

Swimming return to competition

Guidance

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Introduction

Covid-19 has had a dramatic effect on the sport of Aquatics and it could be some time before we return to what most of us would consider to be 'normal'.

No Major Open Meet Competition has taken place since March 2020.

In July 2020 we published our Return to Pool Guidance which covered all aspects of the return to training under the restrictions posed by the Covid-19 Pandemic. We have updated this as things have changed and the current version can be found [here](#). This document is designed to work in conjunction with that guidance.

In October we introduced Level X Racing and this became an immediate success. This initiative was impacted by the National Lockdown introduced in November but resumed in December. A second series will commence in April 2021. Full details can be found [here](#).

We have produced our [Roadmap](#) showing how we intend to move from the Return to Training to a Return to Competition in five Stages. This document is intended to be used by Clubs preparing to move to Stage 4 in 2021.

All competitions must be carefully managed to ensure that the virus does not spread as a result of any Swimming activity. The guidelines that follow are intended to mitigate the transmission risk of Covid-19 and safeguard swimmers, coaches, officials, spectators and volunteers as we safely return to competition.

Swim England will continue to assess the situation and will provide regular updates on any changes or adaptations to the guidance. This document refers to current UK Government guidance for England only and is subject to change in response to the current Covid-19 Alert Level, community prevalence of Covid-19 and/or to reflect additional or update UK Government guidance. Social distancing guidance can be found [here](#).

Clubs attending meets in other Home Nations or Countries must follow the Covid-19 Laws and Regulations for that Country.

In the meantime, please remember anyone who is deemed vulnerable in respect of Covid-19 is reminded to follow the Government's guidance, only returning to Swimming activity when it is right for them to do so. There is no pressure to return. Everyone's health, wellbeing and safety are the priorities.

IMPORTANT: If you are showing symptoms of the virus or have been in contact with someone displaying symptoms, then you must follow government guidance.

Further updates of this document may be necessary as the government releases further guidance in due course.

The Government's current advice on social distancing is underpinned by the **Hands. Face. Space guidance**, which forms the basis for mitigating actions to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Approximately 1 in 3 people who have coronavirus have no symptoms and could be spreading it without realising it.

It is critical that everybody observes the following key behaviours:

- **HANDS** - Wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds.
- **FACE** - Wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.
- **SPACE** - Stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors).

Test and Trace

NHS Test and Trace has been introduced by HM Government to help return life more to normal, in a way that is safe and protects our NHS and social care. The service allows them to trace the spread of the virus and isolate new infections and plays a vital role in giving us early warning if the virus is increasing again, locally or nationally.

All venues are required to display the official **NHS QR code posters** so that visitors to the venue can 'check-in' using this option, as an alternative to providing their contact details, using the NHS Covid-19 App. To cater for those who do not have a mobile phone, or have not downloaded the app, an alternative option for people to leave their contact details will be provided.

Transmission Risk - Guiding Principles

In every sport and leisure activity there are risks of Covid-19. To return safely, an assessment has to be carried out of the transmission risk that a return to competitive activity presents.

Equipment used both during training and competition phases of sport can act as fomites, a vehicle for carrying the virus, and therefore impacting on the transmission of Covid-19 between individuals. Throughout this document we aim to assist individuals and organisations in assessing the implications and requirements of the return to competitive swimming and we make recommendations as to how this route of transmission might be mitigated.

Covid-19 can actually be transmitted in three ways:

- Droplet transmission when in close contact with others.
- Fomite transmission by sharing or transferring equipment like backstroke ledges, water bottles.
- Population – the number of participants likely to take part in proposed activity.

A fomite is an object or materials which are likely to carry infection, such as clothes, utensils, and furniture.

Assessment Process:

Step one: Identify

- Identify fomites (equipment) used in activity.
- What is it? (Name).
- What is it made of? (Material).
- How is it cleaned safely, repeatedly and effectively without degrading it? (Cleaning).

Step 2: Use

- Consider how the fomite is used in activity and how its use might be changed.
- Reduce overall use.
- Personal use only.
- Change fomite to a version which poses less transmission risk.
- Estimate risk of use and impact of mitigation.

