

A practical guide for technical officials
returning to off track athletics
following the COVID-19 restrictions during
phase 3 of the route map for exiting lockdown

This practical guide, prepared by our team in consultation with **sportscotland** and UK Athletics in line with government guidelines, outlines the specific measures **scottishathletics** recommends that technical officials take to ensure a safe return to athletics activity.



PHASE 3

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Be aware that guidance can change quickly, and more restrictive rules may be applied in the future, so please refer to the scottishathletics website regularly as each event date approaches

The guidelines in this document relate to phase 3 of the Scottish Government's COVID-19 route map through and out of the crisis.

This phase:

1. Permits the resumption of sport in line with sports specific guidance and public health advice.
2. Organised outdoor non-contact sporting activity can be undertaken by all ages with no physical distancing required on the field of play.
3. Live events can create a competition bubble of maximum 30 athletes, with a total of 200 attendees at the event. This means up to 30 athletes can compete together, either in a wave start or small race, but physical distancing must be maintained before and after competition.
4. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with any updated Scottish Government guidance. Information on the Scottish Government's approach to managing COVID-19 is available at www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/
5. Travel guidance outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to. Guidance is available at [Staying Safe and Protecting Others: Travel](#)

The safety and wellbeing of athletes, coaches, officials and the wider athletics community is at the heart of any guidance that **scottishathletics** produces and distributes. We are aware that a number of athletes, coaches, technical officials, event organisers and athletics venues are eager to resume athletics competition as soon as possible. However, **scottishathletics** stress that competition should not take place until it is safe and appropriate to do so, and aims to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved in athletics, facility provision and the wider community of the sport is prioritised.

The safety of all event participants is key, and event organisers must ensure that measures are in place to mitigate risk at their event. Competition providers should appoint a COVID-19 Officer to hold overall accountability for the competition. This should be a named person from their organisation who will work closely with the organiser, the venue and the officials on duty to ensure that the event can be delivered safely in the current climate. All competitions must take account of local conditions, and any risk assessment for normal activities must be undertaken with government guidance around COVID-19 considered.

The guidance that follows provides competition-specific advice within the confines of the government framework. This guidance has been published on the understanding that it is an interpretation of government guidance relevant to off track competition. It is likely to change at short notice; in which case, updates will be published through the **scottishathletics** website and social media channels. Technical officials should check for updates regularly and respond to altered competition plans accordingly as an event date approaches.

scottishathletics looks forward to welcoming all Technical Officials back to competition this season and appreciates that the past few months of lockdown have been difficult for many members. Officials should feel no need to rush back to their volunteer roles and are not expected to return until they feel prepared to do so. The following guide aims to reassure returning officials that measures are in place for your safety, and to offer advice on what to expect from events taking place this season.

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1. Competition Timelines

Up to 31st March 2021

- Virtual competitions taking place.
- Physical competition taking place with suitable adaptations and following these guidelines.
- Guidance will be reviewed following any Scottish Government announcements.
- No spectators are permitted at any events.

From 9th October 2020

- Local restrictions in place in certain NHS Health Board Areas
- Competition available across all disciplines of athletics in Scotland.
- Any licensed competitions taking place MUST comply with the government and **scottishathletics** guidelines available on the date of the event.
- All events are held 'behind closed doors'

2. Appointing Officials

UKA licensed officials are required at all events in line with licensing standards and UKA rules. Officials and volunteers should be approached prior to the competition license application to ensure that sufficient volunteers are available to help the event organiser to stage the event. It is understood that the availability of graded officials may be limited under current circumstances, and so additional volunteers may be recruited to work under the supervision of a UKA Level 2 official should sufficient graded officials not be available. The numbers of graded officials and additional helpers must be sufficient to ensure that the event complies with the published **scottishathletics** [Licence Standards](#)

Officials' Allocations

Event Organisers should contact and invite suitable officials and volunteers to cover all roles required at their event. Event organisers should contact officials as soon as possible to confirm their availability. For **scottishathletics** events, this is coordinated by the Road and Cross Country Commission. Requests for availability are made by emailing events@scottishathletics.org.uk.

3. Health, Safety and Hygiene

All event organisers are expected to reinforce good hygiene practices prior to, during, and after their event, as participants may be asymptomatic. In this phase, no one should attend any events if they:

- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have COVID-19 symptoms (self-isolate for 10 days) or are feeling unwell
- Have been told to self-isolate as part of the contact tracing measures in place

Event Organisers will link with venue operators and landowners to ensure that access to first aid and emergency equipment is agreed and maintained. Event organisers will ensure that first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID pandemic and first aiders are aware of COVID-19 specific first aid advice <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm>.

General Cleaning Advice

- Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standards.
- Cleaning protocols may differ between facilities, therefore individual facility guidance for cleaning must be followed at all times.

4. **scottishathletics** Competition Structure

Due to government restrictions it has not been possible to offer a full championship season for Road and Cross Country events in Winter 2020/21.

Road Championships will be allocated, where feasible, to events on confirmation that they are to be held as planned. Some 2020/21 road championships may be held during Summer 2021.

