CIRCLE Safety Charter

The purpose of this charter is to establish a safety framework for the participants of the CIRCLE project, organised by FEDEC during the Circa Festival in Auch (FRA).

It also aims at promoting dialogue between students, accompanying persons, riggers, technical teams and all FEDEC members about how to minimise risk and raise general awareness through better and safer training and performing.

We invite all CIRCLE participants to carefully read this charter. The recommendations stated in this document should be applied throughout the whole week in Auch, whether during training sessions, performances, at the boarding school, or in other venues of the festival.

The CIRCLE Safety Charter should be respected by all FEDEC members involved in the project, including:

- **Students**,
- **Accompanying persons** (teachers or other designated adults responsible for students),
- **CIRCLE groups** (a group of students performing together at CIRCLE, either from one school or from various schools cooperating),
- **CIRCLE riggers** (hired by FEDEC, supervising the set-up and rigging operations during the whole duration of the project, in cooperation with Circa's technical teams),
- **Circa technical team**,
- **FEDEC team** (employees of FEDEC),
- **FEDEC Working Group on Safety & Rigging** (specialists in circus safety and rigging, appointed by the FEDEC board, in charge of suggesting improvements and mediating in case of conflicts).

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Part 1 - Technical safety

During their week in Auch, students must comply with the basic safety regulations recommended by this charter.

As general recommendations to minimise risk, students should:

Use **common sense** and always be alert.	Always **minimise the risk** factor to an acceptable level.	If unsure, **speak to your accompanying person** and the CIRCLE riggers.

Students must perform under the same safety conditions as during rehearsal or training, and they are expected to train in a responsible way and not compromise their own and/or other people's health and safety.

In case of doubt, unclear of exceptional situation:

- Students are responsible for **immediately reporting safety issues to their accompanying person and the CIRCLE rigger**.
- If students and their accompanying person disagree on a safety issue, **the final decision is of the accompanying person**.
- If the accompanying person and the CIRCLE rigger disagree on a safety issue, **the final decision is of the CIRCLE rigger**.
- If necessary, **the FEDEC Working Group on Safety and Rigging can act as support or mediator** to ensure that the performance respect the principle to minimise the risk to an acceptable level.

Non-standard objects, materials and elements (**e.g. sharp objects, fire, stones...**) **that increase the physical risk factor to the students and/or the audience, or may damage the surroundings, cannot be used without permission of the CIRCLE rigger and the accompanying person**.
The CIRCLE rigger can ask students to stop their rehearsal activities at all times for safety reasons.

Risk assessment

During the process of planning, rehearsal, and presentation of your CIRCLE project, you should consider the specific risks associated with the activities undertaken.

A risk analysis consists in:

- **Collecting relevant information** about the planned activity
- **Identifying the possible hazards,**
- **Assessing the risks arising from the hazards** (estimate the probability and severity of the consequences and decide whether the risk can be tolerated),
- **Planning actions** to eliminate or reduce risks,
- **Documenting the risk assessment**.

FEDEC promotes risk assessment as a good practice to minimise risk and raise awareness about specific risks linked to a performance's features. For this reason, all CIRCLE groups must do a risk assessment of their own performance prior to their arrival at the venue.

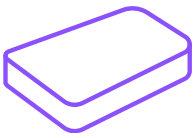
The risk assessment should be done by using the dedicated template you can find in the CIRCLE technical file. If you have any questions or need advice or support to fill out your risk assessment, you can contact the CIRCLE Rigger and/or the FEDEC Working Group on Safety and Rigging.

Use of rigging & safety equipment

All personal rigging equipment brought by students must be approved by the CIRCLE rigger before use. All rigging equipment provided and installed by the CIRCLE riggers has been certified in Belgium except for the aerial rigging truss, its suspension and the tie down components. It is strictly forbidden to remove or change any item without consulting the CIRCLE riggers.

Always check your equipment visually before starting a training or performance. If you have any doubts, ask your accompanying person or the CIRCLE rigger for advice to get a second opinion. To know more about basic safety inspections, you can also check this **FED-Talk video**.

Operating a manual pulling system is only allowed to students who are trained to handle it. The use of a proper safety lunge is needed for swinging - and Washington trapeze, cloud swing, etc.



Use of landing mats

Release movement (salto, twist, and jump) from a circus apparatus should only be performed over a safety mat regardless of height. CIRCLE groups must ensure that the mat configuration (including height and covered surface) is sufficient for the students in case a fall from the apparatus occurs.

Each year, FEDEC offers different landing mats that can be used as safety measures during performances. If the mats provided by FEDEC are not sufficient safety measures according to the presented performance, participating schools are then responsible for adopting proper ones.

Part 2 - Physical & health safety

Students are expected to train in a responsible way and not compromise their own and/or other peoples' health and safety.

Students taking or adjusting prescription medication (including opioid pain relievers and/or products containing codeine) should be aware of potential risks. Training may be dangerous if they are feeling drowsy, aggressive, dizzy, nauseous, light-headed or shaky. Before coming to the CIRCLE project, they should consult their doctor and inform their accompanying persons about their medication.

Emergency plan

When a student gets injured and medical help is needed:

1

Inform the accompanying person and/or one of the CIRCLE riggers. Once this responsible person gets near the injured person, only they can decide to call 112.

2

See if you can help taking care of the injured student while waiting for follow up (e.g. comfort them, keep them warm, laying still, get a cold pack...). If not, simply give the injured student space.

3

Always make sure the injured person is accompanied to the hospital or doctor - preferably by the accompanying person and/or someone from the student's school and/or someone from the FEDEC team. If it is not possible, ensure the student remains in contact with the school by phone.

Part 3 - Emotional & social safety

Students and accompanying persons should be aware of and always respect their own boundaries and those of others. **Respect must be ensured for everyone**, regardless of gender, age, social or geographical origin, or religious or cultural affiliation.

No form of psychological or physical harassment will be tolerated. If students witness or become victims of any abusive conduct, they are encouraged to inform their accompanying person(s) or a member of the FEDEC team.

Data privacy

At the CIRCLE welcome meeting, students will sign a release document for the use of audio-visual rights, as professional photographers and video-makers will document their shows. Before posting pictures and videos on social media, students must ensure that their content does not harm the CIRCLE project, the Circa festival, their school or a fellow student.