Step 3: Clean and protect

- Cleaning and protection protocols for fomites.
- Where – identify high traffic areas.
- When - between or during sessions?
- How - time, chemical, heat or light.
- Protect - Use by individuals (possibly screened) with high levels of personal hygiene and facial coverings.

Step 4: Educate and monitor

- Educate and audit.
- Educate, re-educate and remind staff and competitors regarding change in behaviours and use of fomites.
- Monitor effectiveness.

These four steps are addressed in more detail in future sections of this document, as well as other methods of transmission of the disease.

To ensure that Swimming could return to competitive activity, a number of considerations surrounding typical swimming training and competitions will occur. These have been created with Swim England guiding principles in mind.

- **Safety first** – The safety of anyone involved in our sports and activities is paramount and will be put first in all considerations.

- **Consistent** – Our guidance is across multiple activities and many stakeholders, we will seek to make it consistent and aligned to avoid creating conflict or confusion.
- **Robust** – We will ensure that our guidance is developed by experts in the sport/activity/field and then reviewed internally and by a medical practitioner to ensure it is as robust as possible.
- **Evolving** – We will provide initial guidance but understand that not all factors are currently known and that circumstances will change, to that end we will develop and improve guidance as appropriate and based on practical experience when activity recommences in the water.

All involved in Swimming must familiarise themselves with these considerations and they must be utilised in all activity.

These Covid-19 rule requirements will be temporary and may well evolve and be updated as time progresses; however, it is unknown how long they will be applied in England.

Based on research undertaken on competitive swimming race based analysis, expert advice from the sport and existing government approved Swim England guidance around training club activity, in a chlorinated environment, we believe that swimming competitions presents a low level risk as a sport.

Risk Summary		
Droplet and airborne transmission	Fomite transmission	Population
Risk Factor		
<p>Swimmers</p> <p>Minimal risk during individual swim races, where swimmers start off individual starting blocks or in the water (backstroke), with one swimmer per starting block and lane. Each lane width is 2-2.5 metres. Swimmers compete one per lane for the duration of the race.</p> <p>Over the top starts should be used wherever possible with the swimmer who has completed their race moving 2 metres along the lane rope and exiting the pool by the side when the next race has started ensuring that they keep 2 metres apart from any other swimmer.</p> <p>In relay races, the risk slightly increases, as swimmers (consisting of four individuals), congregate behind the starting</p>	<p>Swimmers' equipment</p> <p>Swimmers' entry into the water requires the use of Starting blocks or Backstroke ledges. Time handling per swimmer is approx. 20 seconds. Electronic touch pads for confirming time/results are partially submerged in chlorinated water and touched by swimmers on finish with their wet/chlorinated hand.</p>	<p>Swimmers</p> <p>During the individual swimming race, the maximum number of swimmers is limited, varying upon the total number of lanes in the pool. With one swimmer per lane, 2-2.5 metres apart, the maximum will be 10 swimmers in total, across 10 lanes in the pool.</p> <p>In a relay race, the maximum number increases to 40 swimmers in total maximum.</p> <p>Efforts must be made to minimise the congregation of swimmers in results areas.</p>

<p>block with the first swimmers on the starting block or in the water (backstroke). One relay swimmer races in the lane at a time.</p> <p>Consecutive relay swimmer dives over the top, as the previous relay swimmer proceeds to exit the pool by same manner as individual swimming described above.</p> <p>Swim down areas should be controlled environments for numbers and participation.</p>		
<p>Officials</p> <p>Officials are positioned per lane, behind starting blocks, at each end of the lane, 2-2.5 metres apart from one another. Additional officials, inc.</p> <p>Referees, are positioned at sides of the pool, with some moving along pool deck in line with the swimmers during the race. A mixture of radio and verbal communication is used.</p>	<p>Officials' equipment</p> <p>Officials use: whistles, AOE back up buttons, stopwatches, bells, lap cards, clipboards and water bottles. Some may also use radios for communication. Starting system is also used to commence racing.</p>	<p>Officials</p> <p>Meet Manager, Referee, Starter, Timekeepers, turn/stroke/finish judges, recorders, Clerk of the Course may total approx. 30, subject to number of lanes.</p>
<p>Coaches</p> <p>Coaches usually position themselves along the opposite length of the pool, moving up and down the pool deck, verbally or shouting their support for their racing swimmers.</p>		
<p>Risk Mitigations</p>		
<p>Swimmers</p> <p>1a. Chlorinated environment further supports the mitigation of transmission in an already socially distant racing environment in the pool.</p> <p>1b. Relay racing is only permissible subject to thorough risk assessment which ensures that social distancing can be enforced within the pool deck space which accounts for swimmers and officials</p>	<p>Swimmers</p> <p>This risk may be mitigated by rinsing/splashing the equipment between swimmers with chlorinated water, which acts as disinfectant, and swimmers submerging their hands into water.</p> <p>Hand sanitizing points are available throughout the venue.</p>	<p>Swimmers</p> <p>1a. Minimal risk when individual race swimmers compete in individual lanes, mitigated further by chlorinated environment.</p> <p>1b. In relay racing, thorough risk assessment to be conducted to determine mitigating actions of housing relay teams socially distanced around pool deck, such as one way flows, alternate lane</p>

