



1st Edition, October 2017

# Mixed Ability Boxing

## *Start Up Guide*



# Introduction

**Welcome to the Mixed Ability Boxing Start Up Guide. This resource has been designed to provide hands on guidance for coaches in all clubs so that they have the confidence to welcome members of all abilities into the family of boxing.**

England Boxing (EB), the National Governing Body (NGB) of sport for Olympic style boxing, is delighted to be working in partnership with International Mixed Ability Sports (IMAS) and Unorthobox, a Leeds-based non-profit boxing organisation, in the production of this guide.



EB has over 850 affiliated clubs and we are very proud of the positive reputation they and the volunteer workforce who run them have in providing safe, high quality boxing training in a disciplined manner that demands respect from all in the communities they serve.

We have gathered evidence from a number of these clubs who have experience of working with members with varying abilities, their stories are shared in this guide.

EB, in partnership with IMAS and Unorthobox, will create a short practical workshop based on this evidence and make it available for all clubs in all regions, with the aim of helping clubs to be more inclusive.

The common theme from the contributing clubs was that there was no magic formula required in creating a fully inclusive club. A philosophy that welcomed all members coupled with coaches' ability to adapt their training was all that was needed.

The fundamental principle is the right for all individuals to understand and accept the risks involved, whatever their ability, in boxing training and competition, and therefore to participate!

**Ron Tulley**  
**England Boxing**  
**Head of Development**



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# IMAS vision for Mixed Ability Sports



**International Mixed Ability Sports (IMAS)** is a not for profit organisation who have developed and are championing the **Mixed Ability Model**.

The Mixed Ability Model promotes social inclusion through sport, education and by encouraging players of all abilities to be equal members of mainstream sports clubs.

The model represents an innovative and radical approach to broader social inclusion, revolutionising the way we think about sport participation. Our sports and educational activities aim to create a fully inclusive and safe environment for everyone

*To enable people of all abilities to be equal members in clubs and communities using the power of sport and education.*

regardless of their age, gender, background or ability.

We want to engender a sustainable and long-lasting change offering new opportunities to participants who have faced a wide range of barriers to participating in sport.



# Our Manifesto



## The Mixed Ability Model is about:



### HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

Sport has the power to transform lives making us healthier and happier, and yet there are people excluded or segregated because of stigma, prejudice or personal perceptions of their capability.



### INCLUSION AND EQUALITY

Too often sport is seen as the prerogative of elite athletes or established majorities. Grassroots sport can also be responsible for excluding minorities allowing access only to charitable or segregated activities.



### MEMBERSHIP AND BELONGING

Mixed Ability recognises the right of everyone to participate in community sports without being separated, classified or labelled.



### EQUAL PARTICIPATION

Mixed Ability is a social movement within sports, actively promoting inclusion and equality through a sense of belonging and membership to a group, team or club.



### RULES AND REGULATIONS

Mixed Ability Sports follows the same rules and regulations of mainstream sports without adaptations, and only minor adjustments to take into account individual participant needs.



### BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

In breaking down these barriers Mixed Ability Sport creates opportunities for marginalised communities to challenge the established status quo and affirm their right to equal participation.

**BECOME A SIGNATORY** by adding your name and endorsement to the list of people and organisations on our website. To find out more about our activities and IMAS affiliation please visit our website [www.mixedabilitysports.org](http://www.mixedabilitysports.org) or email [contact@mixedabilitysports.org](mailto:contact@mixedabilitysports.org)

# Welcome

**A warm welcome to the inaugural Mixed Ability Boxing Guide, bringing together for the first time the experiences of coaches and participants who believe that full inclusion should be part of our daily life.**

The Mixed Ability Model embraces human diversity, and gives real opportunities for people of all abilities, or facing a wide range of barriers to participation, to work together and empower themselves. Training in a mainstream gym or club, being equal members, striving to improve personal goals, challenging stereotypes and the orthodoxy of sport (and disability sport along the way). For some it is a chance to demonstrate their boxing know-how and commitment to inclusion, for others it's just about learning new skills or being part of a new family. It doesn't matter, we are all part of the same club.

In our Manifesto, we do acknowledge that grassroots sports can also engender exclusion. IMAS advocate to democratise sport participation across the world, giving people the right to join in community sports without being identified, separated, classified or labelled, promoting inclusion and equality through a sense of belonging and membership.

