

## PHASE 1 - RESUMPTION OF PERFORMANCE SPORT GUIDANCE

### Step One (section A)

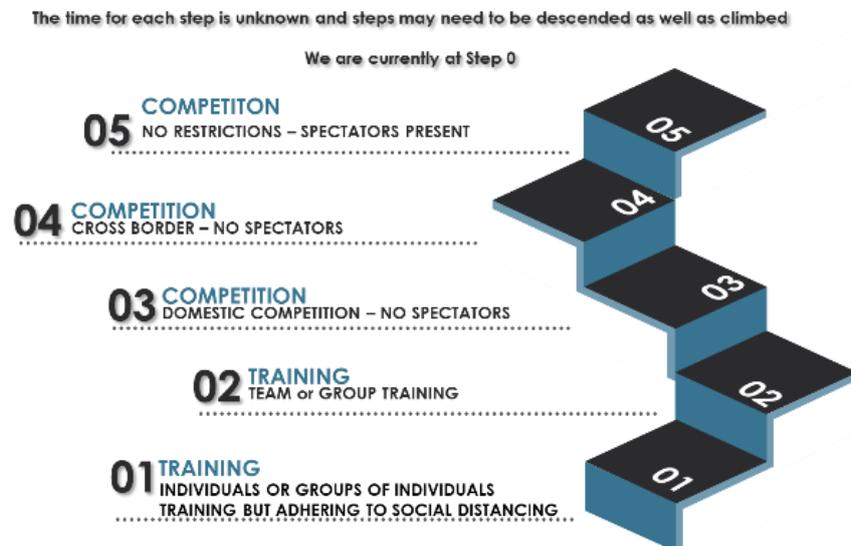
#### INTRODUCTION

As part of a World Class System, the **sportscotland** institute of sport (SIS) has been working in collaboration with Scottish Government, key partners, medical experts and UK Sport to agree an approach for the 'Resumption of Performance Sport' in Scotland.

It has been agreed that a coordinated resumption of performance sport training and competition is necessary to minimise the risk to the wider community as well as sports community of fans, friends and family who support them. This includes minimising the pressure on the health service.

Five steps have been outlined for the performance sporting community to transition from the current restrictions through to full unrestricted performance sporting competition.

#### 5 STEPS TO RESUMPTION TO PERFORMANCE SPORT - SCOTLAND



The aim of the five step approach is not to set specific timelines and actions but rather to provide a framework that key partners (SGB's & facility operators) can use to forward plan and ensure a consistent approach which is in line with, and adapts to, Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland route map phases

There is no expectation that sports, clubs or athletes will be ready to return immediately. Prior to resumption of performance activity robust risk assessments and checks must be undertaken to ensure that all procedures can be fully and effectively implemented. Please continue to err on the side of caution with the health and safety of athletes and support staff being the priority.

## PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE

The purpose of this document is to define a set of recommended minimum-practice guidance for a transition to Step One (section A) for professional / performance athletes. It is anticipated that following this guidance will assist performance sport organisations to deliver a safe return to organised training for its athletes and staff.

This guidance does not constitute legal advice or replace any Scottish Government or Public Health advice; nor does it provide any commentary or advice on health-related issues. Performance sports and affected organisations should therefore ensure that they seek independent advice from medical practitioners prior to implementing any resumption of sport.

## ATHLETE DEFINITION

The guidance seeks to consider the needs of performance athletes and the staff who support them to protect their health and wellbeing while they re-engage with training.

For the purposes of this guidance the definition of an 'performance athlete' is defined as:

### 1) Athletes who are:

- a. Professional athletes, and / or
- b. Athletes in professional teams, or
- c. 16 years of age and above and on performance development pathways for professional sports.

**or**

### 2) For GB Olympic and Paralympic sport, athletes who are:

- a. GB senior (i.e. those not classified by age group) representatives for NGB's on a Summer or Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games (Tokyo/Beijing) pathway, **or**
- b. On senior training squads (i.e. those not classified by age group) for NGB's on a Summer or Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games (Tokyo/Beijing) pathway, **or**
- c. 16 years of age and above and on performance development pathways for NGB's on a Summer or Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games (Tokyo/Beijing) pathway.

**or**

- 3) Athletes who are senior representatives or on senior training squads (i.e. those not classified by age group) for Commonwealth Games sports for territories in the British Isles and are participating in sports which are not on the 2020 Olympic / Paralympic programme but are on the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games programme.

## STEPS TO RESUMPTION

**Step One (section A)** of resumption of performance sport can be described as a return to a level of organised individual programme training in a defined outdoor performance facility while adhering to the government physical distancing advice. This might be individual training or groups of individual athletes training in the same facility/space but adhering to physical distancing and other steps to minimise the spread of COVID-19. Under Step One (section A), travel to training venues is also permitted for performance athletes and staff.

Considering Scottish Government and Health Protection Scotland advice, Step One has been divided in to two sections

- **Section A** – Focus on the outdoor space and individual training adhering to social and travel distance advice.
- **Section B** – Additional access to risk-assessed venues including limited indoor facilities. Individual training adhering to social and travel distance advice

The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly developing situation and it is likely that this guidance and references will be regularly updated.

