

# Returning to the pool

Guidance for **Clubs**

# Covid-19: Returning to the Pool

To see the most recent updates, [click here](#).

## Guidance for Clubs

### Introduction

The following has been developed in co-operation with industry partners.

This document aims to support our network of clubs in returning to swimming facilities following the period of closure due to Covid-19 and provides guidance on reducing the risk of Covid-19 transmission within the swimming pool environment.

It will highlight the continued requirements for safe social distancing and enhanced hygiene regimes, along with guidance on how this will impact on the different experience the pool user will have. The guide will include details on what to do before leaving home, on arrival at the pool and in the water itself.

As the country emerges from the national lockdown it will be important for clubs to understand the restrictions that will be in place for each stage of the re-emergence.

We are publishing this guidance with the current information that has been shared to National Governing Bodies. For some areas of this guidance there will be further updates as the government releases further guidance in due course.

Under 18s and those with disabilities can undertake any club activity without restrictions when indoor pools are allowed to reopen (not before 12 April). This also covers people who were aged 17 on 31 August 2020 but who turn 18 this academic year.

Outdoor swimming pools will be able to open from 29 March for club activity with no restriction on the age of participants. Club activity indoors and outdoors must adhere to Swim England and Government guidance.

Parents attending a club session in a safeguarding/supervisory role are permitted. Supporters, parents, and other spectators must adhere to legal gathering limits whilst attending events when they are permitted to attend again.

Other sections will provide guidance for pool operators and practical advice relating to the control of Covid-19 in swimming facilities and during various activities. Links to best practice and other industry standard guidance will be provided where appropriate.

As with all environments, there is still a level of risk of Covid-19 transmission in aquatic settings that requires control measures to be implemented, based on your Covid-19 Risk Assessment.

Clubs must create their own risk assessment per activity before implementing any of the activities listed below.

Anyone taking part in a club session should also familiarise themselves with the [Swim England Guidance for Users](#) before attending. There is also more detailed guidance for club swimmers in the sections below.

## Clubs

The following guidance is designed to support clubs when considering the factors that are likely to influence training sessions while social distancing measures remain in place.

- It is strongly suggested that each club should have a dedicated officer in the Covid-19 Lead role, making sure that from the club's perspective they are up to date with central or local government recommendations. This person will also have a key responsibility to liaise with the pool operator and be aware of the rules and guidance set by the facility (for all facilities used by the club). More information can be found in the [Covid-19 Role Description](#).
- All volunteers undertaking the club Covid-19 Lead and Liaison roles must be a Swim England member. The role does not require the individual to undertake a DBS check or attend safeguarding training.
- Clubs should discuss with the pool operator any changes that may affect the pool programme and club access.
- When determining bather load and lane capacity, clubs should consider the advice on assessing risk in the pool as set out in the [Swim England Guidance for Operators](#). It is advised that clubs should do this in collaboration with the pool operator.
- Teachers and Coaches should deliver from poolside.
- Teachers and Coaches should adhere to government guidance on social distancing.
- Clubs should work with the facility management to evaluate the number of personnel on poolside to give effect to social distancing.
- Clubs should consider the practicalities of getting swimmers to and from the poolside, particularly as the majority of facilities might also be in use by the public.
- Club members should adhere to government guidance on social distancing when walking or waiting on poolside.
- Clubs should review available pool space to allow for correct social distancing, including entry and exit points.
- Allow sufficient time between squads for cleaning, and to reduce the chance of clustering groups.
- Equipment should be cleaned in-between use. Submerging equipment in adequately disinfected swimming pool water will reduce the risk of transmission of enveloped viruses.
- Where possible participants should bring their own, readily identifiable, equipment.

- Supervision/spectating is likely to be limited, if at all, so keep those attending to a minimum.

More detailed guidance, including specific guidance for our various disciplines, can be found below.

If you have any questions relating to the guidance please contact [clubguidance@swimming.org](mailto:clubguidance@swimming.org).

# Guidance for Clubs

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This section of the recovery toolkit is specific to an aquatic club returning to training.

In essence the document is in two distinct parts:

- Part one – Club Committee / Club Management Planning.
- Part two – Technical Support for Returning to Training.

Initially this section will be information generic to all aquatic disciplines, then will break down into more discipline specific information for the sport or sports that your club offers.

## Guiding principles

- **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.

## Be prepared for change

It is becoming clear that the aquatic landscape that we knew pre Covid-19 may be vastly different on our return. Once there is a green light to open all centres it's not likely that all pools will simply open their doors on that date.

- Many pools may open with reduced pool hours – early mornings for example could be limited.
- Whilst a leisure centre may open there may be a phased return to certain activities.
- Local authorities / pool operators may open pools within certain geographical areas bit by bit rather than on mass.
- Some pools may not reopen at all.

In short there could be less opportunities, and we cannot expect clubs to simply step back into where they left off. This is not definitive yet, but it is something clubs must consider.

## Thought starters for setting up training sessions

A number of these can be found within our [supporting documents page](#).

## Accessing the facility

When facilities do begin to reopen, be aware that pools may not be accessible for a number of weeks. The timing of this will all depend on various factors, including government guidelines and the operators approach.

The table below outlines the potential considerations for pool operators when they are able to look at re-opening of facilities.

	Activity	Potential delays
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reactivation of the pool plant.</li> <li>Communication with booking holders (end of week one).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pool plant not starting.</li> <li>Algae.</li> <li>Time to heat the pool.</li> <li>Deep clean of pool and equipment.</li> <li>Lack of access to chemicals.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reinstating staff members.</li> <li>Completing return to work process.</li> </ul>
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent water biological test completed.</li> <li>Set up any necessary restriction to social distancing in all public areas.</li> <li>Continued communication with clubs and members.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Testing</b> could take up to three weeks depending on local demand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government guidelines altering.</li> <li>Producing the correct signage.</li> <li>Size of the facilities.</li> </ul>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retrain staff.</li> <li>Communication with clubs and members regard recommencing activity.</li> </ul>	<p>Government and national governing body guidelines altering.</p>
Any issue with the above areas will delay the opening of the pool		



## Preparation for clubs

Based on the potential operator timeline above, a potential return to pool timeline for clubs can be considered with key milestones in order to be ready for a return to the water. This timeline includes the number of the supporting documents and flow diagrams that have been devised to offer more information in key areas.

These supporting documents are:

1. How to review your membership using the finance toolkit.
2. How to work with your operator.
3. How to prepare for social distancing.
4. How to formulate a new programme in line with social distancing.
5. How to reinstate your workforce, paid and voluntary, using the finance toolkit.

It is outlined in the diagram below, where these supporting sheets fit in the timeline.

