1. Scope

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.

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2. Introduction

The use of Inflatable play equipment (e.g. bouncy castles) may be organised 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 and 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/media/gn/event-safety-gn.pdf).

The sections below outline control measures that should be considered when planning an event which includes inflatable playequipment.

3. 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 Gill Robbins, Security Services, who can be contacted by email at; gill.robbins@bristol.ac.uk. Applications for events must be received at least 3 weeks before the date of the event.

4. 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 (e.g. 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 4 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.

5. 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 an adequate number of competent person(s). All persons supervising the inflatable equipment must be
adequately trained. As a minimum, each inflatable should be supervised by at
least one competent individual. The hire company will be able to provide staff to
cover this supervisory responsibility. Please contact Safety and Health Services
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.

6. 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.

7. Useful Information

- Pertexa Inflatable Play Accreditation (PIPA): www.pipa.org.uk
- Amusement Device Inspection Procedures Scheme (ADIPS): www.adips.co.uk
Safety and Health Services website: www.bristol.ac.uk/safety
Health and safety Executive (HSE) website: www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/fairgrounds/faqs.htm#inflatables
University Insurance site: www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/insurance
First aid risk assessment advice: www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/media/gn/fara-gn.pdf
University event guidance: www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/media/gn/fara-gn.pdf
### University of Bristol Risk Assessment: Bouncy castle at an event

**Area covered:** Safety and Health Services  
**Risk Assessment Completed by:** Jessica Vance  
**Date:** 7th July 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard location and description</th>
<th>Who might be harmed</th>
<th>Existing control measures</th>
<th>A. Likely severity of injury (1 to 3)</th>
<th>B. Likely occurrence (1 to 3)</th>
<th>Risk rating (A) x (B)</th>
<th>Comments / actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Injury whilst using inflatable   | Individuals on inflatable and nearby | - 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 | - 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 | |

**Signed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Column A: Severity of injury:</th>
<th>Column B: Likely Occurrence:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Major injury or death</td>
<td>Regular exposure of several employees to hazard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Injury requiring medical treatment</td>
<td>Occasional exposure of few employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Minor or no injury</td>
<td>Exposure to hazard very rare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk score</td>
<td>Response times</td>
<td>Risk score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Immediate cessation of activity until interim controls are agreed and implemented</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Critically examine the areas of exposure in the process and agree timetable for completion of all agreed actions</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>