

A practical guide for technical officials returning to athletics beyond level 0

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.

Version 6 – updated on 28 October 2021



Introduction

Most legal restrictions relating to Covid-19 were lifted on the 9th August 2021 when Scotland moved to 'Beyond Level 0'. This included restrictions on physical distancing and the size of social gatherings. Additionally, no businesses had to legally remain closed.

Whilst these changes signal the end of most restrictions for sport and physical activity, they do not signal the end of the epidemic. COVID-19 is a disease that will need to be managed for the foreseeable future. To maintain progress in returning to normality, it is important that people continue to abide by a set of baseline measures covered by Scottish Government guidance and relevant legislation.

Participant and spectator numbers remain restricted beyond level 0, but now with up to **5000** allowed at outdoor sporting events and **2000** at indoor events. Any event organiser wishing to increase spectator numbers may seek an exemption from the relevant local authority and obtain permission from other relevant bodies.

The following guidance applies to both indoor and outdoor competitions.

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1. Appointing Officials

UKA licensed officials are required at all events in line with licensing standards and UKA rules. 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 ensure that the event complies with the [Safe Athletics: Track & Field Safety Guide for Competition](#)

Officials' Allocations

The **scottishathletics** Officials Commission coordinates the allocation of officials prior to the competition season for **scottishathletics** track and field events; and the Road and Cross Country Commission for Cross Country Championships. Any officials who need to withdraw, or officials who become available as an event date approaches, should contact events@scottishathletics.org.uk at the earliest opportunity to amend their availability. Withdrawals within two weeks of an event date should also be communicated to your Referee/Chief for that event to allow duty sheets to be updated.

2. Health, Safety and Hygiene

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 must appoint a COVID-19 Officer to hold overall accountability for the competition. This should be a named person from the organisation who will work closely with the organiser, the venue and the officials to ensure that the event can be delivered safely. 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.

All event organisers are expected to reinforce good hygiene practices prior to, during, and after your event, as participants may be asymptomatic. You must stay at home if you have tested positive for Covid-19; have Covid-19 symptoms; or if you have been asked to self-isolate at home by [Scottish Government Test and Protect system](#). If you are returning from a country outside the UK, you must follow the Scottish Government guidance on testing and quarantine.

Event Organisers will link with venue staff to ensure that usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained. 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. External first aid providers must conduct a Covid-19 risk assessment and provide suitable PPE for their staff's use.

General Cleaning Advice

- Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on.
- Event organisers must ensure that hygiene equipment is provided for staff, officials and volunteers at all times.
- High Jump and Pole Vault beds should be cleaned / sprayed with a suitable disinfectant solution before and after each session (in competition, this may mean a morning and afternoon session, rather than after each individual athlete). A high mist spray PFC1 grade cleaner should be used on the landing beds.

- Sand Pits should be cleaned with sterilising fluid spray of a suitable concentration to neutralise the virus and raked before and after each session. Pits should be raked as normal between athletes' trials.
- Venue guidance on required cleaning of equipment must be sought and followed at all times, as this may differ from the above suggestions. Individual venue guidance for cleaning must be followed at all times.

3. General Practical Guidance for All 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

- Transport Scotland advice should be followed when travelling to and from any event.
- A one-way system may be in place within both indoor venues and outdoor event sites. For **scottishathletics** events, information on proposed routes will be published on the **scottishathletics** website, and the link sent to officials in advance. One-way systems must always be strictly adhered to, including entrance and exit.
- Officials should note that refreshments may not be provided at all events this season. Officials are encouraged to bring their own packed lunch if attending a full-day event. If suitable catering can be provided at an event, details will be circulated in advance.
- Officials must bring a face covering indoors (unless exempt), but it is not required outdoors. Within indoor settings, face coverings must be worn in all public areas, in line with Scottish Government requirements, but can be removed within open spaces within the field of play or to perform certain roles.
- Sanitising and hygiene equipment will be available to officials, dependent on their duties.