## Potential club timeline

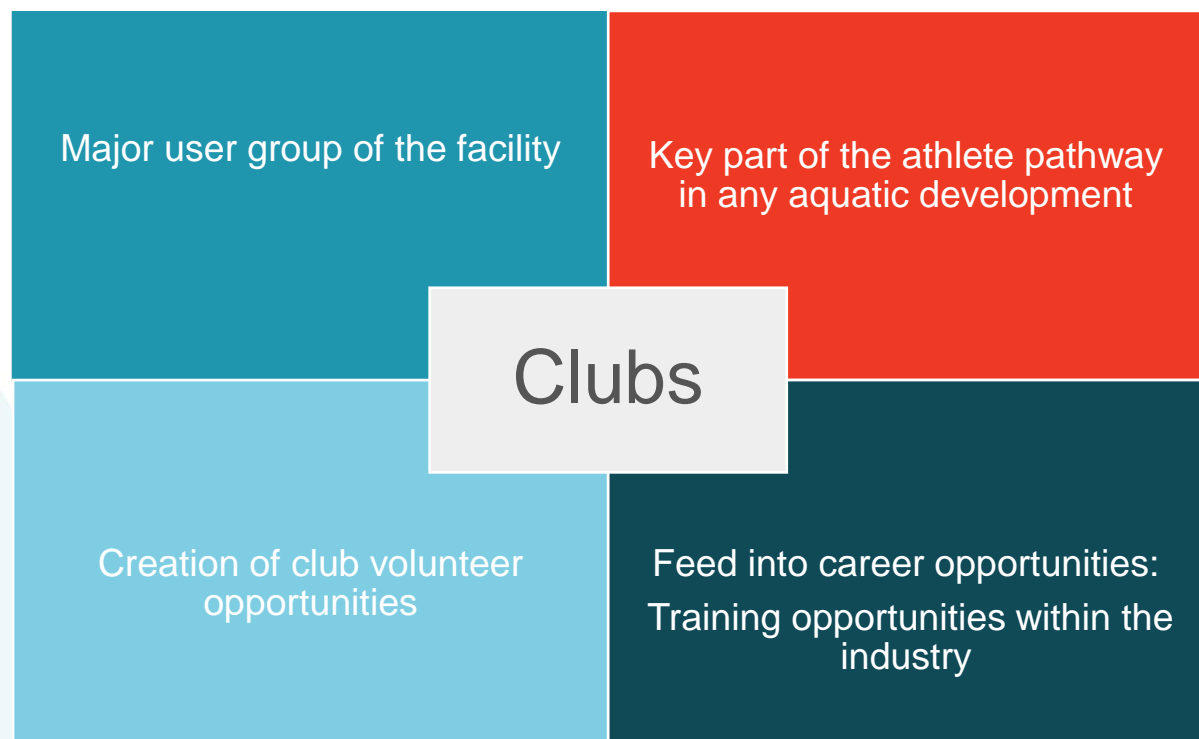
	Activity	Considerations	Supporting documents
Now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact your membership.</li> <li>Begin your return to club review.</li> </ul>	Potential online survey to ascertain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many members retained.</li> <li>Potential income generation.</li> </ul>	1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
-3 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication with the facility to confirm pool time access.</li> <li>Review risk assessments for potential activity.</li> <li>Look at club timetable to offer a phased return to the pool.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include current government guidelines / operator and NGB guidance in risk assessments.</li> <li>Consider what your offer will be for land activity to support return to pool.</li> </ul>	1, 4 and 5 SwimMark Templates
-2 Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication with club members.</li> <li>Make contact with coaching staff.</li> <li>Construct draft phase 1 timetable together.</li> <li>Hold remote coach/committee meetings.</li> </ul>	Consider what training is required for your coaches and lifeguards when returning to club.	2, 4 and 5
- 1 Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access site specific training through the operator.</li> <li>Confirm date opening with operator.</li> <li>Confirm Phase 1 return to the pool with operator.</li> <li>Communication with clubs and members with return programme.</li> </ul>	Be aware there may be a delay to the opening date depending on where the facility is with their emergence process.	2
<b>Week 4:</b> Potential for club to access facility under social distancing regulations.			

## Maximising and exploring shared opportunities

As both clubs and operators begin emerging from lockdown, there are many key areas where strong partnerships can and should be forged.

With potentially less pool time and water space available, it may be necessary for local clubs to work together over the longer term as well as collaborating as a network of clubs in the short term to help each other through this process.

A true partnership and collaboration with the pool operator will be crucial for clubs in the current environment.



'A successful club forms part of a successful leisure centre'.

# Support one

## Completing a club review

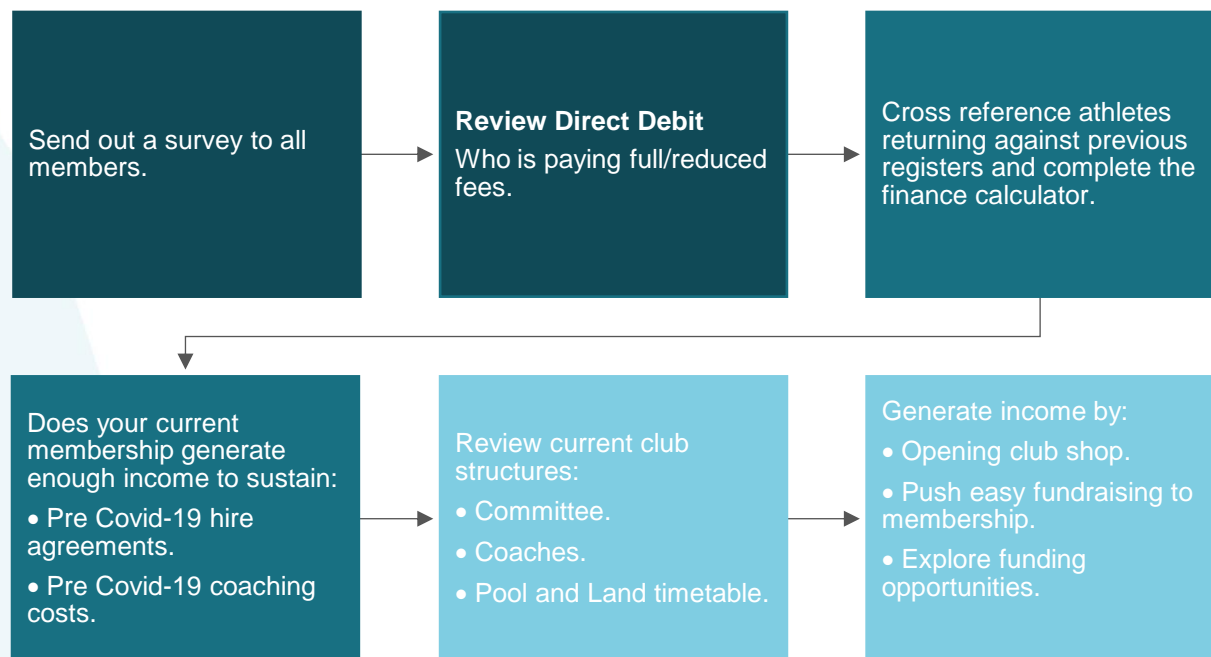
### Overview

This guide aims to support the club in identifying current baselines in terms of Membership, Club Finances, Coaching Staff and Workforce. It is important to have this information before any decisions can be made on how the club will reinstate pool activity once the facilities are able to reopen.

There are additional tools in this section to support the club:

- club finance toolkit
- survey example.

### Process



### Considerations whilst completing this process:

- More support regarding holding virtual meetings and AGMs and other useful support can be found through **Club Matters**.
- It may be necessary to adjust the proposed survey template to make it relevant to your club size and structure. The Members Survey should be a strong starting point and relevant to the majority of Swim England clubs.
- Additional support may be required when reviewing the club's (new) baseline membership. If staff have been out of the business, it might be advisable to bring the head coach back to support this process.

