



# Extreme Temperature Policy (Hot and Cold)

Hull Gymnastics Club Limited  
t/a Aspire Gymnastics Club  
Unit 8 St Johns Business Park  
St Johns Grove  
Hull  
HU9 3RL  
[admin.support@aspiregymnasticsclub.org](mailto:admin.support@aspiregymnasticsclub.org)  
01482 374 808  
[www.aspiregymnasticsclub.org](http://www.aspiregymnasticsclub.org)



# Contents

Legislation	3
Introduction	3
When should we stop or restrict gymnastics activities due to high temperatures for safety reasons?	3
Recommended Minimum Actions (Heat)	4
Heat Exhaustion - recognising the initial stages and what to do	5
Heatstroke - recognising the signs and what to do	5
What is the minimum temperature for the gym?	6
When should we stop or restrict gymnastics activities due to low temperatures for safety reasons?	6
Recommended Minimum Actions (Cold)	6
Sign-off sheet	7

## Legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Workplace (*Health, Safety and Welfare*) Regulations
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004

## Introduction

Cold winters and hot summers can be a problem in gymnastics clubs due to nature of the buildings they normally operate within.

Aspire operates in a large open, former warehouse, with the design of the building aggravating any high or low external temperatures.

Very high and low temperatures can affect the ability of coaches and gymnasts to concentrate and to work effectively and can cause physical discomfort and illness. This effect on gymnasts can increase the possibility of accidents and injuries.

- **In very hot conditions**, the body's blood temperature rises. If the blood temperature rises above 39°C, there is a risk of heat stroke or collapse. Delirium or confusion can occur above 41°C. Blood temperatures at this level can prove fatal and, even if people recover, they may suffer irreparable organ damage.
- **In very cold conditions**, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. Prolonged exposure to cold will eventually use up your body's stored energy, so you have a lot less energy to use for concentration and focus.

Thermal comfort is not just related to air temperature alone. It considers a range of other environmental and personal factors including radiant temperature, air velocity, humidity, clothing insulation and metabolic heat. These factors make up what is known as the "human thermal environment".

## When should we stop or restrict gymnastics activities due to high temperatures for safety reasons?

Health and Safety legislation does not enforce a specific maximum temperature, although the Workplace (*Health, Safety and Welfare*) Regulations 1992 says that your employer must maintain a reasonable temperature where you work.

It is important to adopt a risk-based approach when deciding whether training should be stopped or modified during periods of hot weather. When deciding if it is safe to continue, we need to reduce the likelihood of a heat-related injury like heat stroke, exhaustion, and heat syncope (*fainting*).

A dynamic risk assessment would be best suited in this instance because of the variations in temperature and humidity. Coaches are best placed to do this as they have the appropriate experience, and knowledge to assess the activity.

Consider the following when making the assessment:

- *Can the gymnast complete the task without physically overexerting themselves due to the heat and humidity?*
- *Can the activity be modified so it is a less strenuous one?*
- *Is there an ample amount of water available?*
- *Can the session be postponed or rearranged to avoid the hottest part of the day (11:30 – 13:30)?*
- *Can coaches recognise the symptoms in someone with the initial stages of a heat illness?*
- *Is there someone present who will know how to provide first aid to someone with a heat illness?*
- *Are there sufficient staff to assist if required?*

In considering the above, we need to decide if the event/task is safe to go ahead, so we should consider using the below heat index table to help us decide what control measures need to be in place for the event/task to run safely. The heat index is the temperature that a person feels on the skin. Temperature should be taken on a raised block in the middle of the sprung floor using a **THERMO-HYGROMETER**, which displays the current temperature and relative humidity to measure this.

It is important that the heat index is checked throughout the day to ensure that the correct Recommended Minimum Actions are in place.

Recommended Minimum Actions (Heat)	
<b>Caution: Zone 1</b>	
Heat Index up to 32°C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide ample amounts of water. This means water should always be available and gymnasts should take in as much water as they desire.</li> <li>• Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for up to 10 minutes duration.</li> <li>• Watch / monitor gymnasts carefully for necessary action</li> </ul>
<b>Extreme: Caution Zone 2</b>	
Heat Index 33°C to 41°C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide ample amounts of water. This means water should always be available and gymnasts should take in as much water as they desire.</li> <li>• A mandatory 4-minute break for every 30-minutes of training should be taken - for drinks and recovery (cooling down/rest).</li> <li>• Watch / monitor gymnasts carefully for necessary action</li> <li>• Consider postponing practice to later in the day.</li> <li>• Coaches should be aware of the increase in temperature when working at height (<i>High bar, High beam, Coaches supporting on coaches' platforms</i>) and take this into consideration when deciding on skills to work during sessions.</li> <li>• Re-check temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for increased Heat Index</li> </ul>
<b>Danger: Zone 3</b>	
Heat Index 41°C and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop all inside activity, as air conditioning unavailable</li> </ul>

## Heat Exhaustion – recognising the initial stages and what to do:

NHS guidance confirms that heat exhaustion does not usually need emergency medical help if the individual can cool down within 30 minutes.