IMAS have been developing and sharing the Mixed Ability Model through their team of trainers since 2009. Initially working primarily with adults who have



Learning Disabilities and involving them in co-producing presentations, accessible resources and delivery, we quickly realised that there was growing interest for the Mixed Ability Model beyond these groups.

We now work with Sports NGBs, grassroots clubs, health support networks, Universities, and a broad range of individuals who recognise IMAS as world leaders in inclusive sport. We deliver theoretical and practical training into clubs, organisations, service providers, and healthcare professionals, reaching thousands of people across Europe every year and we are creating a social movement which can revolutionise the way we think about sport. We would love you to be part of it!



We are delighted to work in partnership with England Boxing and Unorthobox to create this first Guide and to develop an educational workshop which will follow. Boxing has an incredible ethos, based on commitment, respect, discipline, self-improvement, and many gyms across the country promote this philosophy with passion. We hope that we can support their work through IMAS, affiliating them to a vast network of individuals, clubs and organisations who can be of mutual support!

We do acknowledge this is only the first edition of the “Mixed Ability Boxing Guide” and we are sure many more will follow. In the next ones, we would welcome a wider evidence from coaches, volunteers, gyms and participants who adopt the Mixed Ability Model, and work hard every day to change perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. Because Mixed Ability Boxing is not a special sport, it’s sport for all.

**Martino Corazza**  
**Mark Goodwin**  
**IMAS Founders and Directors**

## What is Mixed Ability Boxing?



# Coaches Experiences

## **Sarah-Jane Murray, Founder, Director and Coach of Unorthobox**

Boxing has been a part of my life from a young age. There was always excitement in our house when a big fight was coming up. As a child I was allowed to stay up late to watch the boxing. I would have loved to train in a boxing gym, however there was a perception in my family and in general that “boxing wasn’t for girls”. So, I made do with watching some of the great boxers of the time such as Nigel Benn, Chris Eubank, Steve Collins, Mike Tyson, Prince Naseem Hamed and Frank Bruno.

As an adult, I found myself working in a local health and fitness club alongside ex-amateur and professional boxer turned coach Colin Manners. I began training with Colin and as soon as I had learnt the basics he took me down to the boxing gym. I was the only female there but it didn’t matter, I absolutely loved the training. Usually I was the first one in and the last one out. I really wanted to compete and that’s what I was working towards.

Shortly after passing my medical I was diagnosed with endometriosis. This meant various treatments including several surgeries and therefore time off training. Each time I returned to boxing training after surgery, my fitness and strength levels had decreased and certain exercises caused me pain.

Previously I was more than capable of keeping up with the rest of the participants,

however this was becoming increasingly difficult. As my health worsened I reluctantly gave up training at the boxing gym.

Being suddenly diagnosed with a debilitating medical condition can have a massive negative effect on all areas of a person’s life. Personally, I found it really difficult going from being an outgoing, healthy fit woman to sometimes not even being able to get out of bed. Sometimes I didn’t even feel like talking to friends and family because all I had to talk about was my illness. At this time, it became apparent how much not being able to attend the gym had affected not only my physical and mental health but also my confidence and social life.

The time off got me thinking that there must be other people like me who love boxing but would not feel capable or comfortable attending a general session at a boxing gym.

Boxing can have a massive positive impact on people’s lives. It’s not just about physical health and fitness. In my experience boxing increases self-confidence, improves overall feeling of wellbeing, mental health, develops coordination, relieves stress and much more.

In our Mixed Ability sessions, we have also noticed other benefits. We are promoting community cohesion, bringing people of all ages, genders, backgrounds, religions, abilities and disabilities together. People who may not usually socialise are brought together by the wonderful sport of boxing.





*"I would have loved to train in a boxing gym, however there was a perception in my family and in general that boxing wasn't for girls."*

*Sarah-Jane Murray*

## Coaching Mixed Ability Boxing



## **Dominic Whyte, Unorthobox Coach**

When I was first approached to be involved with Unorthobox I knew it was an opportunity I could not turn down. I was aware it would have a positive effect on my life and all the Mixed Ability boxing participants, some who may never have had the opportunity or confidence to attend a sports related session.