<p>combined. Once in the water, it is one swimmer per lane at a time.</p> <p>1c. Event organisers and venue operators to work collaboratively to ensure government guidelines are followed at all times to facilitate social distancing before, during and after racing.</p>		<p>swimming with reduced relay teams participating.</p>
<p>Officials</p> <p>1a. Officials at the lanes will be required to maintain social distance from one another and also swimmers who assume position on starting blocks or in water. Officials to check swimmers' names at a distance. At the turn end, officials should judge double lanes. Other officials alongside the pool deck are to maintain social distance when moving along pool deck and to sit on single seating at a minimum distance of 1 metre plus. The number of these officials to be kept to a minimum.</p> <p>1b. Verbal communication to be kept to a minimum, using radios where possible and appropriate, using mitigating actions against fomite transmission.</p>	<p>Officials</p> <p>1a. All officials equipment to be used by one person at a time, with whistles and water bottles designated for personal use only. Prior to any change of use of other equipment, it should be thoroughly sanitised.</p> <p>1b. No rotation of officiating positions during a session.</p> <p>1c. Equipment sanitised between users.</p> <p>Hand sanitizing points are available throughout the venue.</p>	<p>Officials</p> <p>All officials are required to socially distance during races as per organiser's instructions.</p>
<p>Coaches</p> <p>Subject to pool deck capacity in line with social distancing requirements, a designated seating area may be created for coaches where chairs are to be placed 1 metre plus apart. Verbal communication to be restricted with no shouting and feedback to be provided post-race in another designated area.</p>	<p>Coaches</p> <p>Stop watches should not be shared, nor should programmes, start sheets and result sheets. These should be printed prior and displayed so swimmers are able to view with no hand touching.</p> <p>Hand sanitizing points are available throughout the venue.</p>	

Event organisers must always ensure that the safety and welfare of all participants involved with the swimming competition is paramount.

Key requirements for a Covid-secure activity

- Appoint a Covid-19 Lead and have Covid liaisons for each area of the competition (swim down, warm up, results area, Marshalling etc.). This person should not hold any other position at the event.
- Read and understand this guidance in full and agree to operate in line with it.
- Risk assess the activity in conjunction with the facility operator's own Risk Assessment and operating procedures.
- Requirement for the facility management to agree with the event Covid-19 action/operation plan.
- Develop and activate a risk mitigation activity plan.
- All activity must comply with the Government guidance around social distancing, including pre, during or post activity.
- Facility operators (via **NHS QR Code 'check in' system**) must record all participants' contact details for the NHS Test and Trace programme. Meet promoters/Event organisers should liaise with their facility operator to ensure this process is in place.
- Avoid large areas of congregation – arrive, warm up, race, depart.

Summary of guiding principles for swimming and para-swimming competitions

- Event organisers need to adapt their plans for hosting competitive activity, with the guiding principle being to ensure that current Government guidance, relating to social distancing, in place at the time of the meet remains adhered to.
- Event organisers with limited poolside space need to consider innovative ways of scheduling their competitions, to reduce the number of competitors per session. Organisers could consider organising single age group or single gender sessions, for example, with competitors swimming all of their events in a reduced time frame.
- Prior to commencing any detailed planning, the event organiser should discuss and agree with the facility at the earliest opportunity the proposed event and explain the type of planned activity and the likely movement of different groups. This will enable the venue provider to determine the maximum number of people that can be in the building for the purposes of the swimming competitive activity at any one time. This will enable the event organisers to make decisions about how to organise race schedules, whether spectators are allowed, and how many swimmers can attend.

