

Norfolk Snowsports Club Acceptance of Risk: Skiers and Snowboarders

As a condition of participating in on-slope activities at Norfolk Snowsports Club, all skiers and boarders over the age of 18 must be able to make the declaration at the end of this acceptance of risk.

*In the case of children under the age of 18 or adults lacking legal capacity, the parent, guardian, carer or other responsible accompanying adult (the **Responsible Adult**) must be able to make the declaration at the end of this acceptance of risk on their behalf.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Norfolk Snowsports Club (the **Club**) is a dedicated outdoor dry slope skiing, snowboarding and tubing centre.

Our facilities include:

- main slope (140m)
- waves (40m)
- moguls (40m x 10m)
- fun park, featuring a kicker (big jump that is closed to use apart from use in dedicated sessions), the knuckle (a less steeply angled jump that is open at all times), dedicated landing zone and a quarter pipe
- nursery slope (4 lanes x 40m) and
- intermediate slope (100m) (NB generally in use for tubing, not skiing/boarding)

The Club also has a range of removable apparatus such as boxes, rails, pipes, small kickers/wedges and rollers that are used for freestyle and ski/board cross sessions.

Stubby and full-sized slalom gates are used for racing and in a variety of other sessions.

The intermediate slope is regularly used for tubing. The risks and acceptance of risk for tubing are addressed in a separate document.

2. PROGRESSION

The Club offers a progressive, supervised activity program catering for all abilities, ranging from absolute beginners right up to freestyle skiers and boarders, ski cross and board cross, and slalom racing. A number of the Club's members compete at national levels, and alumni have gone on to compete internationally, including at the Winter Olympics. We also offer adaptive sessions for skiers (with plans, subject to equipment and qualified staffing, to offer this to boarders also) living with a range of mental/physical and impairments/disabilities, and other sessions tailored to particular interest or age groups.

The Club requires all skiers and boarders with less experience, and all new members, to be signed off by a qualified Club instructor before they become eligible to access the facilities without supervision or to attend the more advanced supervised sessions. This is a basic health and safety requirement. It is designed to mitigate the risk of injury to yourself or others.

As your level of skill progresses, you may ski or board faster and attempt more difficult manoeuvres.

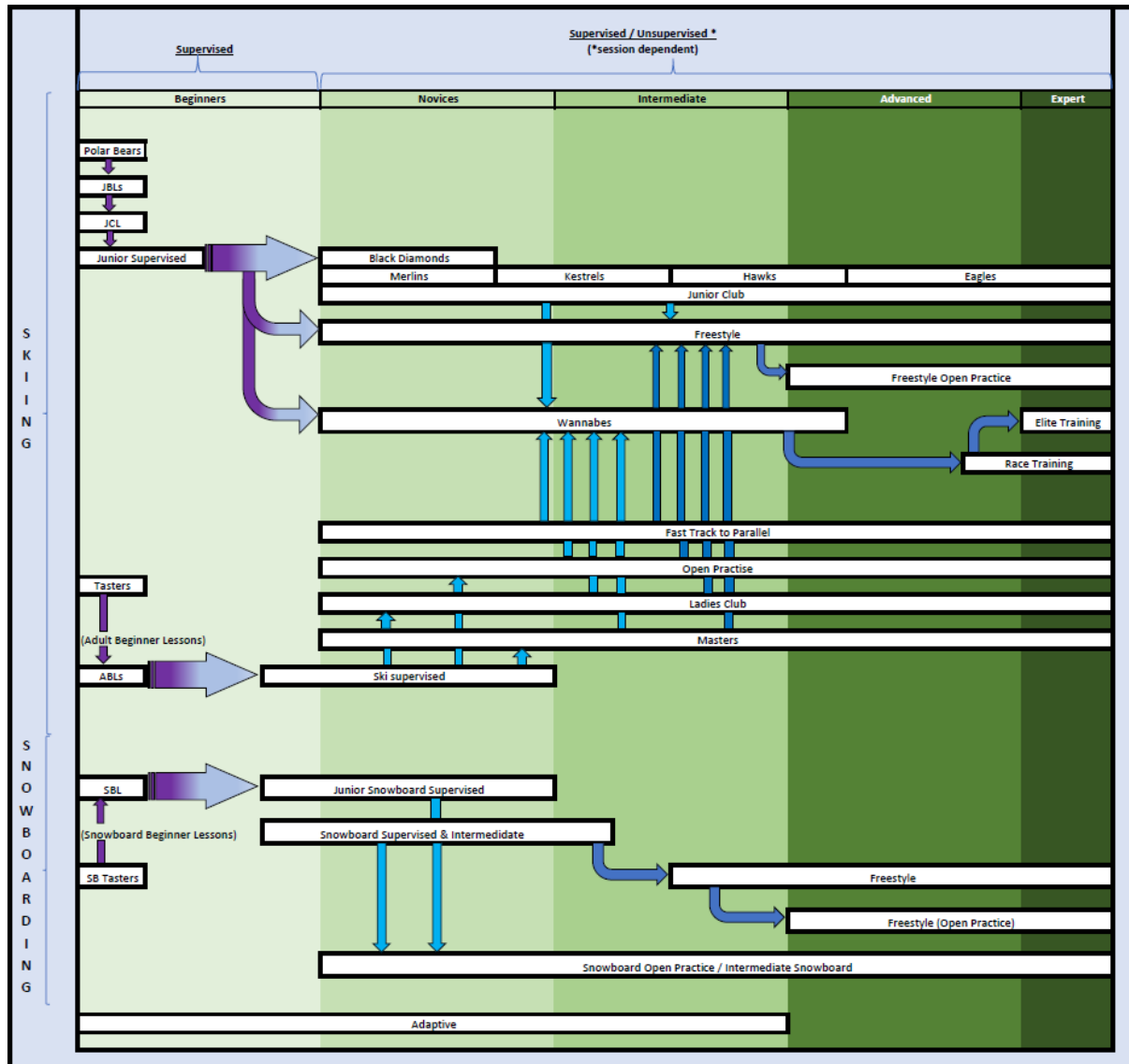
Whilst the Club encourages you to challenge yourself, and recognises that skiers and boarders may attempt new, and progressively more difficult, tasks and activities in order to improve and to learn