## GUIDANCE

The guidance is in two sections:

- **Guidance for Performance sports, clubs and service provision partners** (e.g. Institutes)
- **Guidance for Performance training centre venue Hosts and operators** (If the venue hosting/operating is not the full responsibility of the sport)

The guidance within both sections must followed to give the highest confidence that the approach taken to returning to organised training is in line with the current minimum practice and could be considered appropriate.

### **Guidance for Performance sports, clubs and support service providers**

1. Each performance sport's/club's Accountable Officer should name an existing member of staff as a COVID-19 officer. The role of the COVID-19 officer is to be responsible for oversight of the COVID-19 risk assessments, ensuring the necessary level of risk mitigations are in place and the minimum guidance are achieved has taken place and that sports and any partners/hosts can adhere to their guidance responsibilities within local constraints.

2. Each sport should have a named COVID medical officer (physician), familiar with the emerging evidence related to post-COVID-19 pathology, who is expected to:
  - a. Lead on ensuring any suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases are managed in line with the sports COVID-19 case management protocols and current government guidance.
  - b. Have medical oversight of the return to training of any athletes with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.
  - c. Support the COVID Officer with any medical aspects of the risk assessment and mitigation process.

Sports who do not have a medical officer to cover these responsibilities should secure medical cover to oversee these processes prior to resuming organised training. Regular screening for symptoms within the training environment may be implemented on the ground by an appropriately trained healthcare professional working with a set of protocols defined in the risk assessment mitigation plan and signed off by the medical officer.

3. Organised training should only be resumed where government guidelines on social distancing can be adhered to (considering any terms of dispensation allowed for performance sport) and the sport/club is confident the minimum level of guidance can be achieved within the local context.
4. Sports should prepare a risk assessment and risk mitigation plan to be completed before resumption of Step One training at each venue that determines and communicates what can or cannot be achieved training wise in the local context. The risk assessment and mitigation plan should include but not be restricted to:
  - a. Ensuring that prior to the resumption of training, all athletes and staff who are engaged in the training environment are formally appraised of the risks, mitigating steps being taken and all athletes and staff who choose to engage actively 'opt in' by way of written consent.
  - b. Agreeing a clear position on how athletes and staff who are deemed vulnerable or are in a household with vulnerable individuals, interact with the training environment, which must be in line with government advice on clinically vulnerable individuals. Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals or those continuing to live with anyone deemed clinically extremely vulnerable should not be engaged in the training environment in line with current government advice<sup>2</sup>.
  - c. Identifying additional actions that need to be taken to enable any Paralympic athletes who need support with complex impairments, or the consequences of these impairments to interact safely with the training environment in line with government guidance. This should include a decision on where these actions can be achieved or where engagement of athletes with the environment is not feasible.

- d.** Outlining how regular screening for COVID-19 symptoms will take place before each entry to the training environment. Updated information on the most common symptoms can be found on the NHS inform website<sup>3</sup>. Screening should include a questionnaire and temperature check as a minimum.
- e.** Outlining clear protocols to manage any person who becomes symptomatic at the venue as per government guidelines for employers and businesses as the most relevant information<sup>4</sup>.
- f.** Outlining how staff who are returning to the training environment from isolation due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 or other COVID-19 related reasons should be medically assessed prior to return.
- g.** Ensuring any practitioners who need to work in close contact with other members have access to the personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for the setting and are trained in their appropriate usage and disposal<sup>5</sup>. If suitable PPE cannot be procured without taking away supply intended for key workers, then the practice or work requiring the PPE should not take place.
- h.** Ensuring any support staff within the training environment are operating to the minimum standards of practice that ensures any professional body endorsement and professional indemnity insurances they require are still valid.
- i.** Ensuring training choices are made to minimise the injury and illness risk/NHS burden as a priority consideration.
- j.** Ensuring an appropriate level of medical staffing is in place within the training environment to manage any injuries and illness in training while also meeting the demands of any COVID symptom screening.
- k.** Ensuring local emergency medical cover/assistance can be accessed in the event of a potential life or limb threatening injury requiring immediate extrication and urgent medical care or hospitalisation.
- l.** Ensuring minimum but necessary training staffing levels are calculated to balance training need, distancing protocols and reducing risk of burden to the NHS.
- m.** Outlining how equipment being brought into the training venue will be suitably cleaned and disinfected to manage the possible transmission of COVID-19 (e.g. specialist technical equipment, wheelchairs).
- n.** Forming an agreement with hosts/venues on what steps need to be taken to ensure social distancing and appropriate hygiene measures are maintained in the training environment.