Swimming Competition

Action plan

This guidance is supplementary to existing Swim England information and all activity detailed within this document should only recommence once all the following is in place. These are not exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with the UK Government guidance.

The event organiser and the facility operator should ensure that the following guidance is implemented.

Area	Guidance
Before competition	
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility operators should ensure they have read and understood Swim England's return to pool guidance. • Event organisers must appoint a Covid-19 Lead who will be responsible for developing a Covid-19 plan and Risk Assessment prior to any competitive activity taking place. The Covid-19 Lead should continually monitor how compliance is being observed. • The Covid-19 Lead will be responsible for clearly communicating all relevant guidance to all participants. • Swimmers must be registered members of Swim England.
Risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thorough Risk Assessment must be developed for each competition in conjunction with the facility operator's own Risk Assessment and in adherence with the current Government guidelines and PHE advice. The assessment should detail specific mitigating actions to reduce transmission risk via droplet, fomite and population transmissions. Risk assessment should determine the safe size, capacity and participant flows of the event.
Venue plans and flows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event organisers should work closely with the facility operator to review the venue layout and flows, identifying socially distanced and safe ways to access/egress the venue, addressing each participant group's (athletes, officials, volunteers, coaches and spectators) requirements and determining their routes which would safeguard social distancing at all times. • Consideration should be given to zoning areas around the venue to segregate different participant groups from one another and mitigate cross overs. • It may also be possible for event organisers to house swimmers in adjoining sports halls or gymnasiums, or in outdoor space or marquees. If this is the case, the designated area for each team should be pre-planned so that the space available enables swimmers and team staff to remain appropriately socially distanced. • For a small gala in a large pool, or where the number of competitors per session permits it, swimmers may be accommodated on the poolside. In this instance, consideration must be given to those participating or officiating in the gala being able to do so in a socially distanced manner, despite the presence of teams of swimmers on the pool deck.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clubs should remain within their designated zone/area and should not mix with other clubs where possible.
Event conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition technical rules, 'event conditions', should be developed in addition to the Risk Assessment, which accounts for social distancing requirements and government guidance. Conditions should be submitted to the appropriate Swim England Regional Licensing Officer with the licensing application.
Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking into account the Covid secure measures and facility operators Risk Assessments, the event schedule for the competition should consider: staggered arrivals/departures, phased starts, time trials, breaks e.g. longer gaps between heats, to avoid the likelihood of congestion within all areas of the venue. A list of event timings should be distributed, if facilities allow swimmers should arrive to warm up, race and depart.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event organisers should frequently communicate with all participants ahead of the competition with specific competition plans, outlining health and safety procedures, and exact protocol for pre-, during- and post-activity to familiarise all with the procedures in advance and avoid face-to-face briefings/congregations on venue. The plans should refer to, but not be limited to, arrival process reminding event attendees to follow venue's NHS Test and Trace procedures, infection control, Covid secure competition format, floor plans and participant flows, infection control, departure protocols. A Health Survey Form should also be sent to all participants for them to comply with before they attend the event. This must be returned to the Covid-19 Lead, via the promoting club, no more than 1 week before the competition start date.
Entries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event organisers must review entries capacity against the Risk Assessments and the total maximum capacity permissible on venue to ensure social distancing measures can be safely maintained. Entries and withdrawals should be accepted online in advance of competition only. No entries are to be taken on the day of competition to safeguard against breaching capacity restrictions, face-to-face interaction and wider impact on competition operations.
Officials and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event organisers should review the core number of officials and volunteers required to deliver the competition and identify any areas where new roles are required to ensure social distancing measures are upheld. Only recruit the number of officials that are actually needed and are compliant to licensing guidelines. Ensure officials and volunteers are fully briefed ahead of the competition on their roles, new safety measures and ensure their health and welfare is maintained. Ascertain if there are any critical roles where there is close contact and social distance is difficult to maintain. Mitigate with PPE and provision of disinfectant/sanitising products.
Pre-attendance symptom check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants (or parents) will be aware of the increased risk associated with taking part in competitive activity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants (swimmers, officials, volunteers and spectators) must have completed the Return to Competition Health Declaration Form which will have been sent to all participants prior to the event. No-one should leave home to participate in any form of Swimming if they, or someone they live with, has any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high temperature • A new, continuous cough • A loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste • Should an individual have demonstrated any such symptoms, they must not participate. Instead they should follow NHS and PHE guidance on self-isolation. • If an individual is symptomatic and/or living in household with possible Covid-19 infection they should remain at home and follow Government guidance. In addition, any participants who have been asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they are contact of a known Covid-19 case, must not exercise outside their home or garden and must not exercise with others. • Under no circumstances can a swimmer who has been instructed to self-isolate by a health care practitioner or PHE participate at a swimming competition. • They should also be strongly advised to comply with public health restrictions and avoid high risk behaviour outside the sports setting to reduce the risk to their fellow participants when they do attend. • Should participants have had Covid-19, a clear period of self-isolation and appropriate training time to allow for safe competition needs to have been completed
Safety Briefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Covid-19 Lead must ensure a safety briefing is provided before the commencement of any competitive activity. This briefing will remind swimmers, officials and volunteers about their responsibilities in complying with the Code of Behaviour set out in Appendix 1 of this guidance.
Local Lockdowns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of local lockdowns, Swim England event organisers must follow government guidance according to the specific implications for a swimming competition in their area. • Entries must only be accepted from those swimmers eligible to compete under the current HM Government Guidance. • Additionally, contingency plans should be in place should a local lockdown impact on availability of officials/volunteers, participating swimmers, venue availability. • Communication of impact of the local lockdown or restrictions should be swift to all participants. • Swimmers entry fees should be refunded if they are unable to attend due to a Government imposed lockdown.

Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents who wish their children to take part in a swimming competition should have already provided written consent to the club and or coach for their child to take part. • Parents should ensure they are comfortable with the event organisers' club Covid-19 planning arrangements before attending the competition. • Parents will already understand that a period of isolation may have resulted in some children becoming anxious or unsure whether to resume previous activities. Parents should only support their child's return to activity when they feel confident to do so and feel the activity is safe and right for them. • Swimmers must arrive changed and ready to swim wherever practical. • Swimmers should bring their own water bottle, equipment, including hand sanitiser, all clearly marked with their name. They must not share these with anyone else. Should it be necessary for Swimmers to have snacks on the poolside, for medical reasons or otherwise they must not be shared with other swimmers. Preferably there should be no snacks taken onto the poolside. • Parents are asked to ensure their child/children know how to maintain good hygiene and hand washing. • Young children may struggle to maintain social distancing, so parents are asked to help their children to recognise the need for this. • All persons with responsibility for the safeguarding of children aged under 18, must have an in-date DBS Check, and should have completed the safeguarding training. • Coaches must ensure the ratio of coaches to children is appropriate – see Swim England safeguarding policy, Wavepower .
Day of competition	
Arrival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Covid-19 Liaison Officer needs to be present. • Event organisers/facilities should consider further mitigations to ensure safe arrival at venues. • Facility operators must display the official NHS QR code posters so that all participants, aged 16 or over, can 'check-in' upon arrival at the premises. • Event organisers should signpost event attendees to follow venue's NHS Test and Trace procedures upon arrival. • Manual and paper registrations should be avoided and digital methods should be used wherever possible. Social Distancing and PPE Guidance must be followed. • Clear signage (e.g. for one-way systems, hygiene, social distancing markers) should be visible to manage entry, parking arrangements, traffic flow and general movement around the venue which ensure social distancing is maintained. • All participants should be discouraged from bringing personal items with them to the venue. Such items as water bottles, training and officiating

