

**United Hospitals Boat Club
Club Safety Policy**

V4

7.10.2024

JM

Also available at <https://www.uhboatclub.co.uk/important-information>

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1. Introduction

The United Hospitals Boat Club (UHBC) objectives are set out in the constitution¹:

1.1. To promote the sport of rowing throughout the affiliated clubs;

1.2. To promote safety in all aspects of the affiliated clubs and in the competitions organised by the United Hospitals Boat Club;

1.3. To provide a suitable means of competition between the affiliated clubs.

2. Commitment to safety

UHBC has a zero tolerance for anyone being harmed as a result of our members' participation in the sport. We believe that harm is not an inevitable consequence of our activities and that incidents that cause harm can be avoided. We will strive to provide an environment in which the sport can be practiced safely and enjoyably by our members. We will guide and lead our members in a way that fulfills these aims.

We recognise that our members² have primary responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. The Club, through its Officers and Committee, will encourage safe practice having due regard for the guidance provided by British Rowing in RowSafe. UHBC sets out safety rules in relation to the competitions that it organises and in relation to crews selected to row for UHBC that it expects its members to respect. Details of these rules can be found on the UHBC website and in relevant social media. Complying with these rules will help to prevent harm.

The Club is also committed to learn from the incidents it becomes aware of and will share this information to help others in the sport to learn too. We are committed to make appropriate use of British Rowing's Incident Reporting System. Members are invited to refer any questions and concerns, relating to safety, to the UHBC Safety Adviser or deputy.

¹ Available at <https://www.uhboatclub.co.uk/important-information>

² The term 'members' refers to all categories of club membership set out in the constitution (including affiliated clubs and honorary affiliated clubs). These clubs in their own right have responsibility for safety within their own organisation.

3. Role of the United Hospitals Boat Club as organising committee for competitions

1. The United Hospitals Boat Club is the organising committee for the various closed competitions based at the University of London Boathouse. These events are private matches as defined in British Rowing Rules of Racing, and sanctioned by the TRRC. There may be invitational crews, usually from local clubs within the Thames central subdivision (5).
2. The British Rowing Rules of Racing³ will apply as far as is practicable to the competitions organised by UHBC.
3. UHBC will comply with British Rowing RowSafe⁴.
4. UHBC will comply with the British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Adults Policy⁵.
5. UHBC will comply with the provisions of the British Rowing Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy⁶ and Anti-Bullying Policy.
 - 5.1. Individual affiliated competitors in the various closed competitions organised by UHBC will be aged at least 17 years and 3 months at the beginning of their first academic year, as the standard minimum age for admission to the University of London and Imperial College. Any individual affiliated competitor who is aged under 18 at the beginning of the academic year will be deemed to have the capacity of an adult for the purposes of UHBC, and no specific childrens' safeguarding issues are expected relating to their entry into a competition being run by UHBC. It is expected that there will be an appropriate individual nominated by the competing club able to deal with any safeguarding and welfare issues for any of their members who are aged less than 18 years. UHBC may accept entries from clubs who are not affiliated members where the competitors are aged less than 18 years, but only where there is an appropriate individual nominated by the competing club available to deal with the welfare and safeguarding issues for each crew which has competitors aged less than 18 years.
6. Whilst UHBC is functioning as the organising committee for the various closed competitions, individual competitors are representing their own clubs.
7. The individual clubs are responsible for ensuring the safety of their members and other river users. The responsibility of the individual clubs includes:
 - 7.1. ensuring that there is a safety audit submitted to British Rowing on an annual basis

³ Available at <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/British-Rowing-Rules-of-Racing-April-2022-V1.pdf>

⁴ Available at https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/?utm_campaign=37225_Safety%20Audit%20-%20open%20email&utm_medium=email&utm_source=British%20Rowing%20Limited%20dotdigital&dm_i=7LDC,SQ1,5LPTF,2VS6,1

⁵ Available at <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Safeguarding-Adults-at-Risk-March-2020.pdf>

In accordance with page 6 the UHBC Club Welfare Officer is elected from the current year's captains.

