioned and locked before each throw in accordance with UKA rules. In particular that the gates are correctly set for right and left handed hammer throws. ▪ Officials in the field must be out of the sector during throws. Officials at the circle or runway need to be safely positioned away from the cage. ▪ Competitors should be called up in 2s or 3s i.e. Number 15 to throw, 27 to get ready, nine to follow etc. ▪ The Chief Judge/Event Leader must first check that the circle is clear. ▪ Ensure that only suitably qualified officials are allowed forward of the mouth of the throwing cage. ▪ The Chief Judge must stand with the athlete at the entrance to the cage. ▪ The event leader MUST sound a warning horn to alert other officials that a throw is imminent. It must be emphasised to the athletes in the pre event briefing that the warning horn is to warn those within or in the vicinity of the throwing sector that a throw is about to commence and is not a signal for them to commence throwing. ▪ When all officials and other personnel in the danger zone have acknowledged the sounding of the horn the Chief Judge will permit the athlete to take up their position in the circle to commence their throw and the time will begin at this point. ▪ Officials responsible for marking long throws must be particularly vigilant when facing the sun and wear a cap or hat if appropriate. ▪ Officials should not run within the throwing sector in wet, slippery conditions. ▪ Event officials should always carry implements to the side. ▪ Implements must only be returned by hand, held vertically, or by mechanical device. ▪ Once the throw has been taken and the measurement recorded the procedure should be repeated ▪ It is good practice to repair divots in the landing sector

Stop any activity where safety might be compromised whether it is your event or another.

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR JAVELIN THROW

(INCLUDING SEATED JAVELIN)

FACILITY/EQUIPMENT SAFETY

1. The javelin is affected by aerodynamics and the wind which means that the impact area can be very large. Wind direction should be considered when placing the roped area outside the sector lines. A javelin that lands flat on a hard surface can "skid" for a long distance and, when in doubt, the safety rope should be placed as far outside the sector lines as possible.
2. Event organisers, meeting managers and referees should ensure that Javelin throwing events are programmed so as not to present a hazard to other events.
3. Where long, triple or pole vault runways are located on the infield, Javelin throwing must not take place unless a separate risk assessment indicates that the standard of throwers will pose no risk to jumpers.

ACTIVITY SAFETY

†NB For seated javelin marked references to "the runway" should be replaced with a "UKA/IAAF compliant throws cage". In all other safety respects the same safety protocols will apply.

BEFORE THE EVENT	WARM-UP	DURING THE EVENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all event Officials are given a safety briefing prior to the commencement of the event. The meeting manager or organiser should ensure that all personnel who are liable to enter the infield are made aware of all safety considerations. At least two of the event judges should be suitably qualified. If persons who are not suitably qualified are used they must be taken to one side and instructed in the safety procedures before the start of their duties. Where track kerbing is in the run up line, ensure that it is removed before the event, placed in a safe area, and replaced after the event. † (Note: not applicable to seated javelin) If a throws cage is used for seated javelin; ensure that both gates are locked in the open position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ALL practice throws take place from †the runway under the supervision of a suitably qualified and competent official. Warm-ups need to be well organised. For example having throwers warm up in competition order. Javelin throwers should not be allowed to "spike" or throw practice throws outside the competition area. The event leader MUST sound a warning horn to alert other officials that a throw is imminent. It must be emphasised to the athletes in the pre event briefing that the warning horn is to warn those within or in the vicinity of the throwing sector that a throw is about to commence and is not a signal for them to commence throwing. In the case of the longer throwers allow 4 or 5 athletes to take their turns and then have officials pick up the implements and return them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ALL practice throws take place from †the runway under the supervision of a suitably qualified and competent official. Officials in the field must be out of the sector during throws. Officials at †the runway need to be safely positioned. Never stand behind a javelin thrower, they bring the javelin back before going forward, the back-end of a javelin can inflict a serious injury. Competitors should be called up in 2s or 3s i.e. Number 15 to throw, 27 to get ready, nine to follow etc. The Chief Judge must first check that the †runway is clear. The official must stand on the †runway while the athlete takes up their starting position. The Chief Judge must sound a warning horn to alert other officials that a throw is imminent.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