	<p>equipment, medicines, should be for personal use only, not shared and clearly labelled where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a welcome desk is required to provide competition information, signposting etc. this should be set up to ensure social distance is maintained, congregations are avoided, and volunteers are provided with PPE and sanitisation products. • No cash is to be handled and paper processes should be limited to a minimum.
Changing areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Covid-19 liaison officer needs to be present. They should be stationed at either the entrance or exit but can enter the Changing Rooms in an observational capacity to ensure that Covid-19 protocols are being followed. • Swimmers should be encouraged to arrive in their swimsuits and with non-slip footwear. • Subject to risk assessments and agreement with the facility provider, changing facilities may be provided for swimmers and operated in line with the operator's safety procedures, allowing for social distancing, limited time access, avoiding congestion and maintaining safe hygiene standards to prevent transmission. • Subject to the safe provision of changing facilities, swimmers should be encouraged to change back into their clothes after competition, away from the venue. However, if this decision is implemented, consideration must be given to preventing floors and other slippery surfaces in the venue becoming wet, particularly those off-poolside. • Safeguarding provisions, as required by Wave Power must be complied with at all times. • Clearly adverse weather could affect how swimmers are treated.
Warm up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Covid-19 Liaison needs to be present in addition to warm up Marshals. • Warm up sessions should be planned to ensure there are socially distant flows, segregated areas and necessary phased sessions with gaps to prevent congestion. • Event organisers could offer a dry land warm-up only, with appropriately qualified coaches being responsible for ensuring that swimmers are adequately prepared. Event organisers should provide a clearly designated area, facilitating social distancing compliance. • Dry land areas should be supervised to ensure that numbers do not exceed agreed capacity. • There should be no equipment in dry land warm-up areas. • Event organisers may also consider a blend of dry land and short pool-based warm-up sessions, with competing teams being allocated lanes according to their size of entry and accounting for social distance and mitigation of congregations. • The maximum number of swimmers in a lane in a warm-up should be agreed with the venue in line with the risk assessments and follow Swim England training advice.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A warm-up supervisor should be appointed to control the pool based warm-up and ensuring social distancing compliance. • Event organisers should set expectations as regards the equipment that is permitted during warm-up and swim down.
Team Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All competing teams with swimmers under the age of 18 must have a responsible Team Manager/Managers complying with the ratios laid down by Wavepower. Team Managers are responsible for ensuring that their swimmers, wherever possible, observe the social distancing measures in operation.
Marshalling areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For a small gala, it may be possible to operate with no marshalling. In this case, a clearly defined protocol needs to be in place to avoid overcrowding at the start end of the pool. • For larger galas, it may be safer, and confer greater order, to operate a stricter marshalling system. This should be housed in a large space, with clearly defined protocols to ensure that there is no overcrowding of swimmers and social distancing can be maintained. The event organisers may decide to enforce this via rows of socially distanced chairs, with competitors being guided to the start area by volunteers. • If swimmers are marshalled away from the pool area, event organisers should consider whether the volunteer marshals need to use PPE. • Swimmers should arrive at the marshalling area race-ready. Event organisers may choose to allow the wearing of a tee-shirt and the carrying of water bottle and relevant medical equipment items. • Swimmers should collect their own belongings at the conclusion of a race. • Swimmers should also be briefed on how to exit the pool at the conclusion of their swim, collect equipment and leave the poolside in a socially distanced manner.
Officials/ volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon arrival, officials and volunteers may wish to leave their personal items in their cars, or store them elsewhere, such as in lockers, if they are available. • Event organisers should have provided officials and volunteers with comprehensive competition plans, role descriptors, safety and hygiene procedures and venue flows ahead of the competition day electronically. If a further briefing is necessary on the day of competition, it should be conducted in a socially distanced manner or preferably outside. • Officials should avoid being in close proximity to swimmers, names should be checked from a distance. • All Officials must comply with HM Government Guidance on the use of PPE whilst officiating on the poolside. • Where chairs are provided for officials only one official should use the same chair to avoid cross-contamination. • A minimum of officials should be appointed to reduce the number of people in close proximity to the swimmers. One Referee and Starter is sufficient for a session.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officials should judge double lanes at the turn end – for example - the maximum number of officials judging at the turn end at a pool where eight competition lanes are in use, shall be four. • Trainee officials can be accommodated for mentoring and assessment purposes, but in compliance with social distancing. • There should be only one starter appointed per competitive session, to ensure the microphone remains appropriately sanitised. • The hand-held microphone, chairs and secondary timing buttons should be cleaned with sanitising product at the conclusion of each competition session • Similarly, any remote strobes should be moved by the same person each session and sanitised between sessions. • Timekeepers/J1 should bring their own stopwatches, pens and clipboards. If secondary timing buttons are in operation, their use should be restricted to one person per lane per session. • Lap cards, bells, stopwatches and whistles should again be used by one person at a time, and sanitised prior to any change of use.
Competition	<p>Swimming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All equipment to be sanitised before use including starting blocks and backstroke start devices. They should be sanitised again during dormant periods. • Competition standard lane ropes to be used and inspected for damaged discs before the start of any session. • False start rope must not be fitted to prevent use by more than one official. • Chairs should not be provided for swimmers. • Social distancing must be observed at all times. • Over the top starts should be encouraged. • Kit boxes should not be provided. • Every time a backstroke starting ledge is used the adjustment device must be sanitised by either using a sanitising agent or dipped in the chlorinated water. • The cross bar of the starting block to be splashed frequently to reduce the risk of infection. • Competitors' cards or individual timing slips must not be used. • Exiting a race needs to be done in a social distancing way appropriate to each pool.

