

2026 National Swimming Championships Risk & Emergency Management Plan



DEFINITIONS

ISO 31000:2018	Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines. A standard relating to risk management codified by the International Organisation for Standardisation. It provides principles and generic guidelines on risk management.
Nationals Championships	Nationals sports contested as standalone championships in 2026 including Triathlon, Swimming, 3x3 Basketball, League of Legends, Swimming, Indigenous Nationals, Distance Running, Futsal, Snow Sports, T20 Cricket, Cheer & Dance
Nationals	refers to a combination of all Nationals Div 1 and Div 2 events
UniSport	UniSport Australia
CMT	Competition Management Team
EDM	Electronic Direct Marketing
Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)	Enterprise Risk Management ('ERM') is a strategic business discipline that supports the achievement of an organisation's objectives by addressing the full spectrum of its risks and managing the combined impact of those risks as an interrelated risk portfolio.
PM	UniSport Project Manager
Risk Assessment	The overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation
Risk Management Plan (RMP)	Specifies the approach, the management components and resources to be applied to the management of risk for the event
Risk Management	Coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to risk. (Ref ISO 3100:2018)
Risk Treatment	The process to modify the risk (Ref ISO 3100:2018)
Risk	The effect of uncertainty on objectives (Ref ISO 31000:2018)
UTM	University Team Manager

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1 GOVERNANCE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This plan is compiled to address the risks involved in conducting the annual 2026 UniSport Nationals Championships held at various locations and dates. Risks will be identified and treated using ISO 31000:2018 as a guiding principle.

1.2 ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

UniSport is the peak governing body of university sport in Australia. UniSport Australia promotes and fosters the importance of university sport as an integral part of university life at 43 member universities, who collectively represent more than one million students nationwide.

UniSport's head office is in Brisbane with three regional offices in Newcastle, Melbourne and the Gold Coast. UniSport's Board of Directors oversee the governance of the organisation.

UniSport Nationals

The UniSport Nationals are a combination of annual events held across Australia. Nationals includes:

- UniSport Nationals - our flagship multisport event
- Nationals Championships - up to a further 12 single sport competitions held separately in different locations around the country

Nationals encompass over 40 sports, with 77 different competitions taking place in either men's, women's, mixed or open categories.

Sporting events such as Nationals Championships present several risk management challenges for organisers. The events are obligated to look after the safety of both workforce (paid and voluntary) and participants in a variety of different settings and situations.

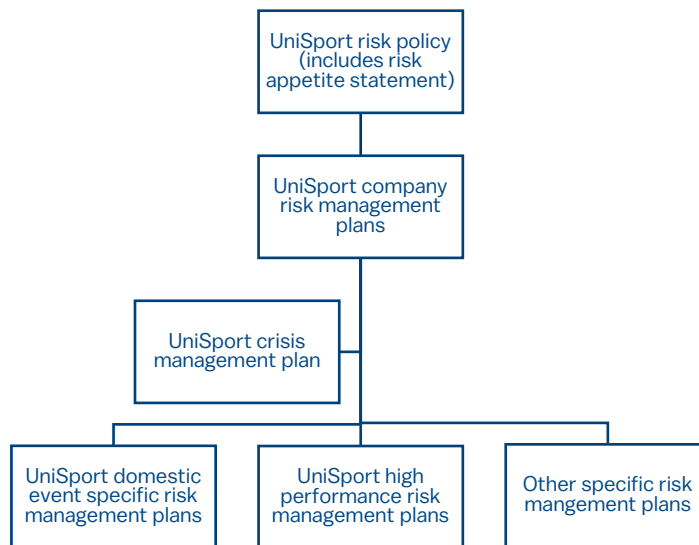
The work environment is unique to the events, and it is the responsibility of the events to develop policies and procedures aimed at risk reduction for all parties involved. UniSport is committed to achieving and maintaining the highest possible levels of occupational health and safety for competitors, staff, volunteers, officials, spectators and corporate guests.

Refer to: [Appendix 1 – UniSport Policies and Guidelines](#)

1.3 UNISPORT COMMITMENT TO RISK MANAGEMENT

UniSport adapts an enterprise risk management (ERM) approach that encompasses the whole of company and its relevant operational delivery areas. The ERM approach allows UniSport to implement affective risk management practices across its whole organisation, ensuring that risk is imbedded into staff roles, operational delivery and that risk is driven from the top down throughout the organisation. UniSport adheres to the International Standard for risk management ISO 31000 and industry risk standards set by the Australian Sports Commission (as a part of funding requirements).