- o. Outlining the steps to determine maximum capacity levels for the various spaces in use with hosts/operators.
  - p. Outlining (via agreement with venue hosts as necessary) how all areas will be cleaned between sessions for different groups of athletes.
  - q. Outlining how any equipment/items that must be shared within the training venue (e.g. gym equipment) will be cleaned/disinfected between each user.
5. All performance athletes and support staff should be engaged in a 1:1 check-in prior to resumption of organised step one training to ensure they have understood the sport specific risks and mitigations, training site protocols in place, are physically and mentally well enough to engage in return to training and have actively 'opted in' to engaging in step one return to training via written consent. All athletes and staff should also be clear on their route to 'opt out' of the organised training environment under Step One conditions at any time without unreasonable steps being taken against them consequently.

All performance athletes and staff should adhere to government legislation on social distancing when travelling to and from the training venue and should not come within the 2m social distancing range of anyone outside their household during travelling to and from training. Training time and distance should be minimised where reasonable.

6. Sports should clearly and regularly communicate any updates to protocols around training, prioritisation of access to venues and any necessary risk mitigation steps to their athletes and any home support network (e.g. parents).
7. Athletes who are returning to the training environment from isolation due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 or other COVID-19 related reasons must do so under the direction of a physician / medical officer, familiar with the emerging evidence related to post-COVID-19 pathology. This should include a check-up with the same medical officer before re-engaging with the training environment. As a minimum these return to training steps should follow the latest version of the **sportscotland** Institute of Sport graduated return to training protocols which are updated every two weeks unless a sport has more advanced guidance in place. Should a sport wish to utilise these protocols they should contact their relevant **sportscotland** High-Performance Manager to gain access to the most up to date version as the scientific knowledge base is changing rapidly.
8. Should a known or suspected COVID-19 case occur in the training environment or an individual be identified as a contact of a known case, the individual/s in question should be placed in isolation and follow Scottish Government guidelines<sup>2</sup>. The designated medical officer should be immediately informed, if not involved, with identifying and isolating the case at the training venue.

9. Athletes or staff deemed 'clinically extremely vulnerable' should continue to follow government advice. This currently includes maintaining 'shielding'<sup>2</sup> and therefore, not engage in a return to organised training outside of the home.
10. Sports and hosts (as applicable) will need to discuss and agree how any abnormal costs that arise from mobilising a facility for use during restricted periods will be handled prior to training being resumed.

### **Guidance for Performance training centre venue hosts and operators**

1. The resumption of organised performance sport training should not in any way limit the hosts/operator's ability to support ongoing usage of the facility for supporting the NHS or key worker requirements.
2. Each facility which is a performance training host / operator should have its own named COVID-19 officer if the venue is not sport run. The officer should be responsible for oversight of the venues COVID-19 risk assessment and mitigation plan, ensuring the necessary level of risk assessment and mitigation has taken place and that sports and hosts can adhere to the guidance within their facility.
3. All hosts/operators must ensure staff supporting performance sport resumption are formally appraised of the risks, mitigating steps being taken and requested to actively 'opt in' if they are comfortable to return to working within the training environment by way of written consent.
4. Where multiple sports/clubs are utilising the same training site/s all COVID-19 officers should share their risk assessments and operational plans to ensure alignment and avoid any potential conflict between plans.
5. Hosts/operators of venues being used for Step One return to training should ensure that all outdoor areas to be accessed by performance athletes, support staff and facilities staff are deep cleaned prior to return to a standard which follows Scottish Government guidance for post-COVID case non-hospital facilities cleaning<sup>5</sup> as a minimum.
6. Hosts/operators of venues being used for Step One return to training should ensure that all areas to be accessed by performance athletes, support staff and facilities staff are cleaned at the beginning and end of the training day to a standard which follows government guidance for non-hospital facilities cleaning<sup>5</sup> as a minimum.
7. Hosts/operators of venues should agree with sports/clubs in advance about how any relevant areas will be cleaned between sessions for different groups of athletes.
8. Hosts/operators should ensure their cleaning staff have all the necessary levels of PPE and cleaning material needed to complete deep cleaning and daily cleaning protocols.

9. Hosts/operators should ensure their cleaning staff have any necessary levels of training needed to complete deep clean and daily cleaning protocols prior to organised training resuming.
10. Hosts/operators should ensure that government advised social distancing guidelines can be maintained within their facility and work with sports/clubs to determine maximum capacity levels for the various spaces in use.
11. A single host/operator liaison should be appointed daily and made known to the sports/clubs to be the single interaction point as necessary. Interaction should be kept to that which is essential.
12. Hosts/operators of venues being used for step one return to training should only agree to operate where they are able to comply with law, current Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland advice and all the normal essential insurance cover that is required to run the facilities are in place and remain valid.
13. The venue should take reasonable steps, in partnership with the sport/club to ensure only approved performance athletes and those staff required to support their training enter the site. This should be in keeping with relevant Health & Safety and Fire Regulations.
14. Sports and hosts (as applicable) should discuss and agree how any abnormal costs that arise from mobilising a facility for use during restricted periods will be handled prior to training being resumed.

## **Resources**

1. [Scottish Government COVID-19](#)
2. [Scottish Government Staying at Home guidance](#)
3. [NHS Inform COVID-19](#)
4. [Scottish Government Business and Physical Distancing Guidance](#)
5. [Health Protection Scotland guidance for non-healthcare settings](#)