- When reviewing pool hire agreements, consider how social distancing might be applied.
- Can the club be moving ahead with **Stronger Affiliation** or **SwimMark accreditation**.
- Club members may have lost hats, goggles or grown out of kit during this period and may need to re-stock on a few items – this could be a revenue opportunity for members requiring new or replacement kit.
- With so much online shopping taking place is the club registered to use **easyfundraising** to generate additional income

## Intended outcome

By following this process, the club should gain a good understanding of how many members have been lost or retained during this period. From this information the club should be able to generate a financial forecast and make any decisions regarding adjustments to club structures prior to returning to the pool.

## Supporting resources

Below are links to where you can find relevant supporting resources:

- **Members Survey.**
- **Finance Toolkit.**

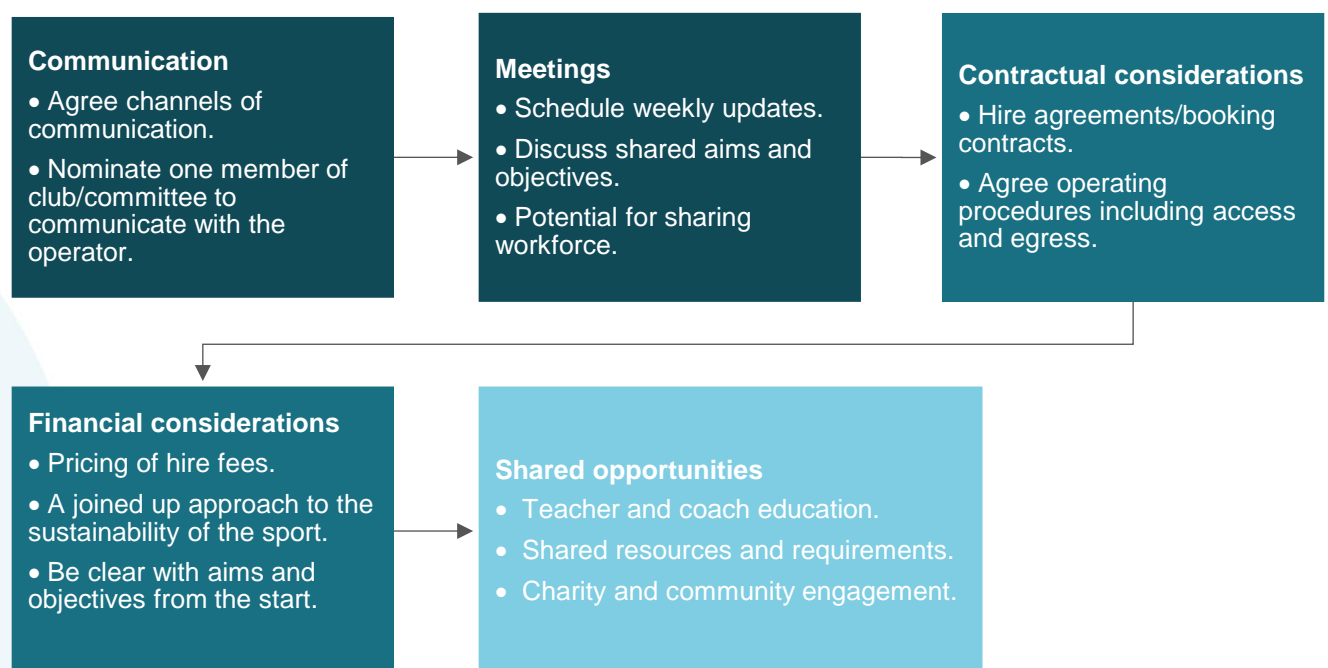
# Support two

## How to work with your operator

### Overview

This guide aims to support the club in the initial contact with the local pool operator. The process below can offer additional information and highlight potential discussion areas. This will also support the club in preparing members and committee for possible changes that may be necessary. The process should outline potential opportunities to manage these challenges in partnership with your pool operator.

### Process



### Intended outcome

By following this process, the club should be prepared for conversations with the pool operator. By week two of the process, the club should be in a good position to begin looking at the club programme. At this stage the club may need to bring back other members of the coaching team (if they've been out of the business).

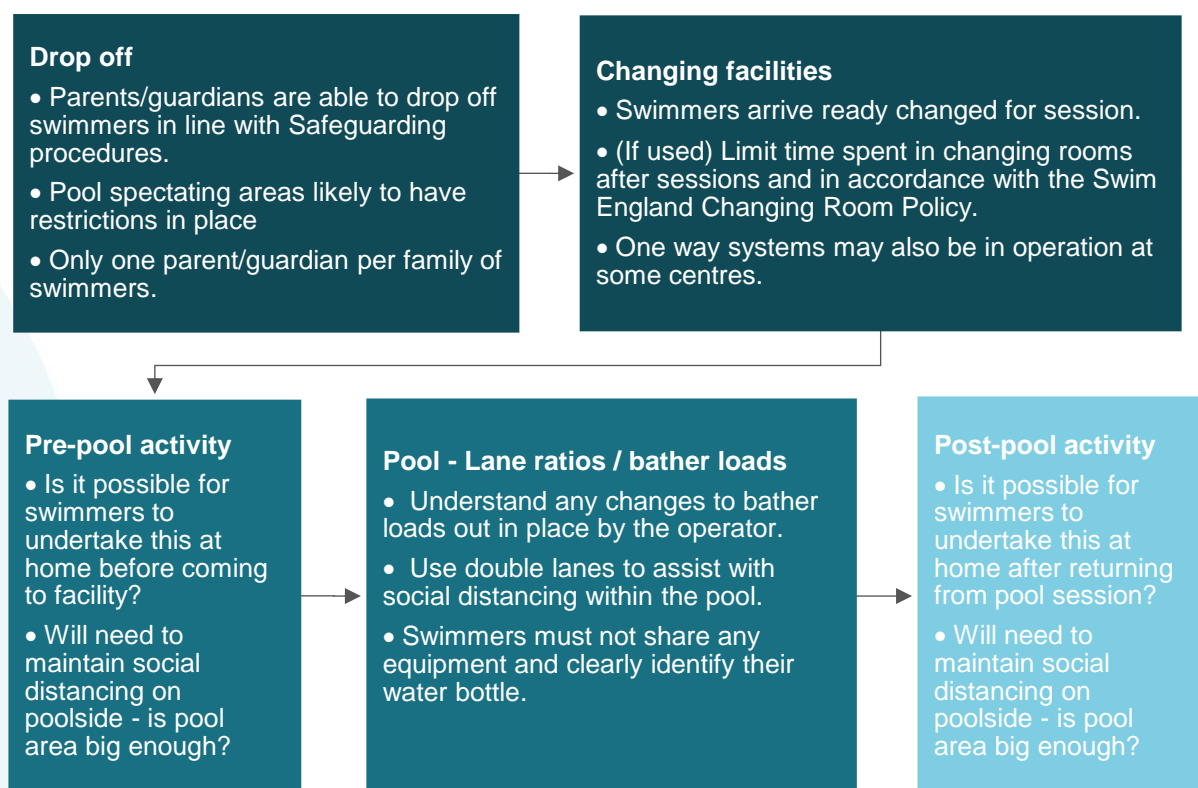
# Support three

## How to prepare for social distancing

### Overview

The below flow diagram should help with club planning. Support three is designed to help consider the factors that are likely to influence training sessions while social distancing measures remain in place. It is important to consider the practicalities of getting swimmers to and from the poolside, particularly as the majority of facilities will be in use with other user groups. Regular communication with the pool operator will be key so the club is fully aware of any restrictions or plans they are putting in place.