I am speaking from my own experience as I have a disability. In 2013 I was diagnosed as being visually impaired. I played rugby league from a very young age up until I began having issues with my eyesight. There was no provision for Mixed Ability participation at this time that I was aware of.

Experiencing losing my eyesight was one of the most difficult things I have ever had to deal with.

We all know the benefits of participating in sport. The hardest thing for anyone can be attending that first session, wanting to be accepted and not judged. This can make it so difficult to take that first step of getting back in to sports.

*"Mixed Ability Boxing has so many benefits for everyone involved including myself who has had this opportunity to be involved in making a difference to people and change lives."  
Dominic Whyte*

Being part of the Unorthobox team and helping with the mixed ability sessions has been the most incredible experience I have ever had. Giving people with various disabilities opportunities to take part in regular sessions is unbelievable. I say regular sessions because that's what they are. The same drills and exercises you will find in any boxing gym, with small adjustments if required.

Mixed Ability boxing has so many benefits for everyone involved, including myself. I have this amazing opportunity to be involved in making a difference to people and change their lives.



## **Jake Goodwin, Amateur Boxer and Unorthobox Coach**

I am a current active boxer, I have boxed for 9 years now and I'm also a level 1 England boxing coach. Having different coaching over the years from grass root levels right up to England/GB coaching I have learnt different aspects of boxing, the coaching I've received made me want to coach myself.





Since becoming a coach I've noticed how happy people leave the gym and how much I can change a person's life in the 1 or 2 hour session. This is what encourages me to keep coaching and inspiring many young people.

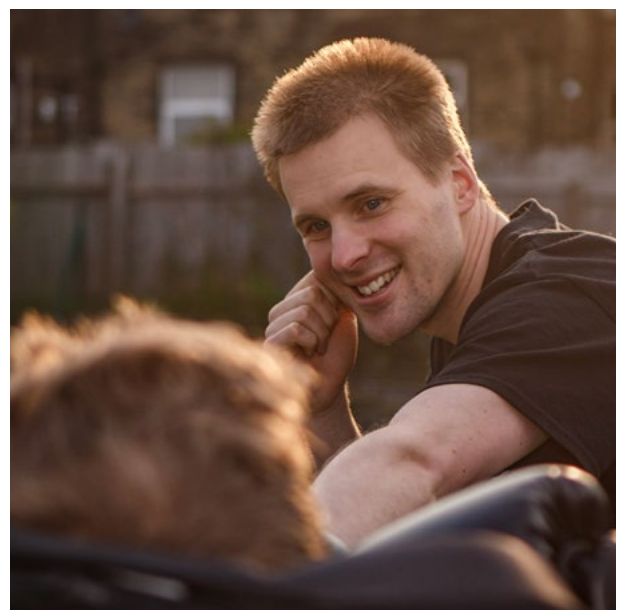
Coaching for Unorthobox has become a big part of my life. The participants are very inspirational to coach. Some of the boxers are aware that currently they are unable to compete however still attend training regularly. They really love the training and it is something very different to their usual activities. At Unorthobox there is no clear division for people with disabilities, everyone trains together. With this method of coaching the participants don't notice the different abilities. I look around during the sessions and observe everyone helping each other. The participants are from a wide variety of different backgrounds, ages and abilities and form as one team to help each other improve.

*"Since becoming a coach I've noticed how happy people leave the gym and how much I can change a person's life in the 1 or 2 hour session."*  
**Jake Goodwin**

*"I have a huge passion for boxing and have seen the massive benefits to the participants in the mixed ability sessions. Improved confidence and social skills and in some cases increased range of movement and motor skills."* **Paul Mainprice**

### **Paul Mainprice, Amateur Boxer and Unorthobox Coach**

Over many years, I have coached a variety of sports. I have a huge passion for boxing and have seen the massive benefits to the participants in the mixed ability sessions. Improved confidence and social skills and in some cases increased range of movement and motor skills. These benefits have a knock-on effect on all areas of their lives and it's fantastic to see how participating in mixed ability boxing can dramatically improve participants overall wellbeing.