The symptoms of heat exhaustion are often the same in adults and children, although children may become irritable too – with the signs of heat exhaustion including:

- *tiredness*
- *dizziness*
- *headache*
- *feeling sick or being sick*
- *excessive sweating and skin becoming pale and clammy or getting a heat rash.*
- *cramps in the arms, legs, and stomach*
- *fast breathing or heartbeat*
- *a high temperature*
- *being very thirsty*
- *weakness*

If someone is showing signs of heat exhaustion, they need to be cooled down and given fluids. Follow these 4 steps:

- *Move them to a cool place.*
- *Remove all unnecessary clothing like a jacket or socks.*
- *Get them to drink a sports or rehydration drink, or cool water.*
- *Cool their skin – spray or sponge them with cool water and fan them. Cold packs, wrapped in a cloth and put under the armpits or on the neck are good too.*

Ensure that someone stays with them until they are better. They should start to cool down and feel better within 30 minutes.

## Heatstroke – recognising the signs and what to do:

NHS website confirms that heatstroke needs to be treated as an emergency and that 999 should be called for anyone suffering with heatstroke.

Their website confirm that the following are signs of heatstroke:

- *still unwell after 30 minutes of resting in a cool place, being cooled, and drinking fluids.*
- *a very high temperature*
- *hot skin that is not sweating and might look red.*
- *a fast heartbeat*
- *fast breathing or shortness of breath*
- *confusion and lack of coordination*
- *a seizure or fit*
- *loss of consciousness (the person should be put in the recovery position while you are waiting for help)*

## What is the minimum temperature for the gym?

The Approved Code of Practice on the Workplace (*Health, Safety and Welfare*) Regulations suggests the minimum temperature for working indoors should normally be at least:

- 16°C or
- 13°C if much of the work involves rigorous physical effort.

This is also confirmed by British Gymnastics, within their Health and Safety guidance.

## When should we stop or restrict gymnastics activities due to low temperatures for safety reasons?

As with high temperature, we must adopt a risk-based approach when deciding whether training should be stopped or modified, during cold weather, considering the Approved Code of Practice on the Workplace (*Health, Safety and Welfare*) Regulations (*stated above*).

To decide if an event/task is safe to go ahead, we should consider using the below cold index table to help us decide what control measures need to be in place for the event/task to run safely. The cold index is the temperature that a person feels on the skin. Temperature should be taken on a raised block in the middle of the sprung floor using a **THERMO-HYGROMETER**, which displays the current temperature.

It is important that the cold index is checked throughout the day to ensure that the correct Recommended Minimum Actions are in place.

Recommended Minimum Actions (Cold)	
<b>Caution: Zone 1</b>	
Cold Index Above 16°C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Normal activities can be performed, but always monitor gymnast / equipment to ensure these activities remain safe for all involved.</li><li>• Watch / monitor gymnasts carefully for necessary action</li></ul>
<b>Extreme: Caution Zone 2</b>	
Cold Index 16°C to 13°C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• With exposure to cold temperatures resulting in gymnasts using up their body's stored energy quicker and having reduced levels of concentration and focus – activities should be modified to remain safe – i.e.,<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Extra matting placed under beams and level of skills performed reduced</li><li>◦ Increased amount of conditioning side stations, to prevent gymnasts 'standing' around waiting.</li></ul></li><li>• Coaches should be aware of the effects of cold temperatures when planning what skills their gymnasts will work on during sessions i.e.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Reduction in grip strength – reducing skills level and/or not using bars.</li><li>◦ Reduction in feeling in feet – reducing skill level on beam/vault or allowing gymnast to keep socks on and not use the beams/vault at all.</li></ul></li><li>• Watch/monitor gymnasts carefully for necessary action</li><li>• Re-check temperature every 30 minutes to monitor for changed Cold Index</li><li>• Coaches to ensure they wear suitable clothing, which allow them to coach whilst also keeping warm – i.e. Base layer or thermal clothing</li></ul>
<b>Danger: Zone 3</b>	
Cold Index 12°C and below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stop all activity</li></ul>

## Sign-off sheet

### Created by:

Name: Alun McMillan

### Electronically Signed on behalf of Hull Gymnastics Club Limited:

Name: Simon Mearns  
Position: Director and Head Coach

Name: Christine Blanchard  
Position: Director and Company Secretary

### Electronically Signed by Health and Safety responsible person for Hull Gymnastics Club Limited:

Name: Alun McMillan