The Cross Country calendar has been affected by cancellations, with no District Cross Country Relay nor Individual District Championships being staged in 2020. The National Cross Country Relays are to be replaced with a Team event with limited numbers, which will act as a qualifying opportunity to a reduced Short Course Cross Country Championships (individuals only). Limited physical events will be complemented with virtual events to allow a second qualifying avenue and to provide competition opportunities for all members.

At the time of publication, it is still planned to hold Inter District Championships, National Cross Country Championships, Young Athletes Road Races and Senior Road Relay Championships on the scheduled dates early in 2021 in some format.

To manage numbers in attendance at events and flow around the venue, the following restrictions will be in place:

- All events will be seeded into waves of a maximum of 30 athletes prior to the competition day.
- An arrival, call up, race and departure schedule will be drawn up, and must be adhered to by all attendees.

5. General Practical Guidance for Technical Officials

The following guidelines will apply to all **scottishathletics** events. Other licensed-event organisers will be expected to have similar protocols in place, but officials should clarify exact expectations directly.

Attending the venue

- Officials are advised not to car-share, except with members of the same (or extended) household as far as practicable.
- A one-way system will be in operation at each venue. Information on proposed routes will be published on the **scottishathletics** website, and the link sent to officials in advance. The one-way system must always be strictly adhered to, including entrance and exit.
- All officials will report outdoors to a specifically designated reporting point on arrival at the venue.
- Toilet facilities will be available with physical distancing measures in place.
- Each official should ensure that they have brought with them ALL of their officiating equipment for the day. No sharing of individual equipment is permitted.
- All personal equipment and items required for the specific duties being undertaken are to be kept with the official at all times. No equipment or items are to be left unattended during the event.
- Personal bags are to be left in the official's vehicle. All personal belongings will be left at the owner's risk.
- Officials should note that refreshments will not be provided at events this season. Officials are encouraged to bring their own packed lunch if attending a full-day event.
- All officials must maintain physical distancing at all times, including within the officials' meeting area, and maintain strict hygiene protocols. It is recommended that officials supply and bring their own personal hand gel for use throughout the day.
- Officials are reminded to bring suitable face coverings with them and are expected to wear them whilst interacting with others.

- Sanitising and hygiene equipment will be available to officials, dependent on their duties:
 - o Anti-bacterial sanitising spray
 - o Rolls of kitchen paper towelling/anti-viral wipes
 - o Black rubbish bin liners to collect contaminated items
 - o Replacement disposable face masks

Briefings

- It is recommended that team briefings are carried out in advance either by e-mail or call. If a discipline briefing is required on the day, this is to be carried out according to physical distancing in a clear outdoor space away from other officials, athletes, coaches and other event attendees.
- No duty sheets nor instructions will be handed out on the day of the event. If required, duty sheets or marshals' information will be emailed to officials and volunteers prior to the event by the relevant Chief/Referee. Each official may bring a personal printed copy or should be able to access this information electronically on their own phone or tablet on the day.

Note: athletes and officials will be allowed to use mobile devices on and around the course, but a common sense approach to their use must be maintained. No calls, games or social media, but athletes and officials are encouraged to check for any relevant updates regularly.

Equipment

- At the beginning of each session and prior to the first event, teams of officials in each discipline will be required to ensure all equipment they will use is wiped down with anti-viral spray & paper towelling/wipes, under the direction of their Chief/Referee.
- Disposable paper towelling and/or anti-viral wipes will be available for wiping down equipment. After use, all towels/wipes must be disposed of in suitable refuse bins.
- It is essential that each official maintains strict hygiene protocols throughout the event, especially when handling equipment. Hand washing and/or use of hand gels should be repeated, together with regular changing of disposable gloves if used.
- At the conclusion of each session, cleaning and disinfecting of equipment must be repeated by the officials involved in the concluded event.
- It is important to remember that face coverings/masks, if worn, might become moist due to exertion or weather conditions whilst officiating. If this happens any official wearing a face covering must change it regularly and ensure safe disposal of the old mask/covering.
- **scottishathletics** radios will be allocated in advance and will be cleaned with anti-viral wipes before collection. Any official returning a radio should wipe it down with anti-viral wipes prior to its return. Clean earpieces will be distributed to officials for the full season (7th November to 28th March) and should be kept for their own personal use. This will include any official in a Management, Referee or Chief role who will be required to use a radio at any **scottishathletics** meeting during the season. Earpieces should be cleaned and returned to **scottishathletics** by the official after their last duties of the season.

During Competition

- All watches, especially Referee, Chip Timing, Start Team and Timekeepers, must be synchronised to the main race clock prior to the first event of the day.
- All officials are to ensure that they maintain strict hygiene protocols during competition both for themselves and the athletes under their care, especially where equipment is being handled.
- Athletes will be expected to report to the start line ready to compete.
- As always, no coaches, parents nor spectators are permitted on the course. Only competing athletes and officials are permitted access onto the "field of play".

