

Health and Safety Office

Topic:	Inflatable play equipment at events
Date:	June 2010
Scope:	Guidance Note
Legislation:	Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Author:	Jessica Vance, Assistant Health and Safety Advisor
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1) Introduction

Inflatable play equipment (e.g. bouncy castles) may be arranged as part of a University event. This can range from an event with a single bouncy castle to those with several inflatables on site. If the inflatable play equipment is not well managed and supervised, there is a high risk of serious injuries especially from individuals bouncing off the inflatable onto the ground, knocking into other objects / people or by falling awkwardly. Accidents may also be caused because many inflatables are designed for use by children rather than adults.

This guidance note is aimed at anyone organising an event where inflatables will be present and provides helpful tips to ensure that the event is both enjoyable and safe. This guidance should be read in conjunction with the main Events Guidance Note (<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/guidance/events/gn07-01.pdf>).

The sections below outline control measures that should be considered when planning your event.

2) Risk Assessment

You will need to carry out a risk assessment for your event to ensure that any hazards have been identified and suitable control measures are in place. The main hazards associated with using inflatables (including bouncy castles) are:

- Instability and blowing away in windy conditions
- Falls from the structure
- Tripping (particularly over anchorages)
- Injury to users caused by boisterous behaviour, or overcrowding
- Access to dangerous (parts of) machinery (inadequately protected, or unguarded blower units)
- Electrical hazards (e.g. shock or burns)

- Inadequate means of escape in case of fire
- Injury to users caused by wearing inappropriate clothes and shoes
- Suffocation and entrapment

Details of effective control measures are outlined in [section 3](#) below. You may wish to use the example risk assessment in [appendix 1](#) as the basis for your own risk assessment, but please note that this is not a complete document and **you must add to and alter the information in the example to reflect your event and the hazards involved.**

3) General health and safety requirements:

The event organiser will need to obtain risk assessments from the supplier of the inflatable to cover the delivery and retrieval, locating, set-up and supervision of the equipment. In addition the event organiser must ensure that all aspects of the use of the inflatable are included in the event risk assessment.

To ensure risks are controlled the following control measures will need to be implemented:

- Hire inflatable equipment from a reputable hire company. Ensure that the equipment has been properly maintained and inspected in the form of the Amusement Devices Inspection Procedures Scheme (ADIPS) inspection report or the Pertexa Inflatable Play Accreditation (PIPA) scheme
- Equipment must be set up, operated and supervised by competent person(s). All persons supervising the inflatable equipment must be adequately trained (repeated below) There should be an adequate level of supervision by competent person(s). As a minimum each inflatable should be supervised by at least one competent individual. Please contact the Health and Safety Office for further information or clarification
- The number of people using the inflatable must be limited to the number recommended in the hire company's safety instructions
- Individuals should not be allowed to use the bouncy castle if there is a high wind or in wet weather where there is a higher risk of serious injury
- All users must be made to remove footwear, hard or sharp objects such as jewellery, buckles and other similar pocket contents
- Eating, consuming alcohol or chewing gum whilst using the inflatable must not be allowed
- Users should not be allowed to obstruct the entrance or exit of an inflatable device or climb or hang on to the walls
- The inflatable equipment must be suitable for the intended users (i.e. if adults will be using the inflatable, the equipment must be designed for, and be able to cope with this use)
- First-aid provision should be suitable for the number of people expected to attend the event, further details are contained within the University Event Guidance Note
- In the case of fire, evacuation and escape routes should be known and fire fighting equipment should be available for use on site as per the event emergency plan
- The inflatable must be adequately secured to the ground
- Soft matting covering hard surfaces must be placed adjacent to the front or open sides

- Petrol generators must not be used indoors or in an enclosed space and should be of a sufficient capacity / have enough fuel in at the start of the event to prevent the need for refilling during the event
- Electrical equipment must be suitable for the environment they are being used in

4) Insurance

Before confirming your booking, you must check that the hire company holds Public Liability (“third party”) insurance to cover the risk of injuries for at least £5M for any one incident. A number of hire companies use an overseas-based insurer that is NOT acceptable to the University so ask for written confirmation of the cover and send it to the University Insurance Officer for approval before you book: insurance-enquiries@bristol.ac.uk

5) Event approval process


The University has a process in place to control the types of event that can take place on University premises. This process is in place to ensure that each event is properly planned, managed and risk assessed. The process is applicable to any event where inflatables will be located in University gardens or on University grounds. The only exception to this is within University student accommodation grounds where activities are controlled by other local mechanisms.

The event approval process is currently managed by Elaine Allenby-Parker, Estates Department who can be contacted by e mail at; Elaine.Allenby-Parker@bristol.ac.uk. Applications for events must be received at least 3 weeks before the date of the event.

6) Useful Information

- Pertexa Inflatable Play Accreditation (PIPA): www.pipa.org.uk
- Amusement Device Inspection Procedures Scheme (ADIPS): <http://www.adips.co.uk/>
- Health and safety Office website: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/>
- Health and safety Executive (HSE) site: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/lau/lacs/47-19.htm>
- University Insurance site: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/insurance/>
- First aid risk assessment advice: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/health/guidance/gn07-02.pdf>
- University event guidance: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/guidance/events/gn07-01.pdf>

Appendix 1

		University of Bristol Risk Assessment : Bouncy castle at an event				
		Department: Health and Safety Office Risk Assessment Completed by: Jessica Vance			Date: 7th July 2010	
Hazard location and Description	Who might be harmed	Existing Control Measures	A. Likely severity of injury (1 to 3)	B. Likely Occurrence (1 to 3)	Risk Rating (A) x (B)	Comments / Actions
Injury whilst using inflatable	Individuals on inflatable and nearby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervised by competent individuals from hire company at all times – will stop overcrowding and boisterous behaviour Control measures outlined in hire company's risk assessment adhered to Hire company's insurance is adequate and has been approved by the Insurance Office Adequate levels of first aid provision available Shoes will be removed, no eating 	3	1	3	
Slips trips and falls	All individuals at event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure inflatable is suitably located and has enough space around it Equipment inspected as part of the PIPA scheme Good housekeeping standards to be adhered to Appropriate supervision of inflatable at all times Inflatable will not be used in adverse weather conditions (advice will be sought from competent staff from the hire company) 	2	1	2	
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Score	3	2	1
Column A: Severity of Injury:	Major Injury or death	Injury requiring medical treatment	Minor or no injury
Column B: Likely Occurrence:	Regular exposure of several employees to hazard.	Occasional exposure of few employees.	Exposure to hazard very rare.

Risk Score	Response Times	Risk Score	Response Times
9	Immediate cessation of activity until interim controls are agreed and implemented	3-4	Provide additional training, supervision and monitoring. Review on change of process or if circumstances change and an annual review.
6	Critically examine the areas of exposure in the process and agree timetable for completion of all agreed actions	<3	12 months review (date of next audit). No real changes in procedure required to reduce risk further