

A practical guide for Athletics and Running following the strategic framework for Scotland's COVID-19 restrictions.

This practical **guide**, prepared by our team in consultation with **sportscotland** and in line with government guidelines, outlines the specific measures **scottishathletics** recommends athletes, runners, clubs, groups and coaches take to continue safely participating.

Version 4 – Updated 17th December 2020



Follow the group size guidance laid out by **scottishathletics**



Follow guidance for the level your Local Authority are placed in at all times



Follow physical distancing at all times off the field of play



Follow jumps guidance at all times

scottishathletics 
jogscotland



Follow public health guidance



Follow equipment hygiene and cleaning guidance

FRAMEWORK GUIDANCE

Following the introduction of [Scotland's Strategic Framework](#), **scottishathletics** have updated our guidance in consultation with **sportscotland** and the government. We have produced the overall **scottishathletics** framework and this supporting document for all areas of athletics and running in Scotland. Protection levels for local authorities are reviewed on a weekly basis and the level applicable to your local authority can be found [here](#). Outlined below is what you can expect at each area of the restrictions for the government's overall strategy.

Level	What you can expect
Baseline and Level 1	Within these levels, we would expect to see low incidence of the virus with isolated clusters, and low community transmission. Broadly, these levels are the closest we can get to normality, without a vaccine or effective treatment in place, before conditions will allow us to move to Phase 4 of the Route Map. They would be similar to the measures in place during the summer, once we reached Phase 3. The Baseline and Level 1 are designed to be sustainable for longer periods.
Levels 2-3	Within Levels 2 and 3, we would expect to see increased incidence of the virus, with multiple clusters and increased community transmission. There would be a graduated series of protective measures to tackle the virus, focusing on key areas of risk – broadly, indoor settings where household mixing takes place with less, or less well-observed, physical distancing and mitigations. The measures would be intended to be in place for relatively short periods (2-4 weeks), and only for as long as required to get the virus down to a low, sustainable level.
Level 4	Within this level we would expect to see very high or rapidly increasing incidence, and widespread community transmission which may pose a threat to the NHS to cope. It is likely that this level would see the introduction of measures close to a return to full lockdown. Measures would be designed to be in place for a short period, to provide a short, sharp response to quickly suppress the virus.

N.B. Our guidance has been developed with affiliated **scottishathletics** clubs and **jogscotland** groups in mind. Non-affiliated clubs and groups delivering organised athletics or running activity may also follow this sport-specific guidance and benefit from the exemptions that are in place for the sport. To qualify for these exemptions, they must appoint a COVID Coordinator, ensure risk assessments are in place for all sessions, record attendance at all sessions, and ensure a UKA licensed coach or leader leads or sets all training sessions. Independent licensed coaches should also follow the **scottishathletics** guidance.

1. General Guidance

Before you participate

In this phase you must stay at home if you:

- If you have Covid-19 symptoms.
- Someone in your household has Covid-19 symptoms.
- If you have been asked to self-isolate at home by the [Scottish Government Test and Protect system](#).
- Have returned from a country which is not on the [exemption](#) from quarantine list in the last 14 days.

Physical distancing & good hygiene behaviours

- Follow Scottish Government advice on physical distancing at all times when not taking part in the activity.
- Do not share food, towels, and drinks.
- Clean your hands and equipment frequently.
- Participants must practice good respiratory hygiene during the activity (i.e. coughing, sneezing into a tissue or the crook of an elbow).
- Avoid spitting.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on.

Further health, safety & hygiene guidance:

[Health Protection Scotland: General guidance for non-healthcare settings](#)

[Health Protection Scotland: Hand hygiene techniques](#)

Safeguarding

Children and young people:

Regardless of the level applicable in a particular area: -

- Clubs should ensure their [Child Wellbeing and Protection Policy](#) and their Welfare Officer contact details are both up to date and easily accessible on the club website and social media pages.
- Clubs should circulate their [Codes of Conduct](#) for coaches, athletes, and parents/carers so that everyone is reminded about the expectations of them and their roles.
- Clubs should make the [Responding to Concerns Procedure](#) widely available so that everyone knows what to do and who to contact with any worries or concerns.
- Outwith normal club sessions, coaches must have the express permission of the parent/carer of an athlete who is under the age of 18 to coach that athlete. If the session is 1:1 the parent must be in attendance. Where a group of children are being coached outwith club sessions then at least one of the parents must be present.
- Parents/guardians who are supervising their children should abide by Scottish Government physical distancing guidance and stay at least 2m away from those out with their own household.
- Groups of parents from different households should not congregate before, during or after the activity.