⁶ Available at <https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/British-Rowing-Safeguarding-Children-and-Young-People-Policy-June-2021-2.pdf>

- 7.2. acting on any gaps identified in the safety audit in accordance with the principles set out in British Rowing's 'Row safe';
 - 7.3. ensuring that individual members are aware of safety issues including navigation⁷ ;
 - 7.4. ensuring that there is adequate third party insurance cover;
 - 7.5. ensuring that incidents are reported via the British Rowing reporting system.
8. Whilst UHBC is acting as the organising committee for these events, the club relies on each competing club to assure the safety of the competing club members and other river users.
 9. The UHBC prepares a safety plan for each event which is sent for approval by the Thames Regional Safety Advisor and the Port of London Authority. Each safety plan will have a detailed risk assessment for each event. The summary of key risks is shown in appendix 1.
 10. UHBC needs to maintain adequate third party insurance to cover any acts taken by the club as organisers of the events and any reasonable action taken by club officers or officials on or off the water in relation to these events. Individual competing clubs need to maintain their own third party cover during these events to deal with issues not covered by UHBC (e.g. injury or damage due to a failure to keep an adequate lookout).
 11. The club will rely on various officials to run these events in a safe and fair manner in accordance with the British Rowing Rules of Racing (in so far as these can be applied to the closed events). It is strongly recommended that all such officials have suitable personal insurance cover. This is provided as a benefit of membership if the officials are members of British Rowing. The use of licenced umpires is encouraged.

⁷ Including *The Tideway Code – A Code of Practice for Rowing and paddling on the Tidal Thames (CPRT)* published jointly by the PLA and the Thames Regional Rowing Council (TRRC), which is available at <https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/tidewaycodedigital.pdf>

3. Role of the United Hospitals Boat Club when selecting crews to represent the club

1. The club may from time to time select a crew or crews to represent the United Hospitals Boat Club in external competition in accordance with section 2.1 of the constitution. This may include entering events affiliated to British Rowing and Henley Royal Regatta. If UHBC selects crews then the club needs to act directly to:
 - a. ensure that there is a safety audit submitted to British Rowing on an annual basis
 - b. act on any gaps identified in the safety audit in accordance with the principles set out in British Rowing's 'Row safe'⁸
 - c. ensure that individual members are aware of safety issues including navigation
 - d. ensure that there is adequate third party insurance cover
 - e. ensure that incidents are reported via the British Rowing reporting system
2. It is likely that the club will need to borrow equipment from individual affiliated clubs as UHBC does not currently own any rowing equipment directly. It is reasonable for the club to assume that the individual affiliated clubs will provide equipment in line with current British Rowing safety guidelines although the club needs to actively ascertain this.
3. It is almost certain that any individual selected to represent UHBC will already be a member of an affiliated club as this is the prerequisite for representing UHBC. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the individual will be aware of the basic safety issues relevant to the affiliated club (e.g. knowledge of the Tideway Code, requirements for swimming ability, etc) although the club will need to actively check this for each individual.
4. It is strongly recommended that any individual selected to represent the United Hospitals should be a member of British Rowing which provides for a level of personal insurance cover including third party insurance.

⁸ <https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/>

4. Process for selection of crews to represent the United Hospitals Boat Club

a. Preliminary

The club will identify a lead for the selection process who will be co-opted as a non-voting member to the UHBC committee under rule 5G for the remainder of the academic year.

b. Prior to formal selection of crew(s)

1. There may need to be preliminary training outings and assessment.
2. These will occur using equipment owned and insured by one of the affiliated clubs (boats, blades, lifejackets, launches).
3. The status of these preliminary training outings (subject to agreement on the part of the affiliated club) is that the training is run by the affiliated club (so that the crew members are either ordinary members or honorary members of that affiliated club).
4. Any third party claim should be referred to the affiliated club.
5. The training will occur in accordance with the rules of the affiliated club.

c. Following formal selection of crew(s)