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new skills, you must always do so within a reasonable framework. You must not, for example, seek to progress too quickly, or attempt an activity that is well beyond your capabilities.

Once signed off, it is your responsibility to assess your level of competence at all times and to attempt only activities that are within your ability or which represent the next logical step in your progression.

The following diagram illustrates the various progression options within the Club



3. RISKS

When you participate in any on-slope activities, you confirm that you have read and understand this document and that you voluntarily accept the risks.

As a condition of participating in on-slope activities at Norfolk Snowsports Club, all on-slope participants over the age of 18 or, for children under the age of 18 or adults lacking legal capacity, the Responsible Adult, must be able to make the declaration below.

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All on-slope activities are inherently risky. This is so whether or not you have been signed off. The risks are partially mitigated before sign off because you are under closer supervision by a qualified Club instructor. You are only allowed to progress from the nursery slope onto the main slope, and progressively higher up the main slope, with the agreement of the supervising Club instructor.

However all on-slope activities imply risk. You cannot remove risk simply by participating in a supervised session.

The principal risks arise from the natural circumstances of skiing and boarding: you are wearing heavy and sharp equipment, travelling at speed on a steep and slippery surface. Your decision making (before you start to move and whilst in motion), your ability to control your speed and direction of travel, and your ability to stop are critical factors in managing this risk.

Before sign-off

You are responsible for all aspects of your movement on and around the slope subject to the duty of care of the Club to provide a competent instructor who is supervising you.

After sign-off

Supervised sessions

You are fully responsible for all aspects of your movement on and around the slope subject to the duty of care of the Club to provide a competent instructor or coach who is supervising you.

Unsupervised sessions

You are fully responsible for all aspects of your movement on and around the slope.

Liability for injuries

If you injure yourself or others because of a loss of control or a poor decision on your part, you are liable accordingly.

The Club has no liability for any injury that arises except to the extent it is caused by the negligence or other default of the Club.

The most common types of injury that one may experience are the following.

- Bruises, cuts and grazes
- Fingers and thumbs – it is not uncommon for fingers or thumbs to be caught in the matting (which uses a diamond grid construction). They can be broken or tendons/ligaments can be torn
- Hips – bruising or fracture
- Knees – especially ligament damage (tears etc)
- Wrists, arms, and shoulders – bruising and ligament damage (tears etc)
- Neck and back injuries – including spinal injuries*
- Head – concussion

* Back protectors are recommended

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You should be particularly alert to the following situations or potential events.

- Starting
- Stopping
- Joining the main slope from the side (red, blue or green intermediate levels)
- Re-joining the main slope from the waves, moguls, or fun park
- Colliding with another skier or boarder
- Falling when using jumps or the quarter pipe
- Falling when using any movable apparatus such as boxes, rails, kickers, or rollers
- Slope obstructions – participants who have fallen or dropped equipment; apparatus in use by other groups on the slope
- Environmental conditions – wet or cold weather make the slope much faster. Stopping and turning can be trickier (especially for less experienced participants).
- Crowded slope – be watchful if there are lots of participants.
- Catching skis or poles on any gates

Volunteer instructors and coaches may set drills, tasks, and challenges for those participating in supervised sessions. They will endeavour to ensure that those are appropriate to the abilities of the participants. At the same time, it is part of the coaching environment (in particular), as well as in lessons with instructors, that skiers and boarders should experiment, and should learn to adapt and to challenge themselves, as part of the learning experience, on their journey to developing their skills and abilities.

