



# Inclusive Guide for Karate Competition Organisers

**ENGLISH KARATE**



**FEDERATION**

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## Why consider inclusivity for competition organisation?

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to provide a modern, single legal framework to tackle discrimination. Under the Act it is unlawful to discriminate based upon a disability. It is the law therefore to ensure reasonable efforts and adjustments have been made for disabled people to take part either as volunteers, officials, spectators or competitors. Most adjustments are small and require just a little bit of consideration. Making necessary adjustments and encouraging inclusivity ensures a more enjoyable event and allows more people to benefit from the thrill of karate competitions.

## Venue selection considerations

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to provide a modern, single legal framework to tackle discrimination. Under the Act it is unlawful to discriminate based upon a disability. It is the law therefore to ensure reasonable efforts and adjustments have been made for those with a disability to take part either as volunteers, officials, spectators or competitors. Most adjustments are small and require just a little bit of consideration. Making necessary adjustments and encouraging inclusivity ensures a more enjoyable event and allows more people to benefit from the thrill of karate competitions.

Venues should as a minimum have:

- Accessible or blue badge bays
- Accessibility toilet facilities (ensuring these are unlocked)
- Wheelchair/ramp access into the venue
- Lift access should there be an upstairs e.g. viewing balcony on the first floor

Other considerations which may need to be considered:

- Is there a hearing loop facility available?
- Does the venue have room for a quiet space for competitors and spectators?  
This is particularly useful for those with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder with overcrowding often posing mental and sensory challenges

The geography of the venue is another integral factor which needs to be given due consideration. For disabled people it may be difficult for them to get to competition venues which are off the beaten track and not located near any public transport routes or areas of familiarity. Principle 2 of the 10 principles from the Activity Alliance documents:

## Principle 2

### My Locality

Travelling to get to activities can be a significant barrier for disabled people. I would much prefer opportunities to be closer to home.



By situating your competition at a venue which is familiar to would-be competition attendees and on public transport routes, it provides ample opportunities for disabled people to attend such events as reasonable adjustments can be made as to facilitate this e.g. a disabled spectator arranges for a friend or competition volunteer to meet them at the bus station and walk to the competition venue.

Don't forget to document details of the venue and how to get there in your marketing and communications plan!

## Creating the right environment

In accordance with principles 6, 8 and 9 create the right environment for your competition. The principles are documented below alongside suggested considerations.

### Principles

### Consideration

## Principle 6

### Reassure me

Some disabled people fear standing out and need to be reassured that any activity we attend will be welcoming and suitable for our needs.

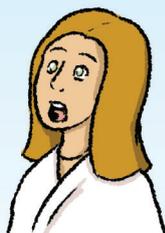


Attending competitions can be daunting. By providing reassurance to volunteers, officials, spectators and competitors this can be a real help. This could be achieved through the utilisation of competition volunteers or a designated person (with a positive and inclusive attitude) that somebody can contact on the day for reassurance or to speak with and ask questions.

## Principle 7

### Listen to me

Disabled people can be limited by our impairment and should be able to discuss our needs in a safe and private environment before starting an activity.



Links heavily with the above. Engage with Members and the wider community. Listen to what their requirements are and offer contact details whereby would-be attendees can contact the organisers and discuss needs and have fears alleviated beforehand.

## Principle 8

### Welcome me

An unpleasant first experience can prevent anyone from taking part again. Ensure my first experience is enjoyable so I'm likely to return.



Greet all with a warm welcome. Provide them with advice and guidance as to relevant provisions available on the day. Be open and friendly and ensure that the day is as enjoyable as possible for all.

## Marketing and communications

Include as much information about your upcoming competition as possible so that disabled people can make an informed decision about whether to attend or not.

Think carefully about how you are marketing your competition and think about what formats that the advertising of the event is provided in. Is the marketing of your competition available in varying formats upon request e.g. easy read documents (learning difficulties), braille (visually impaired), pictorial formats, video format with subtitles (hearing disability), read aloud functionality (hearing disability)? Is the competition marketed on reputable and trusted platforms? This links heavily with Principle 1.

### Principle 1

#### My Channels

Use communication channels that I already trust. e.g. social media, local media.