### Process



The discussions and communication with the pool operator within support document two will be key to putting these practices in place. It will be necessary for the club to update their risk assessments for training sessions with any changes made. A Risk Assessment Template can be found later in this document.

### Intended outcome

Once the club has followed this process, it should give an understanding of how to organise access to the pool and basic considerations for returning to the water.

Information for each aquatic discipline within the Technical Support for Returning to Training, will evolve this process much further.

The support documents in section two and four will also form a key part of this process.

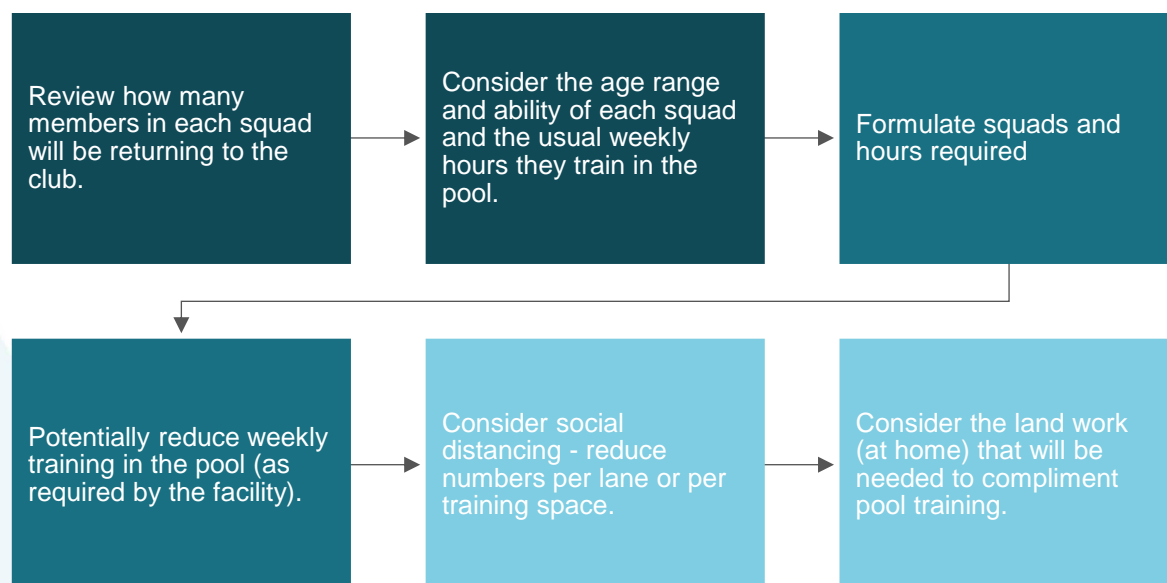
# Support four

## How to formulate a new timetable

### Overview

This guide aims to support the club in formulating a return to pool timetable. This timetable may need to be revised as government guidance changes. The timetable is based on activity for athletes who are free from Covid-19 and applies to the social distancing measures in place within re-opening of facilities. This guide should be followed in line with the support three document for social distancing in general.

### Process



### Considerations before completing the squad overview

When it comes to pool space and time for club swimming, (which will also be applicable to artistic swimming and water polo training) there are numerous variables to be considered, including:

- **Lane width** – narrower lanes = less swimmers, wider lanes = more swimmers.
- **Pool design** – specifically, a tank type pool will create significant waves from club swimmers, the 'rough' waters can necessitate having fewer swimmers within a club session, whereas in a deck level pool waves will dissipate over the side rather than the energy staying within the pool.
- **Pool length and width** – social distancing application.
- **Pool depth** – a shallower pool will often create more turbulent waters, so may necessitate fewer swimmers per lane/pool.



- **Lane ropes** – similar to pool design, anti-wave lane ropes dissipate the energy and prevent a build-up of turbulence on the surface, and additional turbulence could contribute to a need for amending bather loads.
- **Pool plant system / air handling** – efficiency and age of the pool may have an impact on bather loads.

Size, dimensions and design will be a consideration for all aquatic disciplines in terms of maximum bather loads for social distancing.

## Guidance to formulate your squad overview

Every facility will be different. So dialogue and communication with the facility is paramount as well as adherence to government guidelines:

- Do they have a maximum bather load?
- What are their maximum numbers per lane?
- Are they using double lane widths?

These answers are critical in order to plan training sessions and numbers per squad.

## Intended outcome

By following this process, coupled with the Members Survey, the club will be able to see the number of pool hours required.

Once squad numbers have been devised, it's then possible to apportion the hours into a new club timetable to make the best use of the water time whilst adhering to social distancing.

The Head Coach as a minimum will be needed to carry out this exercise with the support of the Club Committee.

Remember this will be a starting point for the club, regular reviews and knowledge of changing guidance will allow the club timetable to evolve.

## Supporting resources

Below are links to where you can find relevant supporting resources:

- [Risk Assessment template.](#)
- [Risk Assessment examples.](#)

# Support five

## How to reinstate your workforce - paid and voluntary

### Overview

This guide aims to support the club in reinstating the coaching team, both voluntary and paid coaches. This guide will link closely with the [Club Coronavirus Toolkit](#), where suitable links to the latest government guidelines regarding furlough and the self-employment scheme can be found. This guide should be followed in line with support one to ensure the club is a sustainable position for covering coaching costs as the club returns to the pool.

### Process

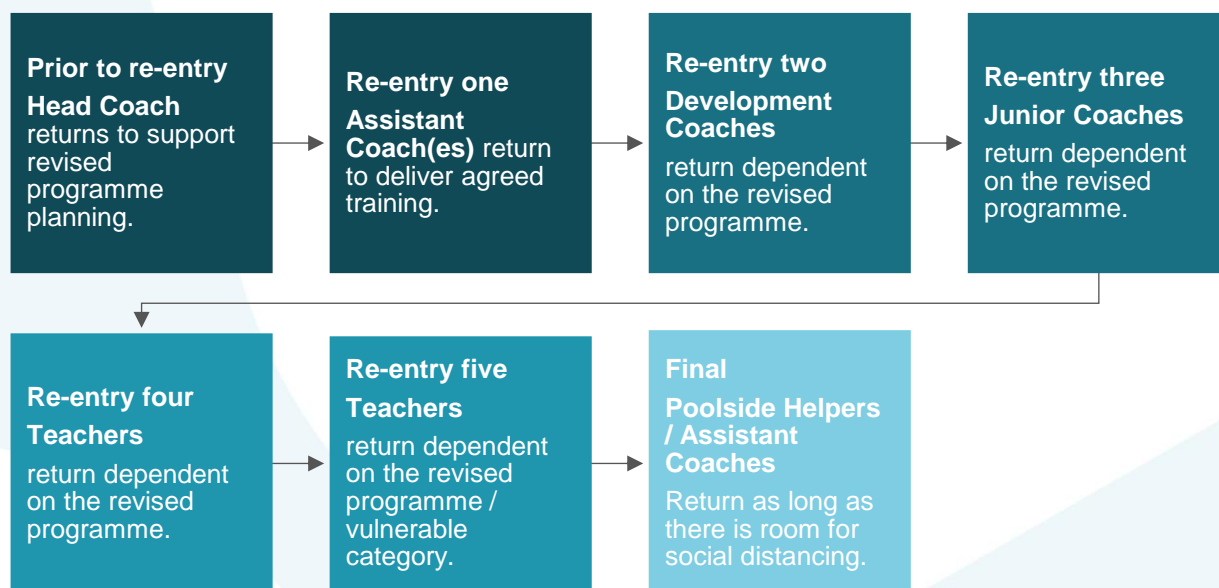
Re-evaluate your programme using the Club Finance Toolkit to establish the number of staff required to deliver a revised timetable (if applicable) in the first instance. Remember it is likely to be a phased approach as the club is able to regrow and new or existing members return to the water.