Several risk documents are implemented by UniSport for its events and programs. These include:



1.4 OBJECTIVES OF UNISPORT RISK MANAGEMENT

Aligning risk management with its strategic objectives, UniSport risk management objectives include:

- Enhance the reputation of UniSport
- Maintain government practices and standards
- Manage and reduce the level of incidents within business activities
- Minimise potential liability
- Identify positive (emerging) risks
- Maintain an effective risk culture within the organisation
- Establish a risk profile for UniSport

1.5 RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

UniSport recognises that risk is not just about things that can go wrong, but about opportunities being presented that can contribute to achieving organisational objectives.

1.6 UNISPORT RISK CATEGORIES

UniSport measures risk in terms of likelihood and impact. Risks covered by the UniSport risk management process are categorised as follows:

- Financial Risk – costs associated with injuries, loss of financial stability and asset value, replacement costs and earning capacity, administrative cost increases
- Legal Risks – losses and costs arising from legal actions for breach of a common law or statutory duty of care or breach of contract
- Operational Risks – risks associated with day-to-day delivery of UniSport events and business which can be controlled
- Reputational Risks – effects on event and UniSport reputation arising from crises, losses or ineffective delivery of programs
- Environment Risks – risks associated with the environment in which UniSport operates such as risks affecting the university sector (budgetary, funding)
- Strategy Risks – risks associated with opportunity that align with strategies and objectives

- Technological Risks – loss of IT infrastructure, online privacy breaches, cyber security

1.7 RISK AND UNISPORT PERSONNEL AND PARTICIPANTS

UniSport’s workforce includes Board, appointed committees, staff, interns, volunteers, suppliers and stakeholders. Board appointed committees and staff are trained throughout the year in risk standards and practices; workplace health and safety management; and contribute to identification and assessment of risk across all areas of the business.

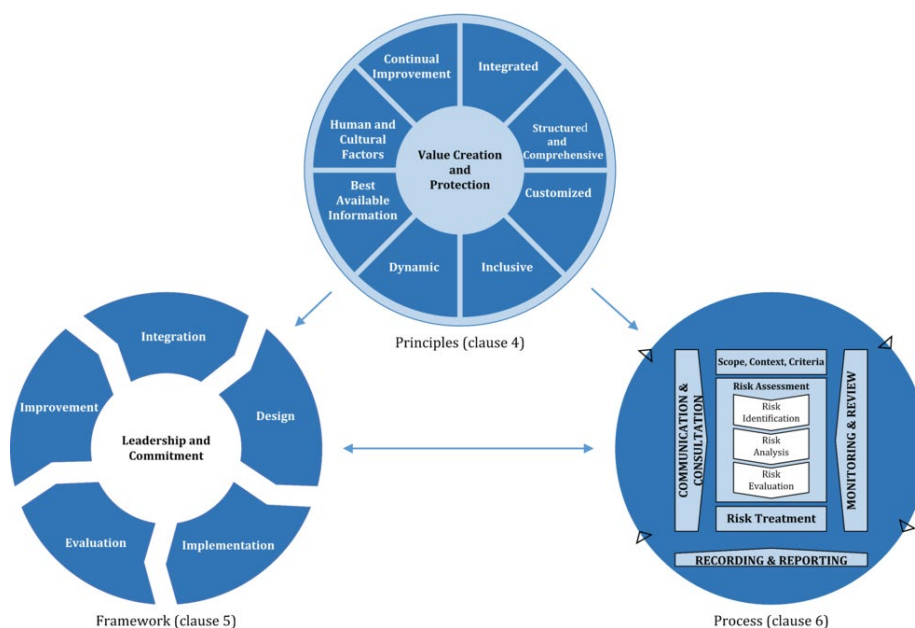
All interns and volunteers are inducted and trained in workplace health and safety, risk identification and reporting for the event they are working on.

UniSport also undertakes risk management training for those that participate in its domestic and international events. Risk information is distributed via the UniSport website to university team managers supervising and managing their team attendance at UniSport events.