# Participants experiences

## Darren

Since joining Unorthobox sessions 6 months ago I have become much more confident. I have lost weight, I feel much fitter and haven't used my inhaler for my breathing for about 3 months. I look forward to every class and can't wait to get on the pads with the excellent trainers. They know how to get the best out of me and push me every step of the way. They are very patient and understanding. Getting involved and helping with the Mixed Ability attendees is also fulfilling. Everyone helps each other which is great to see.

## Arfaan

After playing tennis and football for many years, Unorthobox provided the perfect opportunity at my local tennis club for weekly Mixed Ability non-contact boxing sessions which I jumped at the chance to do. Unorthobox provides a perfect opportunity for people with severe disabilities and health conditions to get involved in sport regardless of health or ability.

I have always said that boxing isn't just a sport which just goes around throwing punches and hurting your opponents, I believe it is much more than that, it's a sport which requires fitness, technique, footwork, discipline and so much more, going to these Mixed Ability sessions with Sarah has all pretty much confirmed that for me and is a very good work out too.

In the 3-4 months I have been going to these Mixed Ability boxing sessions, I have learnt how to punch with great technique, punching with combinations and defensive movements. I have also learnt about technique and footwork which has also improved certain aspects of my tennis.

These Mixed Ability sessions don't just teach how to box but also provides a great workout and fitness in a fun environment.

It's been a real privilege to be part of this class and taught by these tutors who understand what it means to live with Crohn's Disease and an ileostomy pouch.

Irrespective of what disability or health condition anyone may have, I believe these Mixed Ability boxing sessions are the right place to come, because they cater for any disability or health condition.

[#NoGutsStillGlory](#)

## Hassan

The key for me was the Taster Day. I recall being pretty anxious and unsure about whether to give boxing a go. However, the coaches made me feel at ease and reassured me that my visual impairment would not be a barrier to learning the sport. I think if it wasn't for the taster session I probably would not have gone due to concerns over my ability being visually impaired. After the taster day, I decided to take the plunge and attend the regular weekly boxing class, despite



*"My team of coaches all agree that the inclusive sessions at the club are the most enjoyable and rewarding of the week."*

*Sarah Lee, Head coach at Redditch Boxing Club*

still being a little nervous. The coaches were once again on hand to allay any fears I had and assured me that it was an inclusive session. They were certainly not wrong, as you only had to look around to see that there were people of all abilities participating in boxing, which was inspiring.

## **Michael**

I found out about Mixed Ability Boxing with the IMAS Open Days and I had never joined a boxing class before. I learnt that boxing is about stamina, a total body work out and I enjoy it because it's something different from what you get from team sports. For me, the best thing about boxing is that you can learn new skills, self-discipline and being taught by different coaches with different expertise. You can also meet different people, and they all have different abilities or disabilities which are not always obvious. You can learn from each other and you don't always know they have disabilities or long-term health conditions, and you see them overcoming barriers. For me some places are not very welcoming, but here the coaches, the group, the club, they are all welcoming, you can train hard

and have a laugh. I am also developing my skills attending the preliminary award and my ambition is to become a qualified boxing coach.



# Taster Sessions

Taster sessions should be focused on enjoyment and including everyone who's turned up. Most new members will never have worn boxing gloves before, assume no knowledge and introduce skills slowly.

Network in your gym, most committees are keen to be community friendly and inclusive. Club members and coaches can get an idea of Mixed Ability Boxing from the simple guide and short videos found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qy9l8tNrCA>

*"I felt that I was winging it, as I had no specific training in working with people with a disability. However, I adopted a philosophy of what can these members do, rather than what they cannot do. I found that my coaching style and delivery adapted very quickly to the needs of the members which subsequently helped in all of my coaching"*

*Paul Rogers, Scrappers Gym, Swindon.*

*"You can learn from other people and you don't always know they have disabilities or long-term health conditions, and you see them overcoming barriers."*

*Michael*

IMAS will continue to provide ongoing support and help you network with other local Mixed Ability clubs as they develop.

Contact IMAS for more information about local disability support organisations:

[contact@mixedabilitysports.org](mailto:contact@mixedabilitysports.org)



# Health Benefits

**By Dr. Mike Loosemore MBBS  
MSc PhD FFSEM, Lead Consultant  
Sports Physician England Boxing,  
English Institute of Sport and  
Chair of AIBA Medical Commission.**

## Exercise for Health

- Humans evolved to be physically active.
- Physically active people have half the risk of diabetes, half the risk of some cancers, 30% fewer strokes, 40% fewer heart attacks, better mental health, stronger bones, 30% reduction in dementia.
- Unfortunately 70% of the population is not doing enough physical activity and this is reflected in the increasing amount of Diabetes. People with disabilities are less physically active than the general population.