Para-athletes:

- Where a disabled participant requires functional support to help them participate coaches or carers can provide this without maintaining physical distancing. In such circumstance the responsible 'Covid Officer/Coordinator' should consider appropriate

mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment. For instance, providing appropriate PPE, limiting the number of participants an individual provides functional support to, limiting the duration spent in close proximity, or a combination of actions.

Competition

- Clubs, athletes and coaches should be aware that different restrictions will apply to competition. Anyone participating in or hosting an organised athletics event should refer to the separate Events Guidance documents available from the [COVID-19 page](#) of the **scottishathletics** website.

COVID Officer/Coordinator

- It is the responsibility of each club/group committee to appoint a responsible person/s, referred to as the COVID Officer/Coordinator, to act as the point of contact on all things related to COVID-19. An [e-learning module for COVID officers](#) is available to support those undertaking the role.

Local outbreaks or clusters of coronavirus cases

- Where a local outbreak has been reported, sports facility operators and deliverers within this locality should review Scottish Government 'local measures' guidance, their facility/operational risk assessment and consider if additional mitigating actions should be put in place to reduce risk. This may, for example, include; suspending activity, enhancing hygiene and physical distancing measures or introducing additional activity restrictions.

Workforce

- Clubs and venue operators must ensure that relevant workplace guidance is followed for contractors and staff and ensure existing health and safety advice is maintained and aligned. This should be detailed in the risk assessment.
- Where an employee is providing an activity, relevant work placed risk assessments and consultation should take place in advance of any activity being undertaken. See the Businesses, workplaces and self-employed people section at [Scottish Govt: Covid-19](#).
- Consider whether meetings and training must be completed in person or whether alternative approaches can be used. If it is essential that meetings and training takes place in person, [Scottish Government guidance for general workplaces](#) must be followed and a risk assessment should be completed.

Travel

Coaches/Jog Leaders

- Coaches and Jog leaders can travel across local authority boundaries at all levels to coach/lead. However, please remember to minimise travel where possible.

Level 4:

- Avoid any unnecessary travel out of the area.
- Keep journeys within the area to an absolute minimum.
- Participants of all ages living in a Level 4 area should only travel within that local authority area for organised athletics activity.
- Participants can travel to a place up to 5 miles outside your local authority area to take part in **informal** exercise (household rules apply) as long as you start and finish at the same place.

- Any participant attending school, college or university in another local authority area should not stay in that area to participate in athletics unless:
 - the session is taking place at the facility they attend for education.

Level 3:

- Avoid any unnecessary travel out of the area.
- Keep journeys within the area to an absolute minimum.
- Participants aged 18 years or over (adults) living in a Level 3 area should only travel within that local authority area for organised athletics activity.
- Participants can travel to a place up to 5 miles outside your local authority area to take part in **informal** exercise (household rules apply) as long as you start and finish at the same place.
- Participants aged 17 years and under can travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas (but not Level 4) to take part in organised athletics.
- Participants aged 17 and under can be driven to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas to compete/train for their club.

Level 0, 1 and 2:

- Participants aged 18 years or over (adults) who live in a Level 0, 1 or 2 area should minimise unnecessary journeys and avoid travel to Level 3 or Level 4 areas to take part in sport or physical activity.
- Participants aged 17 years and under can travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas (but not Level 4) to take part in organised athletics.
- Participants aged 17 and under can be driven to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas to compete/train for their club.

2. Health, safety & hygiene

Athletes must be aware of current club and facility first aid procedures. The club/facility will ensure the first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID-19 pandemic and that first aiders are aware of COVID-19 specific first aid advice <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/first-aid-certificate-coronavirus.htm>.

- Participants and visitors to indoor sports facilities should wear face coverings before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of the facility (e.g. reception, locker rooms and storage areas).
- Parents/guardians who are supervising their children should abide by Scottish Government physical distancing guidance and stay at least 2m away from those out with their own household. Groups of parents from different households should not congregate before, during or after the activity.
- Athletes should not handle any shared coaching equipment (cones etc.). Only the coach should do this.
- Athletes are advised to use their personal equipment wherever possible and follow hygiene guidance.
- Personal equipment should not be shared, and measures must be put in place to reduce the risk of contamination.
- Where there is a requirement for athletes to share equipment, it should be thoroughly cleaned before and after use.

- Clean all equipment with suitable antiviral wipes/spray at the conclusion of your session.
- Be aware of what surfaces other athletes and coaches touch.
- Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on.