1.8 UNISPORT RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

UniSport undertakes the ISO 31000 risk management process. It also follows what is known as the 7Rs and 4Ts risk assessment process:

- Recognition (identification) of risks
- Ranking of risks
- Response
 - Tolerate: accept or retain
 - Treat: control or reduce
 - Transfer: insurance or contract
 - Terminate: avoid or eliminate
- Resourcing controls for the risk
- React to the risk
- Report of risk performance
- Review the risk and near miss



Ref: ISO 31000:2108 Framework

1.9 ESTABLISHING THE CONTEXT

It is essential that the systematic identification, assessment and treatment of risk occur within the specific identified context. The risk context establishes the environment in which UniSport operates by examining elements such as the structure, operations, stakeholders and capabilities of the organisation. Establishing UniSport's risk context involves a degree of internal assessment of UniSport that provides the impetus for tackling the next steps in the risk management process.

In establishing the context, UniSport reviews both internal and external environments that can affect the event and company's objectives. Once the context has been established and objectives understood, appropriate and comprehensive risk assessment process can be undertaken.

1.10 RISK IDENTIFICATION

UniSport encourages its entire workforce to partake in the identification of risks. Risk identification is the process of finding, recognising and describing risks and is the first step in the risk management process.

UniSport recognises that there are three types of risk:

1. Hazard risk – short term, operational and have an immediate impact. These risks are mitigated. UniSport looks at the necessary actions to prevent the risk occurring and aims to limit the damage that the risk will cause.
2. Control risk – medium term, tactical and may have an impact that lasts up to a year. These risks are managed. UniSport makes necessary resources available to identify these risks and to put controls in place. There is a certain level of response to the impact from these risk types.
3. Opportunity risk – long term, strategic and may have an impact that takes many years to evolve. These risks are embraced. UniSport reviews its risk appetite when looking to take opportunities and actions based on if the risk falls within its risk appetite.

UniSport uses the following techniques to identify risk:

- workshops
- targeted group discussion
- yearly evaluation of events
- evaluation of near misses (from within UniSport and from industry)

Risks are categorised into the following areas (FLOREST)

- Financial; risks associated with financial aspects of the business
- Legal; risks associated with the legal aspects of the business
- Operational; risk associated with day to day running of the business/event
- Reputational; risks that can affect the reputation of UniSport
- Environmental; the environment in which UniSport operates
- Strategic; risks that impact on the strategic objectives of the organisation
- Technical; risks that affect technology systems

1.11 RISK ANALYSIS

Once risks are identified they are analysed for likelihood and impact using a double probability risk matrix (refer Section 3). Once the likelihood and the impact have been determined, the risk is provided with a ranking number to assist in determining its priority for mitigation and/or treatment.

Analysis of the risk considers the presence (or not) and the effectiveness of any controls that may exist. Likelihood is defined in terms of % chance of the risk occurring, frequency of risk occurring or

level of risk. Impact is defined into ranges of effects on time, cost or level of impact.

All risks in UniSport events are evaluated using qualitative methods and are prioritised according to their ranking, their manageability and urgency. In most cases, UniSport will use scenario-based analysis to analyse its risks as well as using check lists to assess the effectiveness of controls. UniSport also uses the bow tie analysis to clearly define the cause and effect of the risk.

1.12 RISK EVALUATION

Once the risk has been identified and analysed, UniSport determines whether the level of risk is acceptable or not, within the risk context and within UniSport's risk appetite. Each risk is evaluated by comparing the residual risk after existing mitigation/controls. The risk is then either accepted as treated or not accepted and subjected to the risk treatment process. Once a risk is evaluated it is allocated to an owner who will implement the risk treatment process.

1.13 RISK TREATMENT

Risk treatment is the term used to describe the activities involved in dealing with an identified risk that has been evaluated to be unacceptable. UniSport uses the method known as the four T's to treat risks. The four T's outline the action to be taken to treat, mitigate and control the risk:

- Tolerate: accept and retain (risks that are low likelihood/low impact)
- Treat: control and reduce (risks that are high likelihood/low impact)
- Transfer: contract or insurance (risks that are low likelihood/high impact)
- Terminate: avoid or eliminate (risks that are high likelihood/high impact)

1.14 MONITOR AND REVIEW

Once the risk process is complete it is important to continually monitor and review the risk management process. UniSport does this by testing and evaluating the effectiveness of the controls implemented, checking there are no changes in circumstances that may impact on controls and ensures that controls are up to date and effective.