Moreover, sessions may include participants with a range of abilities or participants who are progressing at different rates. Each participant is responsible for assessing their own rate of progression and ability.

This element of progression and challenge represents another of the inherent risks in all on-slope activity.

Freestyle sessions

Freestyle activities carry additional risk. The use of various pieces of apparatus and the physical challenge presented by complex or unfamiliar manoeuvres creates a greater risk of injury.

You should not participate in these sessions or attempt manoeuvres during sessions if you are not confident that the progression is appropriate to your skill level.

4. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

You are responsible for your own safety and the safety of those who may be affected by your actions whilst on the slope.

In particular you must:

- inform yourself of, and assess, the risks associated with your skiing and snowboarding, as guided and informed by this document
- be in control of yourself and your equipment – especially (but not only) whilst on the slope and
- take reasonable steps to avoid injuring yourself or others or causing damage to Club property

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Equipment:

- If you use skis and boots provided by the Club, you are responsible for providing correct information (height, weight and level of skiing ability) to the boot fitter to enable them to set the release mechanism of the bindings.
- If you use your own skis and boots, you are solely responsible for setting them up correctly, including fitting the bindings to your boots and setting the DIN at an appropriate level for your ability.

If you fall, you should try to get back on your feet as quickly as possible (provided you are not injured in a way that would make this dangerous or be too painful). When you are seated or in a prone position on the slope you are at greater risk from other participants. That is because you are less able to get out of the way of anyone approaching and any resultant collision could pose a greater threat of injury to you as your back and head are at a lower level which places them in the line of other participants' skis or snowboards.

5. THE CLUB'S RESPONSIBILITY

- We will inform you of the risks that we consider are most likely to arise in connection with your use of the facilities
- Take reasonable steps to maintain the facilities and equipment
- When supervising sessions ensure that the volunteers and staff engaged in that session are appropriately experienced and/or qualified
- Volunteer instructors and coaches will endeavour to ensure that tasks set during sessions are appropriate to the abilities of the participants. However, many sessions include participants with a range of abilities. Moreover, participants learn and progress at different rates. Each participant is also responsible for assessing their own rate of progression and ability and should not rely solely on the instructor or coach.

6. SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Mandatory

Use of the following safety equipment is mandatory on the slope.

*All participants**

- Helmets**
- Gloves
- Long sleeved tops and bottoms – the material must be thick enough to help protect you from the abrasive effect of the matting if you fall

Boarders under instruction

- Wrist, elbow, and knee guards are required for all beginner lessons

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Recommended

Use of the following safety equipment is recommended.

- For all participants - back protectors
- For all boarders, whether or not under instruction, wrist, elbow, and knee guards and, for boarders engaged in freestyle sessions, crash shorts

** Instructors and coaches are permitted, exercising their personal judgment (and at their own risk), to coach or instruct without wearing helmets and/or gloves provided their skiing or boarding activity is relatively limited.*

*** Participants (or, for participants who are under the age of 18, the Responsible Adult) are advised that chin guards, which are commonly attached to race helmets to protect against impact with slalom gates, should be removed for non-slalom racing activities. This is particularly important if participating in freestyle activities. It is also relevant for ski cross and GS/extended slalom activities. In the event of a fall, a chin guard may catch the matting or a freestyle or ski cross feature. This may apply torsional or other force to the skier's neck, increasing the risk of injury.*

7. DECLARATION

By choosing to ski or snowboard, you confirm as follows.

- **You have read this acceptance of risk document, you understand the risks and your responsibility to avoid / mitigate them.**
- **You are competent to manage the risks independently of any other person (or, whilst you are under supervision before you have been signed off, through a combination of your own judgment and that of the relevant Club instructor).**
- **You accept the risks and all consequences and outcomes that may flow from them.**
- **If you are an adult making this declaration on behalf of a child or an adult lacking legal capacity, you have explained the risks and their responsibilities to them and you are satisfied that they can participate on that basis.**

It is important to note that participation in a lesson or coached session does not remove responsibility from the individual skier or boarder for ensuring their own safety and that of other participants. You are the only person who can control your movement while on the slope and it is your responsibility to do so.