1. The United Hospitals Boat Club formally takes responsibility for the crew(s) and the equipment that the crew(s) use.
2. The club needs to establish a formal agreement to borrow relevant equipment from the affiliated club(s).
3. The club needs to ensure that there is adequate insurance against third party claims in place.
4. The lead for the selection process is in charge of the day-to-day organisation of the crew training and entry into competition.
5. The lead for the selection process is responsible to the club committee to ensure safety and welfare of the crew(s) and ensure that the safety of all other river users is maintained in accordance with the Code of Practice for Navigation on the Tideway or any guidance for other locations. The committee should be informed of any significant incidents or other issues as soon as is reasonably possible.
6. The lead for the selection process is responsible for ensuring that any local safety requirements (such as those of the University of London Boathouse, any other relevant boathouse or any competition) are met.

7. The lead for the selection process is responsible for ensuring that there is suitable documentation of training outings with notification of appropriate details to the club captains.
8. The lead for the selection process is responsible for ensuring that individuals selected to represent the club have satisfied the basic membership requirements of their own affiliated club (including an assessment of swimming competence and familiarisation with the Code of Practice for Rowing on the Tideway).

Appendix 1 - Risk assessment

Table of risks and control measures

Risk Assessment Matrix⁹

Likelihood of harm	Most likely severity of harm		
	Slight harm	Moderate harm	Extreme harm
Very unlikely	Very low risk 1	Low risk 2	Low risk 3
Unlikely	Low risk 4	Medium risk 5	Medium risk 6
Likely	Medium risk 7	Medium risk 8	High risk 9
Very likely	Medium risk 10	High risk 11	Very high risk 12

Note that the risk assessment matrix is a subjective tool and the individual cells are numbered for reference purposes only.

Appendix 1A Summary of key risks and mitigation process – events organised by UHBC

Key risk	Measured variable	Risk level	Risk status	Mitigation	Responsibility
Changes to fluvial flow	PLA fluvial flow flag	Black flag	Black	Consider impact of delay in establishing ebb stream	CORC (CU)
		Green flag	Green	Nil	N/A
		Yellow flag	Amber	Consider: exclusion of novice crews; scheduling races in nominal flood stream	CORC (CU)
		Red flag	Red	Aim for decision > 24 hours prior to race time	CORC (CU)
High wind speeds	Forecasted wind direction and speed (mean and gust speeds)	Forecast Mean < 15mph or Gusts < 25mph	Green	Course inspection by CU prior to racing	CORC (CU)
		Forecast Mean 16-20mph or Gusts 25-35mph (especially SE)	Amber	Decision may need to be made on race day following change of tide based on course inspection by CU and review of actual wind speed and direction Consider: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue with racing 2. Cancel or defer racing 3. Contingency plan If the wind direction is SW with an ebb stream then the course may be relatively sheltered.	CORC (CU) Decision may need to be made on race day following change of tide. Care with high wind speeds from cross or tail direction (S or SE) on the flood stream at the finish. Care with high wind speeds from cross or head direction (NW) on the flood stream at the finish.
		Forecast Mean > 20mph or Gusts > 35mph	Red	Decision may need to be made on race day following change of tide based on course inspection by CU and review of actual wind speed and direction (note that forecast may > actual gust speeds)	CORC (CU) Decision may need to be made on race day following change of tide.

				Consider: 1. Cancel or defer race 2. Continue with race 3. Contingency plan	Care with high wind speeds from cross or tail direction (S or SE) on the flood Care with high wind speeds from cross or head direction (NW) on the flood stream at the finish.
Transmission of coronavirus infection ¹⁰	National or British Rowing restriction	No restriction	Green	Follow any British Rowing guidelines or UK Government legislation	SA/CU/CM
		Restriction	Amber		

Appendix 1B Risk assessment during period of crew selection

1	Risk of collision with other oared boat, powered vessel or fixed obstruction	Failure to keep an adequate lookout Poor visibility Failure to follow CPRT Third party issues	Unlikely	Moderate Harm	Medium risk 5	Selected crews will be steered by experienced coxes No inexperienced coxes will be used. No inexperienced crew members will be used. Any cox selected will have good awareness of CPRT No crew will be on the water after dusk. Lights will be used in poor visibility conditions. The lead for selection is responsible for ensuring that coxes are competent.
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¹⁰ And similar virus infections