UniSport also reviews risks on a bi-annual basis, risk registers are kept and updated monthly and ongoing reporting processes are implemented. Risk management plans are updated for event delivery periods and risk groups are established (as required) to monitor ongoing operational risks relating to key areas of the event.

Evaluation of an event and the risks (and near misses) also plays a key role in the monitor and review phases of the risk management process.

1.15 THIS PLAN – SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This plan has been developed specifically for UniSport and its domestic event program. It is not a "be-all-and-end-all" resource, which will make UniSport litigation proof or completely fail safe. However, if developed, implemented and followed, it may serve as a useful defence to claims for breach of duty of care and ensure UniSport meets its compliance and other legal obligations.

1.16 INSURANCE AND CERTIFICATES OF CURRENCY

UniSport procures the following insurances for its programs. Certificates of Currency can be provided on request for the following:

- Business Asset Insurance
- Corporate Travel Insurance
- Management Liability Insurance
- Public Liability Insurance
- Transit Trophy Insurance
- Voluntary Workers Insurance
- Workers Compensation Insurance

UniSport sources and retains certificates of currency for all venues which are used for its events.

Participant Liability

Each accredited student athlete acknowledges a participant agreement policy at the time that they register for the event, through UniSport's online registration system. It covers several release and indemnity clauses, reference to UniSport policies and procedures and acknowledges:

- that participants have voluntarily read and understood this warning and accept and assume the inherent risks in participating in the event;
- that participants present themselves as being medically and physically fit and able to participate in the event; and
- that accidents can and often do happen which may result in them being injured or even killed, or their property being damaged.

1.17 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

UniSport maintains a recommendations database which is continually updated, upon the review of each UniSport event. Suggestions and feedback that are listed in the recommendations database are reviewed annually to determine what changes/improvements are to be planned and implemented for subsequent UniSport events.

Refer to – [Appendix 1 – UniSport National Swimming Championships Guidelines](#)

Refer to – [Appendix 2 – UniSport Participation Agreement](#)

2 EVENT INFORMATION

2.1 CHAMPIONSHIPS OVERVIEW

Nationals Championships are held annually between UniSport member universities and include 10 to 12 single sport competitions. The events change location annually and attract approximately 2,450 participants and 200 staff across all championships.

2.2 EVENT OVERVIEW

In 2026, UniSport Nationals Swimming Nationals will be held in Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre, Sydney Olympic Park, NSW attracting 250 student participants.

Held across 3 days from 15 – 17 April 2026, UniSport Swimming Nationals aims to:

- Attract and retain the highest level of university athletes
- Strengthen engagement with National and State Sporting Organisations
- Ensure the event contributes to domestic competition and pathway programs for elite athletes
- Improve sport outcomes for student-athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers by creating a championship event that is respected within the national sporting landscape
- Provide economic, social and cultural benefit to the host city and region
- Contribute to a positive financial position for the organisation

2.3 EVENT SCHEDULE AND KEY ACTIVITIES

2.3.1 EVENT SCHEDULE

NOTE: This event schedule has not yet been confirmed.

Friday 16 April		
7:30am	Session 1 Warm up Commences	Competition Area
8:00am	Technical Meeting	Medal Area
9:00am	Session 1 Commences	Competition Area
4:30pm	Session 2 Warm up Commences	Competition Area
6:00pm	Session 1 Commences	Competition Area

Saturday 17 April		
7:30am	Session 1 Warm up Commences	Competition Area
9:00am	Session 1 Commences	Competition Area
4:30pm	Session 2 Warm up Commences	Competition Area
6:00pm	Session 1 Commences	Competition Area
Sunday 18 April		
7:30am	Session 1 Warm up Commences	Competition Area
9:00am	Session 1 Commences	Competition Area
4:00pm	Session 2 Warm up Commences	Competition Area
5:30pm	Session 1 Commences	Competition Area

2.3.2 SPECIAL EVENTS

UniSport Medal Presentation

UniSport will use a rolling medal presentation for all events. Medal presentations will be conducted within 10-minutes of all final's events. This will take place at the Medal Presentation Area. Announcements will be made following events to remind athletes when their presentation is about to start.