The following should be taken into account:

- safety
- expenditure
- revised membership fees
- staffing costs.

The chart below details a potential process for re-establishing the clubs coaching workforce. (NB: Not all parts of the flow diagram will be applicable to all clubs).

NB: whilst we have referenced coaching staff, the same process would be relevant to a club's teaching workforce depending on the club type.



### Considerations whilst planning for coaches to return:

- Any conditions relating the furlough scheme relating to bringing workforce back must be observed.
- Do any of the club's coaches, either paid or unpaid, fall into the 'at risk' category? You can visit the [NHS website](#) for support with this area.
- Do the club's coaches also lifeguard sessions? Will they need site specific training before they can deliver?
- Ensure all club staff and volunteers requiring a **DBS and safeguarding** training for their role have completed this before they return to delivery. More information can be found on page 44 of Wavepower within the **Safe Recruitment** section.

### Intended outcome

By following this process, the club should be able to ensure there is a safe, sustainable financial delivery plan in place to support the coaching and teaching workforce. At this stage the club may need to consider both financial and legal aspects of reinstating your coaching team.

# Additional resources

All documents listed below can be found within the [supporting document page](#) on [swimming.org](https://swimming.org).

- Club Coronavirus Toolkit
- Finance Toolkit
- Member Survey
- Club Covid-19 Lead – Role Description
- Risk Assessment template
- Risk Assessment examples for:
  - Artistic Swimming
  - Competitive Swimming
  - Diving
  - Water Polo
- Advice for returning to exercise after Covid-19
- Health Survey
- Return to Training Declaration form
- Training venue assessment

# Returning to training – all disciplines

This section looks covers all competitive disciplines and is followed by further discipline specific information. (If your club delivers the Learn to Swim Programme too, please refer to the [Swim England Guidance for Swimming Lessons](#)).

## Introduction

All clubs are responsible for their own decisions with regards to return to training as they must consider their individual circumstances, environments, participants, workforce and all their members.

## Latest Government Guidance

### From 29 March

Outdoor swimming pools and venues will be allowed to open. Club activity can resume without restrictions on age. Clubs must still comply with social distancing guidelines.

### Not before 12 April

Club activity for swimming, diving, water polo and artistic swimming can resume indoors for under 18 year olds and athletes with disabilities. Those who were under 18 on 31 August 2020 but have turned 18 in the academic year 2020-21 are classed as under 18 and as such are included in exemptions.

For all aquatic sports it is important for participants to adhere to social distancing when not undertaking activity in the water.

### Not before 17 May

Club activity for all ages can resume. Social distancing guidelines must be followed.

## Covid-19 awareness and risk assessment

All activities should be planned and a suitable [risk assessment](#) undertaken that takes into account considerations related to Covid-19 including government guidance (both local and national).

It is particularly important that the “risk assessment – social distancing” section of the [Swim England Guidance for Operators](#) is taken into account by all clubs as this covers our guidance on how close participants can come to each other during training sessions. Water Polo and Artistic Swimming clubs should also refer to the [return to competitive training and competition guidance for those sports](#). Clubs should adopt these principles and apply them to their own unique circumstances in order to plan safe and effective sessions.

Clubs should follow the following guidelines:

- Appoint a [Covid-19 Lead](#) with the overall responsibility to oversee the safe return to the water for athletes in partnership with the operator.

- The Club Chairman must ensure a high level of support for the Covid-19 Lead, maintaining open communication and a confidential access to the Welfare Officer if required.
- An additional individual should also be appointed Covid-19 Liaison for each training squad (or session as appropriate). This person will be available at every training session and responsible for the monitoring of social distancing and wellbeing, reporting back to the Covid-19 Lead after each training session identifying good practice together with any adverse findings. This person should not be the session coach and ideally have no other role at the training session.
- When a multi squad training session takes place, it is only necessary for one Covid-19 Liaison to be present.
- The Covid-19 Lead should appoint Liaisons as required and maintain a good level of contact with them ensuring prompt dissemination of information and updates.

## Planning

All clubs are unique and as such there cannot be standard guidance to cover all eventualities. Clubs will therefore need to plan for their own specific circumstances to address the need to maintain social distancing and adhere to government guidelines.

Clubs should ensure they have planned effectively for all aspects of their sessions and should agree their plans with the pool operator to ensure alignment and to offer the safest and best experience for their participants and workforce.

- Club planning and risk assessments should take into consideration (but not be limited to) the following, always with a focus on maintaining social distancing, minimising transmission risk and adhering to government guidance:
  - Arrival and departure protocols.
  - Activity pre, during and post pool.
  - The standard of participants and the specific type of activity.
  - Transitions between activities (e.g. from training sets to breaks).
  - The length of pool and width of lanes.
  - The set-up of poolside space.
  - Use and cleaning of equipment.
  - Use of facilities such as changing rooms and dryland areas.
  - Spectators.
  - Lifeguarding and safety arrangements.
- If the club has any doubt about any aspects of their planning, it is suggested that they start with smaller numbers of participants and ensure that distancing can be maintained and guidance applied, only increasing the number of participants when they are sure this is feasible.

- Each club must assess the relevant numbers that can be catered for within its own sessions and this should comply with pool operator guidelines. This will depend on a number of factors including (but not limited to):
  - Level and ability of participants involved.
  - Proposed training content.
  - Pace/intensity/volume of training.
  - Requirement for equipment.
  - Available poolside space and need for rest.
  - Vulnerability of participants.
  - Length of pool and width of lanes.

## Additional Level X considerations

All of the above pool planning areas need to be considered if choosing to run a Level X opportunity.

These will also include:

1. The inclusion of qualified Technical Officials as per the Level X conditions requirements.
2. The Club Covid-19 Lead will ensure the relevant risk assessment is carried out prior to any activity starting.

## Group sizes for training

Clubs should note that the primary guidance is the Swim England Returning to the Pool document which indicates a maximum bather load of 6 m<sup>2</sup> per participant. All activity must also be risk assessed and agreed with the pool operator.

## Lane swimming

Clubs should group swimmers to train in a lane. As far as is possible, that group should continue to train together in subsequent training sessions. Examples of lane swimming protocols and numbers can be found in “**Guidance for Community Swimming**” section and the “**Guidance for Clubs**” section of the Swim England return to pools guidance.

## Land training

As long as the land training session is formally organised by a qualified instructor, club, NGB, company or charity, then land training can continue outdoors in unlimited numbers, provided that participants are socially distanced and do not mix.