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2	Lack of functioning launches during training	Borrowed launches. Engine failure/ lack of petrol during training	Very unlikely	Slight Harm	Very Low 1	Impact on safety of crew minimal.
3	Inadequate launch safety equipment	Borrowed equipment	Very unlikely	Moderate Harm	Low 2	The lead for selection is responsible for ensuring that borrowed equipment meets British Rowing Row-Safe standards.
4	Immersion in the Tideway	Risk of immersion, hypothermia and drowning.	Very unlikely	Slight Harm	Very Low 1	Presence of launch during training. Back up via RNLI if needed. All coxes will wear buoyancy aids/lifejackets in line with BR Row safe Rowers will need to satisfy individual clubs regarding competence to swim; if not competent then they must wear an appropriate buoyancy aid or lifejacket. The lead for selection is responsible for ensuring that all crew members have satisfied the requirements for swimming competence. If rowers are competent to swim then they will not wear specific buoyancy aids in line with national standards for rowing as set out in BR Row Safe
5	Fast ebb stream conditions (high fluvial flow)	PLA 'flag' system Greater chance of high fluvial flows during winter months	Likely	Moderate harm	Medium risk 8	Lead for selection responsible for checking current status of PLA 'flag' immediately prior to training outings. If 'red' flag then no oared boats should be allowed on the Tideway during the ebb; rowing may be possible during the time between low and high water but the stream speed may still be high. Experienced crews may only boat in the flood period provided there is a direct assessment of conditions immediately prior to the outing. If 'amber' flag then only experienced crews may boat on the ebb provided that there is a direct assessment of conditions immediately prior to such racing.
6	Poor weather conditions	High wind speeds Heavy rain Limited visibility Fog	Likely	Moderate harm	Medium risk 8	Lead for selection responsible for reviewing weather forecasts prior to training outings and identifying the risk of adverse weather conditions. No crew should boat from the University of London Boathouse if the full width of the railway bridge is not easily visible. No crew will be on the water after dusk or before dawn. If gusts are forecast >30mph in a direction parallel to the river and against the stream then there is a high likelihood of unrowable conditions especially near high water. However the Mortlake reach is relatively sheltered from the prevailing southwest wind direction, especially in the area of University of London Boathouse and it may not be possible to accurately predict the impact of high wind speed on the water conditions away from the Mortlake reach.