2.4 KEY CONTACTS AND STAKEHOLDER REGISTER

For a comprehensive list of relevant stakeholders, refer to:

Refer to – [Appendix 3 – Key Contacts and Stakeholders](#)

3 EVENT MANAGEMENT

3.1 NATIONALS CHAMPIONSHIPS DELIVERY STRUCTURE

Nationals Championships are delivered in one of three ways, depending on the specific sporting competition:

- UniSport Owned Event – event is owned and managed by UniSport who engage a sport delivery organisation to deliver the sporting competition elements, ex. T20 Cricket.
- Co-owned Event – event is run in partnership with an external organisation where the event contributes to both organisations' overall objectives ex. 3x3 Basketball in partnership with 3x3 Hustle
- Externally Owned Event – Championships are incorporated as a category within an existing event owned by an external party EG Mooloolaba Triathlon

Nationals Swimming Championships is an Externally Owned Event.

3.2 EVENT MANAGEMENT (SPORT)

UniSport Owned Nationals Championships appoint a competition management team from the relevant National or State Sporting Organisation (NSO or SSO) with detailed knowledge of their sport and the processes required to deliver a national standard competition.

Competition management responsibilities include:

- Coordination and management of the technical and field of play functions
- Effective management of the sport's specific competition
- Management of competition administrative functions
- Management of competition management and officials' team
- Oversee the integration of sports medicine delivery and water safety
- Dispute resolution and administration
- Development and implementation of a Competition Risk Assessment

Issues that are unable to be resolved by competition management will be escalated to their assigned National Event Manager. Unresolved matters will be referred to the General Manager – National Sport Program, before being escalated as per Appendix 4 - Communications Plan.

All Venue Risk Management Plans and Competition Risk Assessments apply to UniSport owned events where venues and Competition Delivery organisations are engaged.

Refer to – [Appendix 4 – Internal Communications Plan](#)

3.3 EVENT MANAGEMENT (OUTSIDE OF COMPETITION)

In the event of significant disruption or cancellation of the event, UniSport Australia will coordinate with the event organiser to determine appropriate actions and communicate these to all relevant stakeholders and participants.

Refer to - [Appendix 14: External Interruptions](#)

4 UNISPORT RISK MATRIX – LIKELIHOOD VS IMPACT



The following matrix has been applied to each risk in the National Championship Risk Assessments, and the treatment and control developed. Refer to [Appendix 9: Risk Register](#), along with Specific Risk and Emergency Management Plans [Appendix 10 to 22](#)

					THREAT					CONSEQUENCE					OPPORTUNITY				
Likelihood	>70%	Common	Very high	5	25	23	20	16	11	11	16	20	23	25					
	50-69%	Has happened	High	4	24	21	17	12	7	7	12	17	21	24					
	30-49%	Realistic	Medium	3	22	18	13	8	4	4	8	13	18	22					
	10-29%	Remote	Low	2	19	14	9	5	2	2	5	9	14	19					
	<10%	Impossible	Very low	1	15	10	6	3	1	1	3	6	10	15					

Rank		5	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5
		NEGATIVE IMPACT (LOSS)					POSITIVE IMPACT (GAIN)				
		Catastrophic	Major	Moderate	Minor	Insignificant	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high
Financial (F)		>\$1mil	\$100k-\$1mil	\$10k-\$100k	\$1k-\$10k	<\$1000	<\$1000	\$1k-\$10k	\$1k-\$10k	\$100k-\$1mil	>\$1mil
Operational (O)		>20 days	11-20 days	4-10 days	1-3 days	<1 day	<1 day	1-3 days	1-3 days	11-20 days	>20 days
Reputation (R)		Event Cessation.	Non-achievement of major event deliverables.	Significant delays to major event deliverables	Inconvenient Delays	Little Impact	Substantiated, public embarrassment, very high multiple impacts, high widespread multiple news profile, third party actions.	Substantiated, public embarrassment, moderate impact, moderate news item.	Substantiated, low impact, low news profile.	Unsubstantiated. Low impact, low profile or no news item.	
People / Health (P/H)		Multiple deaths or multiple life-threatening injuries or severe permanent disabilities.	Death or life-threatening injury or multiple serious injuries causing hospitalisation.	Serious injury causing hospitalisation or medical treatment cases.	Minor injury or first aid treatment case	No injuries or ailments requiring treatments					