3. Club Activity

- The focus should be on delivering the organised activity responsibly in line with the guidance set out by **scottishathletics**.
- Clubs using an athletics facility should agree with the facility operator the maximum capacity and booking process prior to resuming training. Limits on the number of participants accessing outdoor facilities should be risk assessed to ensure appropriate physical distancing can be maintained outside of the field of play.
- Online bookings should be taken if possible. If not, alternative measures should be put in place.
- In line with Data Protection regulations, a register of users must be kept in case there is a need to track and trace. This should be kept for no longer than 21 days.
- All paid and voluntary coaches can travel between local authority areas through protection Levels 0-4.
- No spectating should take place other than where a parent is supervising a child or vulnerable adult. Physical distancing guidance should always be followed.
- If the club has any positive cases, they should inform scottishathletics covid coordinator by emailing development@scottishathletics.org.uk

4. Training groups and sizes

All training sessions should be delivered and/or set by a UKA licensed coach (Athletics Coach/Level 2+) or leader and delivered in accordance with the [UKA Coaching Code of Practice](#).

Whilst the guidelines have been relaxed (as outlined below) on the field of play, **scottishathletics** strongly recommends that physical distancing should be adhered to on the field of play whenever possible, thus reducing the risk of virus transmission.

A “field of play bubble” for all ages means that physical distancing can be suspended for the duration of the activity. At all other times physical distancing must be maintained for individuals aged 12+. Athletes must not congregate with other athletes outside their bubble prior to, and following, the coaching session.

The rules for training group sizes and physical distancing are as follows:

Age 11 and under

- **scottishathletics** recommend you follow the group sizes for indoor and outdoor as laid out in our framework for the level your local authority is operating under.
- The training group size includes the coach up to a maximum of 30.
- UKA recommended coaching ratio of 1 coach to 8 athletes (1:8).
- Children aged 11 years and younger are not required to physically distance, as set out in Scottish Government guidance. This extends to organised sports activity and the field of play.
- Coaches and other adults assisting must continue to physically distance as per Scottish Government guidance.

Age 12 – 17 years

- **scottishathletics** recommend you follow the group sizes for indoor and outdoor as laid out in our framework for the level your local authority is operating under.
- UKA recommended coaching ratio of 1 coach to 10 athletes (1:10).
- Athletes must stay within their designated bubble for the duration of the session.
- Normal physical distancing guidelines will however apply before and after the activity takes place (see [Scottish Government guidance](#)). This group size is recommended to ensure that physical distancing can be maintained prior to, and following, the coaching session.
- Coaches and other adults assisting must continue to physically distance as per Scottish Government guidance.

Age 18 +

- **scottishathletics** recommend you follow the group sizes for indoor and outdoor as laid out in our framework for the level your local authority is operating under.
- UKA recommended coaching ratio of 1 coach to 12 athletes (1:12).
- Athletes must stay within their designated bubble for the duration of the session.
- Normal physical distancing guidelines will however apply before and after the activity takes place (see [Scottish Government guidance](#)). This group size is recommended to ensure that physical distancing can be maintained prior to, and following, the coaching session.
- Coaches and other adults assisting must continue to physically distance as per Scottish Government guidance.

For the purposes of track & field, the field of play is defined as the track and infield (including any external throws specific areas). For off track activity the field of play rules apply from the start of your warm-up to the end of your session.

5. Athlete Guidance

Before and during activity

Check directly with your athletics club and facility operator on their access arrangements.

*Recognised **scottishathletics** performance athletes should be aware of the guidance issued by the performance team and contact their respective performance manager.*

- Athletes should be aware that the easing of restrictions does not mean that all facilities will be open in each protection level. Owners and operators will be required to change access restrictions depending on what protection level their local authority. This is a difficult time for everyone so please be patient as changes are implemented.
- If working with an independent coach, athletes should confirm protocols with the coach prior to the session.
- Athletes should follow the club and/or facilities booking protocols.
- Athletes should avoid travelling to and from training in the same vehicle as someone from a different household.
- Athletes should arrive at the designated training facility as close as possible to the start of their training session.
- Athletes should take with them hand sanitiser and/or suitable antiviral wipes.
- Equipment should be cleaned prior to and following training with suitable antiviral wipes.

- Para athletes will be permitted to use their personal throwing frames and straps, RaceRunning Frames and Racing Wheelchairs. Hygiene guidance should always be followed.
- Athletes should remember a face covering to use when required.