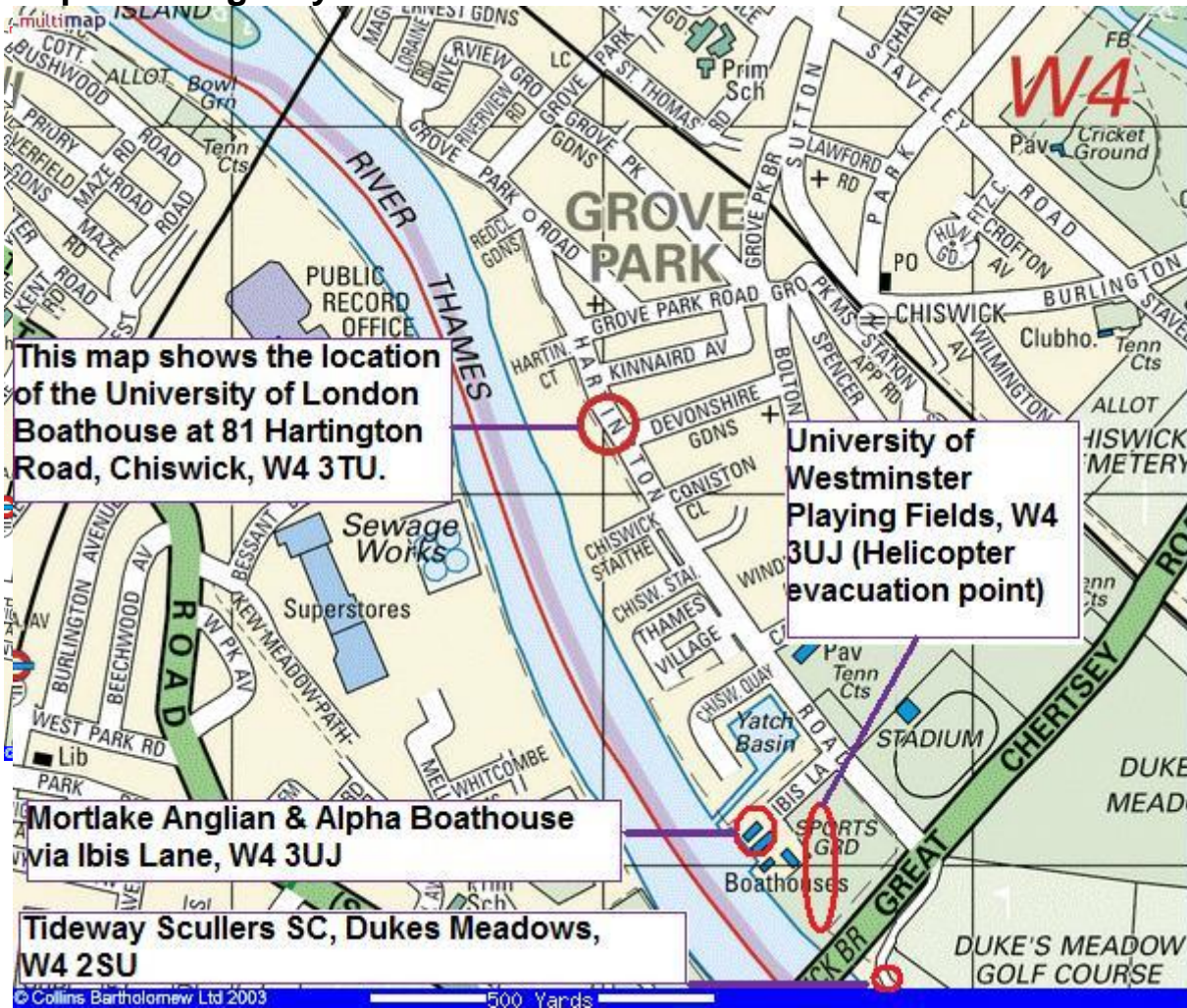
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						<p>If there is doubt then the lead for selection is responsible suspending boating until further information is available. Heavy rain or other climatic conditions may temporarily reduce visibility and the lead for selection is responsible for monitoring the situation.</p>
7	Watermanship of crews in competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure of cox to keep adequate look-out. • Failure to adhere to PLA byelaws & CPRT/ EA byelaws 	Unlikely	Moderate harm	Medium risk 5	<p>See 1 above; Experienced coxes will be used (only) Experienced crews (only) It is the responsibility of the cox to access and understand the rules and byelaws pertaining to each competition.</p>
8	Safe transporting of boats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways agency and other relevant authority requirements are met. • Used of adequate trailer (designed to deal with the load) and towing vehicle used • Driver has appropriate driving licence for trailer and load. 	Unlikely	Moderate harm	Medium risk 5	<p>Lead for Selection responsible for ensuring that trailer and towing vehicle are adequate for the load and that the load is securely fastened to the trailer. Lead for selection responsible for ensuring that the driver is appropriately experienced and licenced for the trailer/load combination. If the club is utilising space on a trailer provided by a third party then the third party is responsible for the adequacy of the trailer and the towing vehicle/driver but the club is responsible for ensuring that the load is correctly fastened to the trailer.</p>

JM Revised October 2024

Appendix 2– Emergency access and first aid

Map of emergency road access



Facilities for Medical Aid			
First Aid	Serious Injury	Evacuation	
1. Primary – UL Boathouse; use of individual affiliated club equipment	Call 999	By Road	By Air
		1. ULBH – 81 Hartington Rd, W4 3TU	ULBH
		2. TSSC – Dukes Meadows W4 2SH (or MAABC, Ibis Lane, W4 3UJ)	2. University of Westminster playing fields W4 3UJ