4.1 RISK ASSESSMENT AND ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

	Risk Rating	Inherent Risk Assessment	Residual Risk Assessment	
NOT ACCEPTABLE	20-25	Action plan to reduce risk MUST be developed.	Risk is unacceptable. Event Management Committee (EMC) MUST be informed. Detailed action plan required to reduce risk and shall be monitored by the Event Organiser (EO) and reported to the EMC.	ANTICIPATION EXCEEDED
TOLERABLE (High)	12-19	Action plan to reduce risk MUST be developed.	Risk is undesirable. Decision on acceptance of risk is to be made by the EMC. Detailed action plan shall be approved and monitored by the EO. 'Fully Effective' controls expected as a minimum.	ANTICIPATED
TOLERABLE (Low)	7-11	Risk may be accepted by the event subcommittee EXCEPT where the Consequence is Catastrophic - an Action Plan must then be developed.	Decision on acceptance of the risk is to be made by the EMC, EXCEPT where the Consequence is Catastrophic . The EMC MUST then approve the acceptance of the risk or otherwise. 'Adequate' controls expected as a minimum.	ACCEPTABLE
ACCEPTABLE	1-6	Risk is acceptable - to be managed by routine procedures EXCEPT where the Consequence is Catastrophic - an Action Plan must then be developed.	Risk is acceptable - must be managed by routine procedures, EXCEPT where the Consequence is Catastrophic . The EMC MUST the approve the acceptance of the risk or otherwise. 'Adequate' controls expected as a minimum.	

5 COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

5.1 COMMUNICATIONS MEDIUM

The primary method of communication during the event will be mobile telephone, instant messaging systems (including Team App and What's App), and email. Landline communication will be the default option in case of mobile outages.

5.2 COMMUNICATIONS PLANS

The documents referred to below outline the hierarchical flow of communications during standard operations and in a crisis:

- [Appendix 4 – Internal Communications Plan](#)
- [Appendix 5 - Crisis Communications Plan](#)

5.3 CRISIS COMMUNICATION HIERARCHY AND CHANNELS

UniSport's Crisis Communication flowchart outlines the hierarchy that applies to UniSport communication and authorised spokespersons in crisis situations.

In the event of a crisis, or when sports or the event is to be cancelled, UniSport will employ the following methods to communicate this to stakeholders:

- Website updated with relevant messaging
- In-person or mobile contact to University Team Managers and key stakeholders
- EDM emails to registered participants
- Social media posts through the UniSport accounts
- Direct phone calls to key stakeholders (major partners and sponsors, sport venues, catering suppliers etc).

In such a situation, [Appendix 3 – Key Contacts and Stakeholders](#) list will act as a key reference point to deliver appropriate messages to stakeholders as quickly and effectively as possible.

5.4 UNISPORT MEDIA POLICIES

The below UniSport policies identify the protocol to be followed in relation to media contact for Nationals Championships:

- [Appendix 6 - UniSport Media Policy](#)
- [Appendix 7 - UniSport Social Media Policy](#)

These policies provide a framework for staff authorised to speak on behalf of UniSport and ensure consistency in the way UniSport is presented in the media, social media and broader community

6 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – [UniSport National Swimming Championships Guidelines](#)

Appendix 2 – [Participation Agreement](#)

Appendix 3 – [Key Contacts and Stakeholders](#)

Appendix 4 – [Internal Communications Plan](#)

Appendix 5 – [Crisis Communications Plan](#)

Appendix 6 – [UniSport Media Policy](#)

Appendix 7 – [UniSport Social Media Policy](#)

Appendix 8 – [Risk Register](#)

Appendix 9 – [Incident Report Form](#)

Appendix 10 – [Disciplinary and Disputes](#)

Appendix 11 – [Eligibility of Competitors](#)

Specific Risk and Emergency Management Plans.

Appendix 10 – [Sport Medicine](#)

Appendix 11 – [Use of Alcohol at UniSport Events](#)

Appendix 12 – [Inclement Weather Plan](#)

Appendix 13 – [Bomb Threat](#)

Appendix 14 – [External Interruptions](#)

Appendix 15 – [Venue Evacuation](#)

Appendix 16 – Medical Directory

Appendix 17 – [Concussion Guideline](#)

Appendix 19 – [Extreme Heat Risk \(SMA\)](#)

Appendix 20 – [Sports Heat Tool \(SMA - USYD\)](#)

External policies and guidelines are made available on our websites [Resources](#) page.

Internal policies and guidelines are accessible to those required through UniSport SharePoint.