For a more detailed overview of inclusive communications and associated resources, please refer to the 'Access for all: inclusive communications' document co-created by Sport England:

[http://www.activityalliance.org.uk/assets/000/000/020/EFDS\\_Inclusive\\_comms\\_guide\\_accessible\\_PDF\\_APRIL\\_2014\\_FINAL%281%29\\_original.pdf?1456915910](http://www.activityalliance.org.uk/assets/000/000/020/EFDS_Inclusive_comms_guide_accessible_PDF_APRIL_2014_FINAL%281%29_original.pdf?1456915910)

## Competition categories

The EKF has adopted the below following categories and accompanying classifications in line with WKF competitions held internationally.

N.B. Not all categories will have sufficient competitor numbers to be viable and that is ok. Providing the opportunity for people to participate and compete is the overarching fundamental aim.

## **Visual impaired**

B1 Total Blindness: Total absence of perception of the light in both eyes or some perception of the light but with inability to recognize the form of a hand at any distance or direction. Athletes must wear opaque glasses

B2 Severe visual impairment: From ability to recognize the shape of a hand up to visual acuity of 2/60 and a visual field of less than 5 degrees (in the best eye with the best practical eye correction).

B3 Visual impaired: From visual acuity above 2/60 up to 6/60 and/or a visual field of more than 5 degrees and less than 20 degrees (in the best eye with the best practical eye correction).

## **Wheelchair Athletes**

Following classifications for Wheelchair users are eligible to compete:

R1 Paralysis of the cerebral spine (C5-C8), whereas arms and hands are also always affected (tetraplegia)

R2 Paralysis of the thoracic spine (TH1-TH2) with different instability of the trunk, but with normal arm functions (paraplegia)

R3 Paralysis in the lumbar area with deficits in the legs, but fair trunk control (L1-S2) (paraplegia)

R4 Severe spastic quadriplegia, self-propulsion in wheelchair is possible with hands and feet for short distances

R5 Leg paralysis, arms have sufficient, but limited, trunk control is unstable, use of manual wheelchair without any problems

R6 Minimal limitations in upper limbs, poor or no walking ability, fair trunk control.

In principle, only athletes in this category are admitted who need to use a wheelchair to move around. No electrical Wheelchairs or Wheelchairs with electrical support are allowed.

## **Intellectual Impairments**

Persons with intellectual impairment, down syndrome, learning disorders, behavioural disorder, etc. having an IQ below 75, are authorized to participate in this group.

Important: Depending on the degree of disability and the number of participants, categories can be divided into classes. If the number of participants is too low (less than three), categories can be combined with other categories or men's and women's categories can be combined into one category. There is no classification, all athletes of a category start together without classification.

For further information on para competition please see the below, published by WKF Para Karate:

[https://www.wkf.net/pdf/ParaKarate\\_Classification\\_Rules.pdf](https://www.wkf.net/pdf/ParaKarate_Classification_Rules.pdf)

## **The competition itself**

The timing of the categories should be reviewed as karate competitions have a habit of continuing late into the night. For those with a disability who are maybe perhaps reliant upon public transport or who feel vulnerable of an evening this should lead to para categories taking place during the latter part of morning and early afternoon.

Moreover, during the competition itself those with an ASD are often distracted and adversely affected by background noise. Therefore, all competition attendees should be encouraged to be as quiet as possible when those with an ASD are competing.

## **Other considerations**

### **Results**

Result displays should also feature as a component of pre-competition event organising. Ensure that any results not displayed on a large scoreboard are at a suitable height for everyone including those with a short stature and those in wheelchairs.

Furthermore, there are often announcing/PA systems utilised throughout karate competitions. These can be used for announcing what categories are upcoming, results or general health and safety information or special announcements. However, how effective are these for somebody with a hearing impairment? The utilisation of display screens documenting information can help e.g. competitors for the para wheel-chaired kata category to holding area 1 now please. This could also be combined with a sign language translator. Minor adaptations like this can have a large impact on those with an impairment.

## Mobility

Competition organisers should ensure that it is easy for people with mobility issues to manoeuvre around the venue and between tatamis where necessary for competing. It is with this in mind that the situation of seating and stalls should ensure appropriately spaced gangways are created. Seating should be placed close enough to the tatamis for the benefit of the spectators but also take into consideration manoeuvrability issues and health and safety.

Seating is often tiered within a karate competition venue which can be a hinderance to those with impaired mobility as the stairs pose an avoidable challenge. Therefore, competition organisers should consider the utilisation of designated seating for those with disabilities as adopted throughout the professional sporting world e.g. football.

## Guide dogs

Do not forget the dogs! Ensure guide dogs have easy access to free water supplies and somewhere to walk.





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