Briefings

- It is recommended that briefings are carried out in advance, either by e-mail or call. If a briefing is required on the day, this should be carried out in an open space, away from other disciplines, athletes, coaches and other attendees.
- Duty sheets should be emailed to officials prior to the event by the relevant Chief/Referee wherever possible. Each official may bring a personal printed copy or should be able to access it electronically on their own phone or tablet on the day. For indoor Championships, Referees/Chiefs may e-mail their duty sheets to the Events Team for uploading to the officials' page of **scottishathletics** website if they wish. This must be received by the Events Team **before 12 noon on the Thursday prior** to an event to be added.

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 and the Technical Manager.
- 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 bins.
- At the conclusion of each session, cleaning and disinfecting of equipment must be repeated by the officials involved in the concluded event.
- **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

putting it on charge. Clean earpieces will be distributed to officials for the full season and should be kept for their own personal use. Earpieces should be cleaned and returned to **scottishathletics** by the official after their last duties of the season.

During Competition

- 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 events ready to compete, bringing only the equipment required for that event. Bags should not be brought into the competition area unless required during competition.
- As always, no coaches, parents or spectators are permitted on the field of play or course. Only competing athletes and officials are permitted access, or those assisting athletes with specific assistance requirements.
- New UKA Supplementary Note: **CR18.5 Unsporting or Improper Behaviour (125.5)** - Spitting (or similar) in warm up, call room, 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). This applies across all disciplines. Officials who issue a conduct warning must complete the relevant paperwork and pass the information verbally to their Chief/Referee who will alert the Meeting Manager/Race Referee for further action.

Post Competition

- All equipment used during the competition is to be sprayed using the anti-viral spray and wiped down using paper towelling/wipes before returning to the facility.
- During any post event de-brief within the venue after the close of competition, officials should continue to follow hygiene protocols. De-briefs may also be held via e-mail or call post-event and comments submitted to events@scottishathletics.org.uk

4. Discipline-Specific Practical Guidance

Admin – Seeding and Results

- All admin areas will be set up with plenty of space for each official. Laptops, tablets, keyboards, mice, printers and all associated equipment will be cleaned before and after use. Additional anti-viral wipes will be available if required.
- As much paperwork as possible will be published online in advance of the competition day and circulated for officials to print an individual copy. Paperwork circulated during events will be limited.
- Seeding will be completed on the day and will allow time for electronic sharing and printing of the final lane draws and competition orders.
- Neither results nor start lists will be posted within the facility in most cases.
- Completed field cards will be brought to the admin area for results officials to input.

Declarations

As usual, athletes will be expected to arrive at the venue as per the published schedule to declare for their event. Timed declaration-windows for each event will be drawn up, with athletes advised to 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. Bib numbers will be distributed at declarations, and hip numbers at assembly if required.

Call Room/Assembly

Assembly

Where call rooms are not in operation in track and field, call up schedules will be available online detailing when athletes are expected to report directly to the assembly area. Athletes should not report early to ensure that space is maintained between each heat/band/group. Athletes in track races of 800m and above will collect a hip number from assembly. Officials at assembly will be expected to conduct basic call room checks, such as bib number, vest and footwear.

In off-track events, athletes will be asked to report ready to run and direct to the start area at the allotted time for their race. Athletes should not report early. Officials within the start area may conduct basic checks, such as bib number, vest and footwear.

Call Room

Where call rooms are in operation, extended call up times may be implemented allowing additional time for final warm up prior to reporting to the call room. Access to the call room will be limited to athletes and officials only.