- New UKA Supplementary Note: **CR18.5 Unsporting or Improper Behaviour (125.5)** - Spitting (or similar) in warm up, call areas, field of play or any other public area may be treated as a conduct offence and will be dealt with by a warning or disqualification (yellow card and/or red card). Officials who issue a conduct warning must complete the relevant paperwork and pass the information verbally to the Referee.

Post Competition

- Officials are to ensure that there is no contact such as high fives, shaking hands, etc. by athletes post-event.
- Any equipment used during the competition is to be sprayed using the anti-viral spray and wiped down using paper towelling/wipes before returning.
- During any post event de-brief within the venue after the competition, officials should continue to follow strict physical distancing and hygiene protocols. De-briefs may also be held via e-mail or call post-event and comments submitted to events@scottishathletics.org.uk

6. Discipline-Specific Practical Guidance

Declarations

- Athletes will be expected to arrive at the venue as per the published schedule around 45mins before their wave is due to start. Timed arrival-windows for each wave will be drawn up, with athletes advised to arrive and declare for their event individually, without any accompanying coaches or parents, at the time specified. For team events, one Team Manager is to declare on behalf of each age group team, rather than athletes declaring for themselves.
- The time-window for each event will be within 60-45 minutes of the event start time. Bib numbers and safety pins will be available at declarations.
- Each declarations official will be allocated a set of waves which they will have the sole responsibility to manage. Paperwork should not be shared between officials.

Call Area and Final Warm Up Zone

- Call Areas and Final Warm Up zones will be created for each start wave. A call up schedule will be available online detailing when athletes are expected to report to the call area to create their competition bubbles. Once assembled within the call up area, athletes are not permitted to mix with other competition bubbles as physical distancing can be relaxed within the race bubble. Athletes should not report early to ensure that distance is maintained between competition bubbles. Any changes on the day will be clearly communicated to the relevant officials by declarations, although it is likely that no-shows will result in waves being run with fewer athletes.
- Athletes should conduct their main pre-race warm up away from this area, physically distanced from others and report only for final warm up preparations and for bag drop.
- Competition bubbles will be called forward to the start pen for their wave start.
- On completion of their run, athletes will return to collect their belongings and must then leave the call area as per the call schedule.
- Stewards in this area must ensure:
 - Athletes remain in their competition bubble and do not mix with other competition bubbles.
 - Do not leave the zone once checked in/arrived.
 - Non-competing athletes, parents, coaches and team managers are not permitted in this area and must maintain 2m physical distancing from athletes at all times.
 - Athletes are dispersed from the Call Up zone as per the wave schedule to prepare for the next waves arrival.

Start Team

- It is vital that all races start exactly on time according to the published wave start time. This is to ensure consistency with times recorded manually by timekeepers.
- Besides their normal preparation duties prior to the start of the first wave, the Starter and Starter's Assistant(s) should ensure that all equipment is suitably sanitised using anti-viral spray and disposable paper towelling/wipes.
- Starters must provide their own starting equipment and blanks. It will not be possible to share equipment.
- Sound systems will not be used unless each starter has their own headset & microphone.
- If there are any false starts or any issues at starts, the duty starters may confer whilst maintaining physical distancing.
- Competition bubbles should be collected from their call up zone ready to race and escorted to the start pen. It is important that the competition bubbles do not mix with each other.

Manual Timekeeping and Recorders

- Manual timekeepers and recorders should form an officiating bubble within their discipline and limit interactions with other bubbles.
- Waves will start as per the published start time on the official race clock, with time of day being recorded for each athlete within a wave as they cross the finish line.
- Completed recording sheets must be placed within the supplied envelope and dropped off at declarations at the conclusion of each session.

Place Callers and Recorders (if used)

- Place Callers and Recorders should form an officiating bubble within their discipline and limit interactions with other bubbles.
- Completed recording sheets must be placed within the supplied envelope and dropped off at declarations at the conclusion of each session.

Line Judges and Funnel Control

- Line Judges and Funnel Control volunteers should form an officiating bubble within their discipline and limit interactions with other bubbles.
- Finishers should be dispersed quickly away from the finish line back towards the call area for their wave as quickly as possible.
- Unless in the case of medical attention, athletes must not sit or lie down within the finish area.
- Team managers, coaches and parents must not congregate in and around the finish area and should be directed away from this area and around the course.

Marshals

- Race marshals may be asked to work alone, ensuring physical distancing between marshal points. Marshals manning the same marshal point should be from the same household wherever practical.
- A clear system of communication should be explained to marshals prior to the first race to ensure that any incidents can be reported back efficiently and effectively.
- Often, marshals are also athletes, coaches or team managers assisting on the day. During phase three, we ask that all volunteers hold only one role on any **single event day** to ensure that they do not form, or interact with, multiple bubbles on the same day. Volunteers may, however, hold different roles on separate days of a multi-day competition.

7. Contacts

Any general event queries should be directed to events@scottishathletics.org.uk in the first instance. This includes queries from officials and event organisers, as well as athletes, coaches and clubs.

Staff Contacts

Francis Smith
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All other staff contacts can be found at the following link:
<https://www.scottishathletics.org.uk/about/people/staff/>