After activity

- Once training has finished **leave promptly** and maintain physical distancing.
- Hands should be washed and/or sanitised as soon as possible.
- Ensure personal kit and equipment is cleaned thoroughly after use.
- If you become unwell after training, you should first contact your GP/NHS 24 and then inform your club.

Competition

- Athletes intending to compete in a licensed athletics event should refer to the **scottishathletics** Guidance for Athletes (Competing) as well as any specific guidance issued by the event organiser before entering or attending any organised competition.

6. Coach/Jog Leader Guidance

Preparing for a coaching session

*Recognised **scottishathletics** performance athletes should be aware of the guidance issued by the performance team and contact their respective performance manager.*

All coaches must plan and prepare with their athletes for each face to face training session and the planning must be aimed at minimising the risk of infection/transmission. The following points must be included:

- Coaches should be aware that the easing of restrictions does not mean that all facilities will be open in each protection level. Owners and operators will be required to change access restrictions depending on what protection level their local authority. This is a difficult time for everyone so please be patient as changes are implemented.
- Coaches using an athletics facility **independently from a club** should agree with the facility operator the maximum capacity and booking process prior to resuming training.
- Coaches can take multiple sessions per day indoor and outdoor, however the numbers allowed in each session will depend upon the protection level restrictions in place in the given location.
- All paid and voluntary coaches can travel between local authority areas through protection Levels 0-4.
- Prepare a risk assessment based on planned activities/training environment/age, etc. of the athlete(s), as well as reflecting the safeguarding requirements outlined earlier in this document and additional hygiene and safety measures.
- Please refer to the event specific requirements in this guide when planning jump and throw related sessions.
- Hygiene: Cleaning, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures and provision should be made for these. Clear guidance and plans must be in place for cleaning of equipment and waste disposal. Detailed guidance is available from [Health Protection Scotland](#).
- It is **mandatory** to maintain a register of training sessions, who attended, where and when. This information may be necessary for government contact tracing

- initiatives (if a club coach, this information should be sent to the clubs Covid-19 Coordinator).
- Ensure where necessary that you pre-book access to the athletics facility or get permission to carry out your session at the chosen outdoor space.
 - Coaches should remember a face covering to use when required. Face coverings must be worn by coaches indoors except where an exemption applies.
 - Coaches can continue to utilise online coaching measures wherever possible following **scottishathletics** social media [guidelines](#).

Before and during the coaching session

- Each facility or club may issue separate guidance on accessing and using the specific facilities. Coaches and athletes should be familiar with all guidance.
- Coaches should plan the allocation of athletes for a session in advance to avoid larger groups congregating before being split into smaller training groups.
- Athletes of any age should not travel to and from training with a coach or other athlete unless they are from the same household.
- Athletes should be advised to bring their own technical equipment.
- If the session is a 1:1 with an athlete under 18 years of age it is preferable that only one parent/guardian from the family is in attendance.
- At all times, coaches, and helpers, should adhere to the Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines of staying at least 2m away from others including when giving feedback and when athletes are resting. Scottish Government guidelines are available at <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>.

After activity

- Once training has finished **leave promptly** and maintain physical distancing.
- Hands should be washed and/or sanitised as soon as possible.
- Ensure personal kit and equipment is cleaned thoroughly after use.
- If you become unwell after training, you should first contact your GP/NHS 24 and then inform your club.

7. Event specific guidance outdoor & indoor

Track

- Follow training group sizes and physical distancing guidelines outlined in the **scottishathletics** COVID-19 Framework.
- Equipment such as hurdles and barriers may be used if the facility and the club have both assessed the risk and put in place measures to ensure it is safe to do so.
- The facility should have in place a protocol for the setup and clear-up of hurdles and/or barriers. Facility operators should make it clear to athletes and coaches whether cleaning of hurdles and barriers will be carried out by the facility staff or whether the coach or athlete will be expected to do it.
- Hurdles and barriers should be cleaned using antiviral wipes/spray before and after use.
- It is advised to use personal starting blocks but if you require to use shared blocks all surfaces should be cleaned using suitable antiviral wipes/spray.

Field Events

Opening jump areas is a decision for the facility operator based on their risk assessment of the activity. The following guidance will inform that assessment and applies where the operator allows vertical and horizontal jumps.