Assembly and Call Room officials must ensure:

- Athletes do not leave the zone once checked in/arrived.
- Non-competing athletes, parents, coaches and team managers are not permitted in this area.
- Athletes are moved on from the assembly / call room area as per the schedule

Track and Field - Field

- Scoreboards, uprights, bars, tape measures, flags, circle inserts and all other equipment should be disinfected before and after each competition by the official using it.
- Sand should be raked over after each athlete (including warm up trials).
- Hammer cage doors should only be moved by designated volunteers, with hands sanitised before and after movement.
- Throws implements should be cleaned/sanitised at the conclusion of each competition.
- High Jump and Pole Vault beds should be cleaned / sprayed with a suitable disinfectant solution before and after each session (in competition, this may mean a morning and afternoon session, rather than after each individual athlete).
- Sand Pits should be cleaned with sterilising fluid spray of a suitable concentration to neutralise the virus. Pits should be raked as normal between athletes' trials.
- On the conclusion of an event, the field card should be checked and verified verbally by the Chief. There is no current requirement for the card to be signed by all individuals, but the names of the judges must be noted on the card by the official responsible for keeping the card.

Track and Field - Timekeeping

- Results will be collected by the individual timekeepers and relayed to the Chief Timekeeper verbally. The Chief is then responsible for noting the results.

Track and Field - Photofinish

- Track events will be seeded electronically and transferred to photofinish.
- If possible, the Read Operator should be placed away from other officials for space.
- Results should be transferred electronically to the results team. Radio communication may be used to confirm when results are final should any races require further checks.
- All computer equipment will be wiped and cleaned as per approved hygiene measures before and after use. Anti-viral wipes should be used.

Track and Field - Start Team

- All relevant equipment will be sanitised using anti-viral spray and disposable paper towelling/wipes pre-race.
- Starters must provide their own starting equipment and blanks. It is not recommended that officials share equipment.
- Athletes will typically use stadium starting blocks, although some may use their own if passed by the Technical Team. Athletes and officials handling blocks must sanitise their hands both before and after handling the starting blocks.

Track and Field - Track

- Lap board & bell should be suitably cleaned between users.
- Hurdles and barriers should be cleaned using antiviral wipes/spray before and after use.

Track and Field - Technical Team

- Members of the Technical Team should sanitise their hands before and after touching any equipment.
- Storage and equipment cupboards are unlikely to offer comfortable space for the whole team. Therefore, equipment should be moved to an open area for checking if possible. If no alternative area can be identified, then a limited number of officials may be in the store at any single time.

Track Guidance

- Athletes will typically use stadium starting blocks, although some may use their own if passed by the Technical Team. Athletes and officials handling blocks must sanitise their hands both before and after handling the starting blocks.
- Hurdles and barriers should be cleaned using antiviral wipes/spray before and after use.

Field Guidance

- Scoreboards, uprights, bars, tape measures, flags, circle inserts and all other equipment should be disinfected before and after each competition by the official using it. This means the technical team should wipe down all equipment delivered to the competition area once checked for use; officials on the event will then be responsible for maintaining hygiene during the event; and the technical team should wipe equipment down against when it is returned to the store.
- During competition, pole vault and high jump beds should be sprayed down before and after each group of athletes, using a high mist sterilised fluid. Officials on the event will be responsible for this during the competition, but the technical team should spray beds ahead of the event during their pre-event checks.
- Sand should be raked over after each athlete (including warm up trials). Officials on the event will be responsible for this during the competition, but the technical team should ensure that this is carried out pre- and post-event.

Off-Track - Start Team

- All relevant equipment will be sanitised using anti-viral spray and disposable paper towelling/wipes pre-race.
- Starters must provide their own starting equipment and blanks. It is not recommended that officials share equipment.

Off-Track - Manual Timekeepers/Recorders and Place Callers and Recorders

- Completed recording sheets should be passed to the identified person directly, not passed between officials.

Off-Track - Line Judges and Funnel Control

- Finishers should be dispersed away from the finish line 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 wherever possible.

5. **scottishathletics** Staff Contacts

Any general event queries should be directed to events@scottishathletics.org.uk in the first instance.

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All other staff contacts can be found at the following link:

<https://www.scottishathletics.org.uk/about/people/staff/>

Contact details for the Officials' Commission can be found at:

<https://www.scottishathletics.org.uk/officials/officials-commission/>