## Boxing for Health

- Amateur Boxing is a complete fitness regime requiring both aerobic and anaerobic training and using every part of the body, for total fitness there is no better sport.
- A high level of self-discipline is required in amateur boxing; many boxers have found these skills useful outside the sport.
- There is a strong anti-smoking anti-drugs ethos in amateur boxing. Most boxers don't smoke.
- Amateur boxing is the most closely medically regulated of all sports, all boxers need a medical before they can take up competitive boxing, they then



have a medical every year, and a medical check every time they box.

- Amateur boxing is very safe as a contact sport with the same concussion rate as ice skating.
- Unlike other sports, serious injuries, such as broken limbs and broken necks, are almost unheard of in amateur boxing.
- Amateur boxing improves self confidence and self belief, allowing athletes to direct their energy in a positive way. Studies have shown that amateur boxers do better economically and socially than their peers who do not box.

## England Boxing position

England boxing wants to play its part in increasing levels of activity in the population with a disability.



# Mental Capacity

**In all sports there is an element of risk of injury or harm, whether that be of an injury to self or another person.**

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 states clearly that we should assume that everyone has capacity to make a decision unless otherwise proved.

If someone wishes to play contact sport, they must understand that even in non-contact activities there is a chance that they might get injured. It is important all participants understand what that means

regarding pain, treatment and possible consequences. Only in this way they have capacity to make that decision.

However if they do not fully understand the full complexity of making that decision but want to play, then it could be decided that it's in their best interests to participate. This is dependent on the benefits of playing outweighing the deficits of possible injury.

If you are unsure that someone fully understands the risks then there are some simple things to do to help them understand.

## Communicating the risks...



**Easy read document**



**Show them photos**



**Real life scenarios**



**Visual responses**

*"I have lost weight I feel much fitter and haven't used my inhaler for my breathing for about 3 months. I look forward to every class and can't wait to get on the pads with the excellent trainers." Darren*



# Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a set in stone subject for all sports coaches and volunteers and is already well established in the area of Children and Young People in Sport. This must now be embedded in Adult Sport as we increase the participation of Vulnerable Adults in mainstream sports.

## What does Safeguarding actually mean?

The definition of the word 'Safeguard' is protection or safe conduct. Therefore, there is a responsibility to keep safe from harm, abuse or neglect as well as 'guarding' rights and well-being.

In order to protect vulnerable adults, coaches and volunteers must have a basic understanding of abuse, maltreatment or neglect and how these may present themselves.

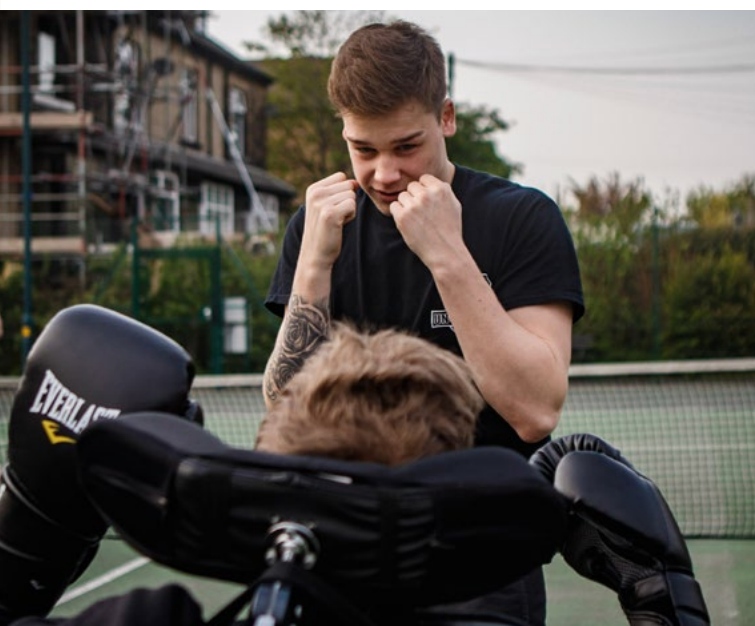
*"Now that our club has gained a strong reputation for including members of all abilities, we have had more offers of volunteer help from within our community and also had more grant aid to help run the club." Jeff Moses, Barrow Boxing Club*

Despite the principles of 'Safeguarding' appearing relatively simple they can be more complex when put into practice. Therefore, in order to recognise or deal with a situation of disclosed harm, appropriate training must be delivered to all sports coaches and volunteers (not all players). This is key to ensuring national minimum standards are met and vulnerable participants are protected across all sports.