Organised club land training sessions can take place indoors for under 18s, not before the 12 April, in groups of up to 15 participants. Multiple groups of 15 plus staff can participate at the same time but groups should not mix and there should be adequate space, social distancing and ventilation at all times.

## Competitive activity

For competition activity it has been necessary to develop separate guidance. For our team sports of Water Polo and Artistic Swimming we have developed guidance in line with the Government's Return to Recreational Team Sport Framework.

The **Water Polo guidance** and **Artistic Swimming guidance** have been approved by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Before considering any form of competition Swim England strongly recommends a consistent and progressive period of training before moving onto competitive activities. A swimmer's ability and fitness to compete should be determined and directed by the Coach. Please ensure you consider the individual discipline Return to Competition guidance documents for additional information and support.

Intra-club competition in a daily training environment is permissible through our Level X programme.

Other competition opportunities including licensed meets and other club galas are not permissible at this current time.

Competition guidance for both Swimming and Diving is currently being developed and will be available soon.

## Participant and workforce behaviour and safety

- When participants return to training it should be gradual, progressive, and for those in high risk groups (or anyone with concerns) we suggest they do so following consultation with their medical practitioner. It is very important that all participants and workforce continue to follow the latest general government guidance around social distancing.
- Briefings on pool protocols should be given to all workforce and participants via video link/recording or in writing before their first session. No briefing, no access.
- All involved (or their parents for under 18-year-olds) should be asked to agree and confirm in writing (via email or online) that they have seen/read the briefing, understood the requirements, and commit to adhering to them.
- Participants and workforce should be made aware that returning to training is not compulsory and they have the option to opt-in or opt-out. We advise that the club records and stores this decision. It is a challenging time for all individuals with increased anxiety and different circumstances for many. We suggest that clubs should recognise this and there should be no compulsion or risk of losing membership if they cannot return straight away.
- Participants should be grouped and then continue to train only with that group, meaning that if anyone displays symptoms, the transmission possibility is limited only to that group rather than other club members and it will be easier to trace contacts. This maybe outside of the normal squad structure of the club.
- Participants and workforce must be briefed that they must not attend training if they have any Covid-19 symptoms or know they have been in contact with others that have symptoms. They should follow government guidance as should those shielding



or in any vulnerable category. If you're unsure whether someone should return to training, refer to the [Training Venue Assessment](#).

- Clubs should ask participants/workforce that have had Covid-19 during lockdown to ensure they only resume training when they are completely recovered and they follow [relevant advice](#) (link) and any medical instruction.
- The Covid-19 Lead and/or the Covid-19 Liaison has the right to refuse entry to training to any member they believe may have symptoms of Covid-19 or is returning to training too early after having Covid-19. There is no right to appeal these decisions.
- Clubs should ensure that athletes are 'fit' for training, and have the pre-requisite level of fitness for the activities that are planned. If in any doubt, then the volume and intensity should initially be low to enable participants to gradually build up fitness whilst minimising injury risk.
- Clubs and coaches should regularly reiterate safety and social distancing information, for example at the start of sessions and through swift intervention if anyone in the session is breaching guidelines.
- Club members and the clubs workforce (including volunteers) should sign the [declaration form](#), stating that they are symptom free, will only attend training if they remain symptom free and are returning to training fully aware of the risks associated with the Covid-19 virus. NB: it's of critical importance at all times that a club maintains a record of those in attendance at training sessions.

## Participant and workforce hygiene

- Thorough hand washing with soap or if not available, hand-sanitiser, should be undertaken by all participants and workforce before and after training.
- Equipment that can't be cleaned in the water should be cleaned with anti-viral wipes.
- Where possible participants should change into their kit at home, arrive at the pool in a tracksuit or other suitable clothing, towel off after training and return home to shower, thus minimising the transmission risk in changing rooms and following the centre guidance where appropriate.
- Participants and workforce should avoid using wash/toilet facilities if possible but if used, then they should wash hands thoroughly, use hand-sanitiser where possible and not touch their mouth or nose.

## Dealing with illness during a session

- Protocols must be agreed with the pool operator to ensure that effective first-aid provision is available. Given the current situation, it is the responsibility of the club to minimise the risk of any injury/illness to reduce as much as possible the risk of requiring first aid.
- The club should ensure that participant contact details are up-to-date and available on site in case of any injury or illness.

## Delivery workforce

- The number of deliverers required will be dependent upon the number of people in the session and also the number of lifeguards present at the pool. Ensuring minimum but necessary staffing levels are calculated to balance training need, distancing protocols and reducing risk. This should be identified in the club's risk assessments prior to any session beginning.
- Areas of coaching should be agreed within the risk assessment and adhered to throughout the session. Coaches should avoid close contact with any participants. As long as the area is clearly marked more than one coach can be on poolside.
- The Covid-19 Lead will intermittently attend the training venues to maintain oversight.
- Wellness and training load of participants should be monitored closely to enable proactive management of athletes and their return to training.

## Wider considerations for clubs

The club should ensure that it has liaised with the pool operator so that all measures put in place are agreed and meet with the guidelines applied in the facility as well as local and national government requirements.

The club should also ensure that:

- It is fully aware of any amendment to Normal Operating Procedures / Emergency Action Plans NOPs / EAPs at the pools.
- It is aware of any changes to the Centre's protocols and that it informs participants, parents and workforce of these as necessary, for example:
  - arrival/entry
  - exit
  - parking
  - cleaning
  - changing rooms
  - closure of areas such as balconies, meeting rooms and reception areas
  - staffing
  - lifeguarding, health and safety
  - accident reporting
  - toilet usage.

## Equipment

Where possible, participants should have their own equipment and only bring what is required for that particular session. It will be important for the coach to ensure this information is provided in advance.

- Personal equipment should be cleaned with anti-viral wipes or solution before and after use, and should not be stored at the venue.
- Sharing of equipment is not permitted and equipment should not be left at the facility.
- Individuals should avoid handling other people's kit and take their own kit home to clean.

## Practical suggestions for applying social distancing and reducing transmission risk

- Briefings and corrections in sessions should be kept to a minimum and done in a manner that enables appropriate social distancing to be maintained. If there is a health and/or safety concern then the coach should not hesitate to undertake a briefing or make a correction, again ensuring appropriate social distancing is maintained.
- To enter the pool a one way system should be put in place, ensuring this adheres to the process the centre has in place.
- Ensure that athletes bring sufficient fluids for the session in their own clearly marked bottles and any necessary food in clearly marked containers so as not to require vending machines or water fountains.
- No physical contact between coaches and athletes should take place when making corrections, only oral communication, keeping the required distance.
- Create time gaps between sessions so that one group of participants can leave the pool and centre before the next group arrives.
- Clubs should consider whether they undertake pre-pool and post-pool activation exercises at the venue or whether this can be done more effectively at home to avoid additional risk of transmission.
- Be clear with participants, parents and workforce that they must stick to scheduled timings to enable arrival and departure to take place effectively without overloading the capacity of the centre/pool.
- Organised indoor club activity for under 18 year olds and athletes with disabilities can resume following the reopening of facilities in groups of up to 15 participants. Multiple groups of 15 plus staff can participate at the same time but groups should not mix and there should be adequate space, social distancing and ventilation at all times. Outdoor activity can resume from 29 March for all ages in unrestricted numbers.
  - **Guidance for Virtual Teaching and Coaching.**
  - **Swim England Land Training Guidance Under New Social Distancing Measures March 2021.**

- It is likely that many clubs will be working with smaller groups than usual. To that end, the club will need to determine how it caters effectively for its members, for example by offering shorter sessions that enable all of them to be involved or by phasing re-entry to the water.
- A familiarisation video of the environment, housed on the club's website would be beneficial if possible.