	<p>Para-Swimming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is acknowledged that para swimmers and those with a disability may need additional support. In instances where an additional adult is required, these individuals are permitted poolside. • Support staff (chaperones/support staff/tappers) shall be Swim England members and shall not count as team personnel – they are to be considered additional to appointed team managers. • Para swimmers and/or support staff (not officials) are responsible for the fitting and removing of equipment such as starting devices as allowed by the rules. Tapping devices must only be handled by the “Tappers”. • Personal items/aids such as crutches, walking sticks, wheelchairs etc. should only be handled by the para swimmer or support staff. • Prosthesis (artificial arms, legs and hands) shall only be handled by the swimmer or support staff. Should a swimmer not be accompanied by support staff a volunteer will need to be appointed to move prostheses, particularly if the race finishes at the opposite end of the pool to the start. • Consideration will be required for events of one length, or para medley races which have no butterfly stroke (75m and 150m). The swimmer will start and finish at different ends of the pool. • Personal aids/wheelchair may still be at the start end of the pool. These must only be handled by support staff, club personnel or the appointed volunteer.
<p>Event management areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wherever possible race timing and recording activities should take place away from the pool deck area. • Nominated individuals to operate, maintain and repair equipment as necessary during competition. • The number of people used should be kept to a minimum to maintain social distancing. • Timing equipment and meet management systems should be linked electronically. • The use of pieces of paper should be kept to a minimum. • Results should be posted electronically. • Volunteers and coaches entering any enclosed area should comply with UK Government guidance in force at the time and may be required to wear a mask. Entry should be restricted to essential entry only. • All people involved in the process should follow the guidance in force at the time. Irrespective the wearing of masks is suggested. • If these processes have to be carried out within the pool area, social distancing must continue to be in place at all times. This may restrict the number of people who can be involved. • A robust action plan needs to be written to deal with the unfortunate scenario where electronic timing fails, cannot be repaired in a reasonable time and manual timing has to be adopted. • In this situation it may be prudent not to continue with the competition.