The key message is Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, at times we will be coaching and playing alongside vulnerable people. All sports clubs have a Children's Safeguarding Policy and we need to ensure procedures are also in place for vulnerable adults.

The full England Boxing Adult Safeguarding Policy including whistle-blowing policy can be found at:

<http://tinyurl.com/yczoufhh>



# Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy

**Clubs should ensure vulnerable members are protected and that working practices are changed to minimise the risk of abuse or neglect. Staff and/or volunteers have a duty to report any suspected cases of abuse.**

## Definition

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are getting, or may need, help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.

## Abuse can include

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private and can be perpetrated by anyone. Examples include:

- physical
- financial
- material
- sexual
- psychological
- discriminatory
- emotional abuse
- neglect

## Rights & Responsibilities

- To ensure volunteers are aware of vulnerable adult's need for protection
- To notify the appropriate agencies if abuse is identified or suspected
- To support, and where possible, secure the safety of individuals and ensure that all referrals to services have full information in relation to identified risk and vulnerability
- Volunteers that have regular access to or work with Vulnerable Adults are checked using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

## Volunteer responsibilities

- To be familiar with the Vulnerable Adult Protection policy
- To take appropriate action in line with our club policy
- To declare any existing or subsequent convictions.

## Support for those who report abuse

All those making complaints, allegations or expressing concern, whether they are volunteers, people using the services of our club or members of the general public, should be reassured that:

- They will be taken seriously
- Their comments will usually be treated confidentially, but their concerns may be shared with the appropriate authorities if they or others are at significant risk.

*"Our club is about the only community setting on our estate in south Liverpool. We started to offer sessions that were not just related to boxing and found that we attracted lots of members of the community that would not have joined the club when it was simply about boxing. With this new diverse offer, we found that more and more people with a disability were attending boxing fitness sessions. As I adapted my traditional boxing coaching I realized that I was becoming far more analytical when observing trainee boxers"* Mark O'Brien, Gemini Boxing Club

## **The Vulnerable Adult has the right**

- To be made aware of this policy
- To have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously
- To receive fair and respectful treatment throughout
- To be involved in any process as appropriate
- To receive information about the outcome

If you wish to make any reports or have any concerns please contact the club's Safeguarding Officer via email or phone, you will also be able to speak to them in person. Alternatively you can approach your coach or team manager who will speak to the Club Safeguarding Officer.

Clubs should review policy and good practice annually.

## **Help players and staff by...**



**Creating awareness**



**Reporting confidentially**



**Listening to everyone**



**Stopping abuse**

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Who can participate in Mixed Ability boxing?

There are no restrictions on who can attend a boxing club and get involved in some form of boxing fitness training. Coaches will assess what new members can do and adapt sessions, where necessary, to meet the needs of all members, young and old, experienced and novice, able bodied and disabled.

## Why Mixed Ability?

Traditionally, participants with disabilities have been offered sporadic sporting sessions often separated from other members of a club. England Boxing encourages mixed sessions as much as possible so that the disabled athlete is training alongside their able-bodied counterpart. Where it is in the interests for some distinct sessions to be delivered separately we still encourage that those members are fully integrated into other aspects of club life such as social occasions and attending club shows to support carded boxers.

*"The coaches made me feel at ease and reassured me that my visual impairment would not be a barrier to learning the sport."*  
Hassan

## What kind of boxing is involved?

Currently there is no provision for International competitive boxing for people with disabilities, there is no Paralympic Boxing. However, the majority of members of England Boxing clubs are not involved in competitive boxing so people of all abilities can enjoy Olympic style boxing training.