## Safeguarding children

All clubs and coaches must operate in a safe and effective manner in accordance with Wavepower, the Swim England Child Safeguarding Policy, and the Swim England Club insurance policy.

Ensure all club staff and volunteers requiring a **DBS and safeguarding** training for their role have completed this before they return to delivery. More information can be found on page 44 of Wavepower within the **Safe Recruitment** section.

The Club Welfare Officer must be aware of the training that is being undertaken and be involved in all risk assessments made, giving guidance as appropriate. This should include assessing that the venue, changing rooms, activity and supervision is delivered, as far as is practicable, in accordance with Wavepower. Where this is not practicable the risk should be identified together with the steps taken to mitigate the risk.

All club staff and volunteers should conduct themselves in accordance with **Wavepower** and the Swim England Code of Ethics and accompanying Codes of Conduct.

Report child safeguarding concerns immediately to your Club Welfare Officer, Swim England's Child Safeguarding Team or Swimline the Swim England Child Protection Helpline.

In an emergency when you believe a child has been harmed or may be at immediate risk of harm and you are unable to contact the Club Welfare officer or Swim England Safeguarding Team then immediate contact should be made with police, Children's Social Care, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), NSPCC Child Protection Helpline or other agencies as appropriate.

### Useful Contacts

Swim England Child Safeguarding Team | Request a call back at [legal@swimming.org](mailto:legal@swimming.org)

Swimline the Swim England Child Protection Helpline | **0808 100 4001**

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline | **0808 800 5000**

Please continue to visit the **Swim England/Institute of Swimming Coronavirus (Covid-19) FAQs** for any further useful updates.

# Competitive Swimming

## Introduction

It is important that clubs read this section in conjunction with the section “Return to Training – all disciplines”.

## Numbers in training sessions

The coach planning the session should take into account the information within the risk assessment – social distancing section of the [Swim England Guidance for Operators](#).

### Number of participants

We would advise during the current circumstances that there is a minimum of 6 m<sup>2</sup> per participant, this defines the maximum bather load. To help capacity it may be useful to reduce session length or regularity to enable more participants to take part over a given period of time.

### Proximity of participants

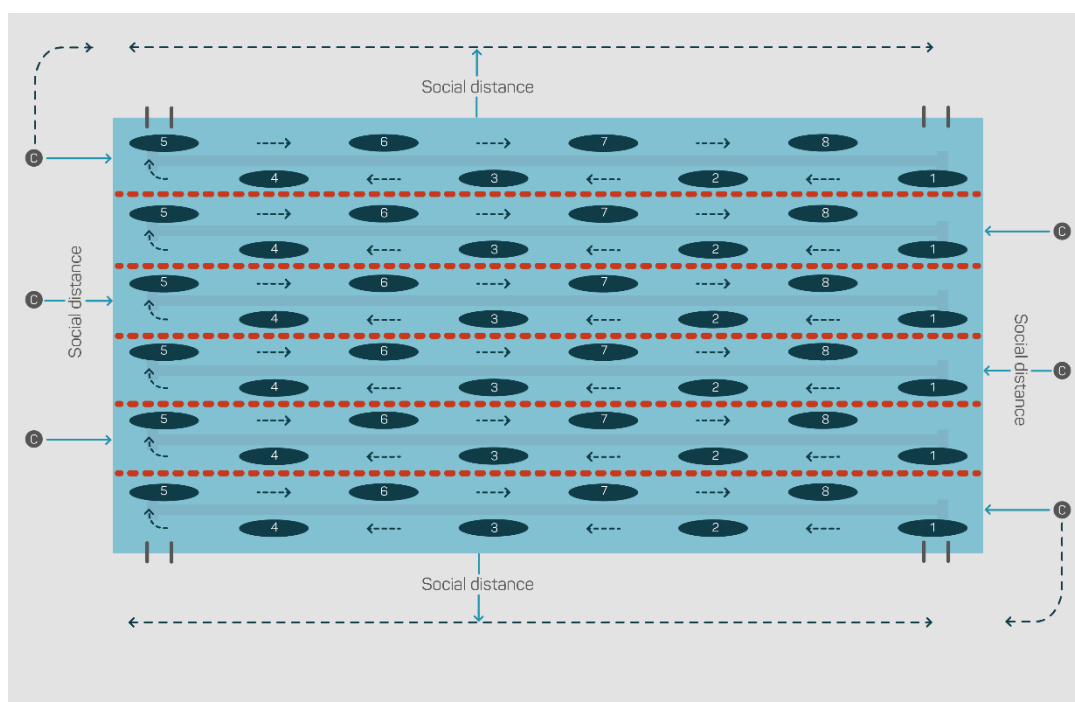
- It is acceptable for swimmers in a session to pass each other at less than social distancing requirements as long as that is for a short time and only when swimmers are in motion.
- It is imperative that swimmers maintain social distancing when static either in or out of the water.
- Clubs should take relevant additional steps to further minimise transmission risk, for example, participants exhaling in the water when passing if that is practicable and safe.
- Clubs should plan their sessions taking into account the factors outlined above.

Clubs should plan their number of swimmers and make the necessary judgements based on the training plan and their ability to facilitate social distancing guidelines throughout the session including during rest periods.

The lane swimming diagram below **gives an example 25m pool layout** of how this could be implemented for competitive swimming training using single-width lanes.

Consideration of the age and stage of swimmers may support a change in the number of swimmers per lane taking into consideration social distancing guidelines at all times. As highlighted above, the application of this will depend on a number of factors and each club will need to plan and risk assess for their own environment.

We recognise that training sessions may not look like a “normal” programme of swimming training however the circumstances that we are operating under are not “normal” and clubs, workforce and participants will need to accept that to be able to utilise pools whilst complying with government guidance, they will need to adapt accordingly.