Shouting/supporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an additional risk of infection in close proximity situations where people are shouting or conversing loudly. This particularly applies indoors and when face to face. If possible, swimmers, officials and coaches and spectators should therefore avoid shouting or raising their voices when facing each other at all times.
Medical and Covid support	<p>Pre-existing medical conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any swimmers with pre-existing medical conditions, which may result in them requiring further support, should notify the event organiser in advance of the competition. If necessary a care plan or Risk Assessment should be conducted in advance of the competition. It is the event organiser’s responsibility to pass on details of advised medical conditions to the lead referee and the pool management in advance of the competition. <p>Injury treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injuries during activity should still be treated, participant health and safety is of the utmost importance. • The best form of protection is through rigorous cleaning, personal hygiene and regular hand hygiene. An increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces and equipment should take place, working with your facility operator and Swim England supporting guidance. • If a participant gets injured, a member of their household or bubble can assist if present and appropriate, but others (including officials and coaches) will still need to socially distance unless a life or limb-threatening injury necessitates compromising guidelines to provide emergency care. • If there is a team physio, first-aider or other medical personnel present, they should be equipped with the appropriate PPE (including face coverings) to protect themselves and others if they need to compromise social-distancing guidelines to provide medical assistance. • After contact with an injured participant, the person who has administered first aid should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. • This advice is applicable to all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact, or the minimum social distancing was maintained. • The first aider should also avoid touching their mouth, eyes and nose. Any medical practitioner (or equivalent), should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with for test and trace purposes. • If a participant becomes symptomatic during the activity, they should immediately remove themselves from the activity and return home as soon as possible. • Further information for those who may need to act as a ‘first responder’ role in a sports setting, appears here. • NHS guidance on further management of symptoms should be followed.

	<p>Covid-19 support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If anyone attending the event reports having developed Covid-19 symptoms whilst at the competition, they should leave the venue immediately. If the symptoms require urgent care, a room should be provided on the ground floor of the facility, ideally close to the fire exit, or close to an exit point that can be easily reached by ambulance. • The room should be deep-cleaned following it being used to temporarily house someone with suspected Covid-19. • PPE should be provided for all those required to enter this room. • The wearing of masks is to be encouraged, but not obligatory, unless Government guidance makes it so. • Event organisers must notify the appropriate authority if a Covid-19 case is confirmed within attendees.
Catering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event organisers may decide to request that all those involved in the competition take responsibility for bringing their own refreshments to the venue, and not share food or drink with people beyond their immediate family. • Where food and drink is distributed, it should be individually portioned and packaged. • The current HM Government Guidelines, in force at the time, must be complied with.
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper results should not be used. • Results should only be published electronically, and not posted within the venue, unless social distancing laws are sufficiently relaxed to permit it.
Prizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is preferred that formal presentations are not made at the Competition. • If necessary prize and award collection should be accommodated ideally elsewhere in the venue, to maximise available space. • Any medals / prizes should have been sanitised / quarantined for an appropriate time prior to distribution.
Spectators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the Government guidance allows for spectators to attend the competition, supporters, parents and other spectators' capacity should be carefully determined in line with the total competition and facility limits. • The Risk Assessment must cover this area of operation. • Spectators should comply with HM Government requirements, in force at the time, regarding the maximum number of people allowed to be together in the same group whilst maintaining social distance from other groups at all times. • Spectator groups must be restricted and spread out in line with current government guidance, ensuring spectators do not cross paths with swimmers, coaches and officials.
Facility Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See existing guidance for more information on working with your facility provider on creating a safe environment here.

Appendix 1. – Code of Behaviour

Code of behaviour

Covid-19 is a highly infectious and dangerous disease. A resumption of competitive training and competition is only achievable if those involved create and maintain a controlled environment that minimises the threat of infection.

Risk in sport cannot be completely eradicated but with caution and care these risks can be reduced.

Each swimmer will need to decide when to return to competitive training and competition, based on their own circumstances and the arrangements that have been put in place for a safe return.

This is particularly the case for swimmers from ethnically diverse communities or those with underlying health conditions. All those returning must adopt the following code of behaviour:

- Be aware of your own personal health. If you show any of the Covid-19 symptoms you must stay at home, inform NHS Test and Trace and seek medical advice.
- Be responsible.
- Read the guidance provided by Swim England and by your club so that you are aware of the changes and what is expected of you.
- Practise good hygiene. Wash your hands regularly.
- Where possible maintain social distancing. This won't always be possible in a competitive activity and that is acceptable. However, before, and after you should maintain social distancing.
- Support NHS Test and Trace. Scan the QR code with the Your Covid-19 Contact Tracing App or you will be asked to provide your details so that in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak those potentially infected can be traced. This is to everyone's benefit so please co-operate.
- Avoid shouting or raising your voice if face to face with others.
- After the competition, leave the venue safely at the earliest opportunity and be aware that other users may be waiting to use the facilities.
- Changing rooms use may be restricted.
- Showers are likely to be closed.
- You must follow the Government's guidance on social distancing.

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