

Organised Events

These notes are intended to provide a framework for a return to diving following easing of government restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance is based on current knowledge and understanding of the risks associated with the outbreak and the current scientific evidence informing decisions by government and other relevant authorities. It is acknowledged that the evidence base and knowledge surrounding the outbreak is rapidly and continually evolving and so the guidance will be reviewed regularly and be subject to update and amendment as appropriate.

STATUS

Currently in the UK different criteria applies within each of the devolved administrations. Please refer to the [STATUS document](#).

Protecting others and reducing the demands on the NHS

Current advice on avoiding transmission of the virus can be found on the Government Website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

The advice for anyone in any setting is to follow these main guidelines:

- The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of a new continuous cough and/or high temperature. If you have these symptoms, however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started (if you live alone), or 14 days (if you live with someone who has symptoms). You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days, contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.
- Wash your hands more often than usual, for 20 seconds using soap and hot water, particularly after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose, or after being in public areas where other people are doing so. Use hand sanitiser if that's all you have access to.
- To reduce the spread of germs when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or your sleeve (not your hands) if you don't have a tissue, and throw the tissue in a bin immediately. Then wash your hands or use a hand sanitising gel.
- Clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces using your regular cleaning products to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

Anyone displaying any symptoms should NOT engage in any activity outside the home.

Ensure you are not showing any symptoms of Coronavirus (temperature, cough, difficulty breathing, or loss of smell and/or taste).

Previous guidance for recreational diving activities followed the governments general principles of meeting socially in groups of six. At the height of the pandemic significant social distancing rules were in place as a legal requirement.

Thanks to significant measures applied to control the spread, including the vaccination programme, most restrictions on group size and social distancing have been removed. The following guidance provides advice on appropriate safety precautions that can still be taken to help ensure the safety of all persons engaged in these activities.

The best initial precaution is for all divers to check their own medical condition and consider the use of lateral flow testing prior to departure and not travel if testing positive or showing symptoms.

For organised events, the additional level of supervision and the safety infrastructure allowed for larger group sizes for some organised activities. The principles for this are set out below and continues to provide appropriate and helpful advice to ensure the safety of group activities.

Organised Events

In a training environment, such as a swimming pool training session or for nationally organised Instructor events, then the overall organisation may reflect larger groups. The larger groups normally represent smaller training groups (an instructor and 2-4 students) who form part of a larger training activity. In these circumstances the overall event should be managed to ensure safety and providing a risk assessment is conducted, recorded and then monitored throughout the activity and takes account of Covid-19 risks then larger attendance events are possible providing government guidance can be adhered to.

Government guidance on “What you can and can’t do”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

Within the FAQs is section 3.15

“3.15 Can I still participate in sport and physical activity in groups of more than 6?”

Adults can continue to take part in outdoor organised sport and licensed physical outdoor activity in groups of more than six, provided it is organised by a **national governing body, club, registered instructor/coach, business** or charity; and/or involve someone who has received an official license to use equipment relevant to the activity. In all cases, the organiser must conduct a risk assessment and ensure compliance with COVID-19 Secure guidance.

You should only be playing outdoor team sports and partaking in outdoor physical activity where the relevant governing body has published guidance on how to do so safely, and you can play outdoors. See a list of team sports governing bodies which have developed guidance. Other outdoor sports or licensed outdoor physical activities may also be permitted if this is formally organised by a sports club or similar organisation and following sports-governing body guidance.

For adults, outdoor organised exercise classes can still take place in groups larger than six. When participating in any exempted activity like this, you must not mingle in groups of more than 6 before and after the activity. You should always ensure you socially distance from people you do not live with (or have formed a support bubble with) wherever possible.

From 24 September, organised indoor sport and indoor exercise classes can continue to take place with larger numbers present, provided groups of more than six do not mix. If groups of six are likely to mix, these indoor activities must not go ahead. There is an exemption for organised indoor team sports for disabled people.

The relevant indoor sport facilities guidance or outdoor guidance must be followed for these activities. Organised Sport and Physical Activity events are allowed provided they follow guidance for the public on the phased return of

outdoor sport and recreation in England. All supervised activities for under 18s, including sports and exercise groups, indoors and out, are permitted where a risk assessment has been carried out. This should follow guidance on out of school settings.

Other forms of exercise must only take place in groups of six unless everyone is from the same household or support bubble.

When playing sports informally (where not organised in line with the rules above) with people you don't live with, you must limit the size of your group to 6. It is illegal to do so in a larger group and you may be fined."

This provides a framework for larger gatherings providing the activity is planned and managed taking account of the need to protect all participants from the risk of Covid-19 including ensuring people socially distance from those they do not live with.

Further detail is contained within the government publication on phased return to sport and recreation:

This includes:

"Organising outdoor sport and physical activity events

The government has published guidance on a range of issues core to the delivery of outdoor sport and physical activity participation events. See guidance for people who work in grassroots sport and gym/leisure facilities.

As well as the general principles around mitigating risks, the rules on gatherings, and taking full responsibility for the safe delivery of a sporting event, organisers will want to particularly draw on the following in their planning:

- operating strictly within government guidance and ensuring event delivery plans are COVID secure
- communicating clearly and consistently with all participants and support staff including volunteers
- being adaptable to change, for example if a local lockdown were to be necessary
- rules on gatherings
- Test and trace requirements including recording of participants and officials to facilitate contacting by NHS Test and Trace if needed
- maintaining a record of staff, customers and visitors to support NHS Test and Trace
- maintaining physical and personal hygiene
- keeping participants, officials, volunteers, and staff safe
- any necessary protective equipment or face coverings for staff
- access to temporary or permanent toilets and changing facilities or those with special needs and disabilities

- traveling to and from events
- use of car parks
- restaurants and clubhouses
- accessible provision within the site and the facility”

Organisers

Currently, it is possible to organise the following:

National governing body

- Instructor training and other nationally organised events

Clubs/Instructors

- Diver training and other related training courses

Businesses/BSAC Centres

- Diver training and other related training courses
- Other activities allowed by the government relating to the business

In all cases there must be a clearly identified individual responsible for:

- Prepare a Risk Assessment (RA) for the event based on:
 - Venue requirements
 - BSAC guidance
 - On-site review on the day
- Brief staff and students on the key aspects of the RA:
 - Staff briefing should include a reminder of the additional role they have to play in ensuring Covid-19 compliance
- Monitor compliance with RA and issue reminders as necessary
- Maintain records of all participants for the purpose of ‘Test and Trace’

To be used in conjunction with other guidance including:

- Medical guidance
- Equipment guidance
- Shore diving
- CPR and rescue procedures
- Diver Training
- Travel Guidance
- Charter boat diving
- RIB diving
- Swimming pool usage
- Etc.