## How do you coach Mixed Ability Boxing Sessions?

Everyone should have the opportunity to participate in the sport they love. Coaching Mixed Ability boxing is very similar to coaching general sessions in a boxing gym. You may have some total beginners, some experienced boxers, some returning to the sport after time out and some there for other reasons such as to improve their fitness. The content of the session is the same as any other boxing session, making minor adjustments if and when required. Everyone is treated as an individual regardless of ability or disability. Specialist equipment is not necessary.

## How do we recruit and retain participants?

Holding taster sessions or Open Days is a great way to recruit new participants. If possible hold the taster session on the same day and time that your Mixed Ability sessions will be held. Contact local organisations who provide services to people with learning or physical disabilities.



*"Coaches at Poseidon have commented that they witness an accelerated improvement in technique, fitness and attitude from the Wednesday night classes where we have participants of all abilities." Lucy O'Connor, Poseidon Boxing Club*

Remember these sessions are for everyone not just people with disabilities. Use your club website, social media, posters, flyers, emails etc. to promote the taster session to everyone within your local community. Ensure you have regular sessions in place for participants to attend once they have been to the taster.

### **Are disabled boxers covered by insurance?**

All members of England Boxing affiliated clubs are covered with the same insurance cover so long as their membership is registered on the England Boxing electronic membership system, "The Vault". Coaches will assess what each member can and cannot do safely and then design activities to meet the needs of the member.

### **Who is DBS checked?**

All volunteers who have regular access to people under 18 at a boxing club are required to undertake a DBS check. Mainly this regards to coaches but can also include officials and volunteers.

### **What if the club have concerns about the safety of the disabled member?**

All clubs when registering a new member should ensure that they gather information about the health and condition of that member (e.g. a member with asthma should have an inhaler available). Coaches with queries over health conditions will ask advice from parents/carers and if needed the members doctor. Like all sports and activities, members should realise that there is an element of risk involved and so long as that is fully understood then a disabled boxer has the same right to undertake those risks as anyone else.

Where a disabled boxer progresses to sparring and competition then they will need to be examined by a registered doctor to determine if they are fit to box competitively. Club coaches and match makers will then match boxers based on weight, experience and ability to do as much as possible to ensure a well matched safe bout.

# Boxing Core Values

The noble art of boxing brings people together from all ages abilities and backgrounds. Boxing is one of the toughest types of training commanding respect discipline and self-control. It requires both mental and physical dedication.

A healthy lifestyle is an essential part of boxing. Committing to eating well, training hard and managing weight is crucial. Boxers have a tough mental attitude and are able to push their bodies to the limits persevering through fatigue to achieve their goals.

Boxing is a great way to channel aggression as you learn to control your feelings and overcome weaknesses. When competing sometimes a decision may not go your way. A great boxer learns from their losses and strives to improve.

Respect for opponents, coaches and officials is a key part of boxing no matter if you win or lose. Self-respect is essential for success in the sport. Boxers must walk their own path and avoid negative influences.

Although seen as a lone sport boxing training is very social. Training in boxing gives you the opportunity to be part of a unique community that feels like family.



*"Our gym has increased its membership and the number of sessions we run ever since we started to work particularly with young people who have autism."*  
Gerard Starkey Rotunda Boxing Club



# Acknowledgements

**We would like to thank all those who contributed towards this guide. In particular:**

Sarah-Jane Murray, Dominic Whyte,  
Jake Goodwin and Paul Mainprice (*Unorthobox*)

Sarah Lee and Rachel Bills (*Redditch Boxing Club*)

Paul Rogers (*Scrappers Gym, Swindon*)

Jeff Moses (*Barrow Boxing Club*)

Mark O'Brien (*Gemini Boxing Club, Liverpool*)

Gerard Starkey (*Rotunda Boxing Club, Liverpool*)

Filip Duda (*Winchester Amateur Boxing Club*)

Lucy O'Connor (*Poseidon Boxing Club*)

John Ashton (*Photographer*)

Joseph Haskey (*Videographer*)

*Thanks also to Heaton Tennis and Squash Club.*

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For help setting up your own Mixed Ability boxing club or to find out more,  
please email [contact@mixedabilitysports.org](mailto:contact@mixedabilitysports.org) or visit us online...



@IMAS\_sport4all

| [www.mixedabilitysports.org](http://www.mixedabilitysports.org)



| "Imas cic"