BEFORE THE EVENT	WARM-UP	DURING THE EVENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UK Athletics approved Tie-down Devices must be used to conduct seated javelin throws Check all javelins before starting warm up and have the field retriever check them each time they return. Ensure that there are adequate retrievers and officials to oversee athlete warm up. Prior to the competition (before warm up), all competitors should be made aware of the safety procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officials should never stand nearer than 2metres to the netting when throwing is taking place. Officials must never turn their back on the throwing athlete. An event official should retrieve all throws and athletes should not be allowed to retrieve their own implements. Always keep the impact area clear during warm ups During the warm up the Field Referee should observe distances thrown and how the javelin reacts to the landing area and adjust officials positioning accordingly. For example: dry, hard infields will cause implements to bounce. Event officials should carry and not throw implements to the side. Implements must only be returned by hand, held vertically, or by mechanical device. Officials should not run within the throwing sector in wet, slippery conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When all officials and other personnel in the danger zone have acknowledged the sounding of the horn the athlete should be permitted to take up position on the †runway Throws must not commence until the supervising official signals to the athlete that it is safe to throw. Once the throw has been taken and the measurement recorded the procedure is repeated for each athlete throughout the competition. Officials responsible for marking long throws must be particularly vigilant when facing the sun and wear a cap or hat if appropriate. Officials should not run within the throwing sector in wet, slippery conditions. Once the throw has been taken and the measurement recorded the procedure is repeated for each athlete throughout the competition. When approaching a thrown javelin to mark the point of landing, or retrieve it, officials must approach the javelin from the side and not from the pointed tail end of the implement. Implement must only be returned by hand, held vertically, or by mechanical device. Be aware of the effect of strong winds on the flight characteristics of a javelin in flight. It is good practice to repair divots in the landing sector.

Stop any activity where safety might be compromised whether it is your event or another.

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR SHOT PUT

(INCLUDING SEATED SHOT PUT)

FACILITY/EQUIPMENT SAFETY

1. A safety cage is not required for the shot put, so it is important that the impact area is roped off to prevent unauthorised spectators, athletes and officials from accessing to the area.
2. Only designated shot put event officials and participating athletes should be within the cordoned area.
3. Event organisers, meeting managers and referees should ensure that Shot Put events are programmed so as not to present a hazard to other events.

ACTIVITY SAFETY

BEFORE THE EVENT	WARM-UP	DURING THE EVENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check all shot before starting warm up and have the field retriever check them each time they return. The meeting manager or organiser should ensure that all personnel who are liable to enter the infield are made aware of all safety considerations. At least two of the event judges should be suitably qualified. If persons who are not suitably qualified are used they must be instructed in the safety procedures before the start of their duties. Officials safety briefing before the commencement of the event - Most accidents that tend to happen to officials during the shot put event are caused by a short lapse in concentration and it is important that both athletes and officials understand that they need to have a continual awareness of each other's presence. Ensure that there are adequate retrievers and officials to oversee athlete warm up. Prior to the competition (before warm up), all competitors should be made aware of the safety procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ALL practice throws are performed from within the designated shot put circle; in the direction of the landing sector and under the supervision of a suitably qualified and competent official. Warm-ups need to be well organised. For example having throwers warm up in competition order. During the throw, officials should stand outside the sector lines and face the thrower at all times. When rotational throwers or those using non-traditional techniques are competing the Chief Field Judge / Event Lead should ensure all officials are within a safe distance from the potential flight of the implements. An event official should retrieve all throws and athletes should not be allowed to retrieve their own shot. Always keep the impact area clear during warm ups. The Shot must only be returned by hand, or by mechanical device. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ALL competition throws are performed from within the designated shot put circle; in the direction of the landing sector and under the supervision of a suitably qualified and competent official. Officials must stand outside the landing sector during throws and should be positioned a safe distance away from the thrower. Competitors should be called up in 2s or 3s i.e. Number 15 to throw, 27 to get ready, nine to follow etc. The Chief Judge/Event Leader must first check that the circle is clear. Ensure that only qualified officials are allowed forward of the throwing circle. The Chief Judge must stand with the athlete at the entrance to the circle while the athlete takes up their starting position. During the throw, officials should stand outside the sector lines and face the thrower at all times. When rotational throwers or those using non-traditional techniques are competing the Chief Field Judge / Event Lead should ensure all officials are within a safe distance from the potential flight of the implements. The Shot must only be returned by hand, or by mechanical device. Once the throw has been taken and the measurement recorded the procedure is repeated for each athlete throughout the competition. It is good practice to repair divots in the landing sector.

Stop any activity where safety might be compromised whether it is your event or another.

INDOOR COMPETITION SAFETY

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR INDOOR COMPETITION

Ensure that Indoor facilities meet the specification and standards in the current UKA rulebook and the Sport England Athletics DGN (Pages 23-34)

The more confined areas generally associated with indoor athletics will require greater attention being paid to the following:

- Uneven, raised and insecure surfaces.
- The placement of equipment.
- The risk of collisions.
- The proximity of walls and ceilings.
- The programming of activities.

The areas below highlight the specific safety checks that should be carried out in addition to those carried out for outdoor competition.

TRACKS AND RUNWAYS

- In the case of demountable tracks/runways ensure that the track boards are secure and are set up according to the manufacturers' specifications and inspected after installation.
- Any change of height (e.g. raised runways) should be clearly marked.

TRACK SURROUNDS (BARRIERS)

- Ensure barriers at the end of the straight are covered with protective foam to prevent direct contact and are secure and that walls are protected where the run off space is limited.
- Ensure that any protrusions from walls do not present a danger to hurdlers or other athletes.

ATHLETES

- Ensure flag marshals are posted when conflicting activities are taking place.

EQUIPMENT

- Any moveable equipment and kit must be placed so as not to constitute a hazard to any events or individuals.