Vertical Jumps

- Both outdoor and indoor a maximum training group size of 8 athletes can jump during a session. Athletes should be supervised by a coach and physical distancing guidelines must be followed as outlined in the **scottishathletics** COVID-19 Framework.
- It is recommended that between jumps athletes 12+ should wear a face covering when indoors.
- An adult, either the athlete, coach or facility operator should perform a wipe down of bars and uprights using suitable antiviral wipes/spray before and after the session. Facility operators should make it clear to athletes and coaches whether cleaning will be carried out by the facility staff or whether the coach or athlete will be expected to do it.
- Athletes should sanitise hands before and after each jump and maintain good hygiene practices.
- Signage must be prominently positioned at each jump area stating the rules/guidance for use.
- High mist spray of an antiviral disinfectant cleaner to be used on the bed between sessions. **Operators must contact the manufacturer of the jumps mats in use at their facility to confirm whether the proposed cleaning products can be used safely on their equipment.**
- Coaches should check with athletes if they have any skin conditions that may react to the cleaning product used on the mats.
- If an athlete coughs or sneezes on the bed it should be closed for cleaning.
- After each bubble/group cleaning of the pit must be completed, and minimum of 15-minute drying time must be allowed, before the next bubble/group starts.

Horizontal Jumps

- Both outdoor and indoor a maximum training group size of 8 athletes can jump during a session. Athletes should be supervised by a coach and physical distancing guidelines must be followed as outlined in the **scottishathletics** COVID-19 Framework.
- It is recommended that between jumps athletes 12+ should wear a face covering when indoors.
- Athletes should sanitise hands before and after each jump and maintain good hygiene practices.
- Sandpits should be covered when not in use and signs positioned to ensure they are not used.
- Signage must be prominently positioned at each jump area stating the rules/guidance for use.
- During each session, one adult, either a coach or athlete, should be responsible for the raking of the pit. The rake should be cleaned using suitable antiviral wipes/spray before and after use.
- High mist spray or watering can of sterilising fluid should be sprayed over the sand after use, turned and raked. Facility operators should implement a process for this procedure ensuring correct PPE is used for spraying.
- After each bubble cleaning of the pit must be completed, and minimum of 15-minute drying time must be allowed, before the next bubble starts.

Throws

- Outdoors follow the training group sizes for the level your local authority is placed in.
- Indoors a maximum training group size of 8 can throw during a session.
- It is recommended that between throws athletes 12+ should wear a face covering when indoors.
- Athletes should be supervised by a coach and physical distancing guidelines must be followed as outlined in the **scottishathletics** COVID-19 Framework.
- Risk assessments must have been completed and shared with all coaches and athletes for both the throws facility and specific training session.
- Athletes are encouraged to use their own equipment which must be cleaned using suitable antiviral wipes/spray before and after use.
- Coaches and athletes should ensure that any shared equipment is used by only one athlete at a time and is thoroughly cleaned before and after each session.
- Athletes and coaches should avoid touching the shared cage/netting.
- Where a cage door requires to be moved, it should be moved by an adult, either athlete, coach or facility operator who is familiar with its operation. The facility operator should make clear to coaches and athletes who can move cage doors. Any surfaces touched in the process of moving the cage door should be cleaned with suitable antiviral wipes/spray before and after use.
- Facility operators should make it clear to athletes and coaches whether cleaning will be carried out by the facility staff or whether the coach or athlete will be expected to do it.

Para-athletes

- Where possible, para-athletes should use their own personal equipment. All equipment should be cleaned before and after a session following the hygiene guidance.
- Wheelchair, race running, and seated throws athletes should be helped and supported into any equipment by the guardian/carer only.
- Outdoors Guide Runners: guide running can now take place following hygiene measures including the cleaning of the running tether in between sessions.
- Indoors Guide Runners: guide running **cannot** take place indoors unless with someone from the same household, extended household or Under 18. Hygiene measures must be followed, and the running tether should be cleaned before and after use.

Off track coaching and leading including road running

- Follow training group sizes and physical distancing guidelines outlined in the **scottishathletics** COVID-19 Framework.
- Coaches, athletes, and runners should adhere to all restrictions that may be placed on a public space by the owner of that space.
- Any organised run should not leave the local authority area where it starts.
- Coaches should ensure they have carried out a standard risk assessment of any training space or route, as they would normally, prior to the session taking place.
- Coaches, athletes, and runners should ensure they carry out standard safety procedures (e.g. phones, route planning etc) when accessing 'wild' public spaces.
- Be aware of other members of the public using the same space you are training in. The group should be briefed on how they run together in a way that respects physical distancing, and which does not cause unnecessary risk or anxiety to members of the public.

8. Contacts

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Remember **FACTS** for a safer Scotland



Face coverings



Avoid crowded places



Clean your hands regularly



Two metre distance



Self-isolate and book a test if you have symptoms