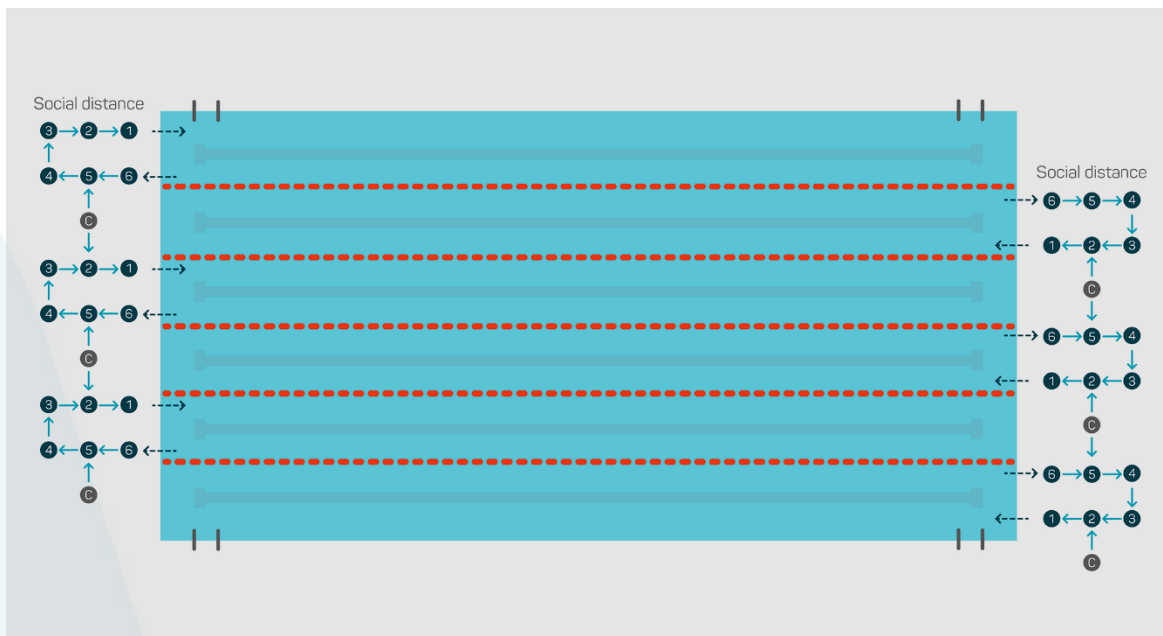
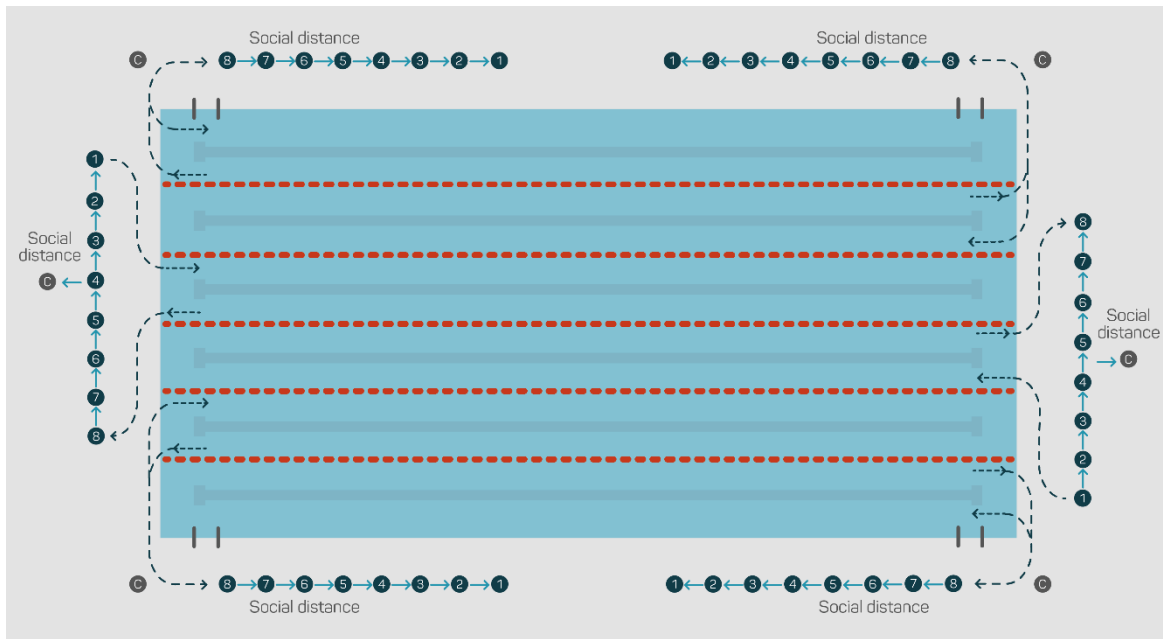


## Further considerations

When planning for sessions, clubs and coaches should also consider the following practical solutions in terms of maintaining distancing and minimising the risk of virus transmission:

Repeat swims are started when the third swimmer gets to the end.

- Swimmers complete their activity mid pool (start/stop points are mid pool positions).
- Ability of swimmer and their positioning within the lane (fastest first in the lane).
- Amount of time between each swimmer push off interval.
- Determining the typical pace of your swimmers will therefore be critical in determining numbers per lane.
- Identifying and using poolside space to rest swimmers.
- Setting up zones for pool briefings with clear markings of where swimmers and coaches should stand to maintain social distancing.
- Identifying where each swimmer will leave their drink and kit to enable them to access these without the risk of congregation.



The above diagrams are examples of how you could run the session. These diagrams are not drawn to scale.

## Suitable types of training

The reintroduction of training should be carefully planned and consideration of prior fitness is paramount. This should be phased over a period of time with the emphasis on skills and drills. Planning is crucial to ensure social distancing protocols are continually adhered to as well as progressive intensity. The below are examples, but not exhaustive, of low heart rate level type of work so that swimmers can learn to 'feel' the water again without gaining any undue muscle soreness.

- Four stroke technical efficiency sessions where movement is continuous and little time needed for recovery and low heart rate maintained to avoid excessive exhalation.

- Drills and skills.
- Underwater work (within 15 metres) to improve streamlining and transition phases.
- Swimming will lead to a breath being blown out above water. Being mindful of how your face is positioned when exhaling should be considered.
- In the first three to four week meso-cycle, focus on low to medium level aerobic training (not more than 50bpm or 5-6/10 effort) to avoid the need to use explosive breathing and to allow a controlled re-acclimatisation to training.
- When doing freestyle, if swimmers need to pass each other, breathe to the opposite side.
- Care should be taken when doing kick sets and if practical a recommendation to use the flat kicking technique with face in the water.
- Diving practices can be performed as long as social distancing in and around each starting block is compliant to government guidelines. Swimmers should, whilst waiting to get on the starting block, be observing social distancing.
- When doing any sprints off the block, this will increase the personal heart rate of a swimmer along with increased breathing and exhalation of any air particles and therefore the provision for social distancing and sufficient time for the athlete to exit the water, once the sprint has been completed, needs to be considered.

## Training progression

When considering session planning, coaches should take into account the time that athletes have spent out of the water and how elevated heart rate will impact on the explosiveness of exhaling.

Following a consistent period of training a phased return to the activities listed below can be considered taking into account the appropriate needs and development of the athlete:

- Race pace practice leading into Level X Racing.
- Increased heart rate intensity.
- **Breath-holding training.**



# Para-Swimming/disability considerations

It is important that clubs read this section in conjunction with the section return to training – all disciplines and the competitive swimming section.

All information below is subject to change based on government guidance. Clubs and individuals to whom this applies should stay up-to-date with the latest government guidance. If in any doubt, seek expert/medical advice.

## ‘At risk’ groups

Swimmers who are at higher risk should follow the medical guidance issued to them. It is very important they follow the general advice on social distancing.

## Guidance for clubs with para-swimmers / disabled swimmers

- Social distancing should be adhered to at all times.
- Disabled swimmers are exempt from all restrictions. People who provide essential support (eg carers) to enable disabled people to participate are exempt and do not count towards the six people in a group, where the rule of six applies. When working with a disabled person who requires support, social distancing should be maintained wherever possible but in some circumstances people will need physical assistance to be active.
- Swimmers, parents, carers who use assistance dogs are able to attend training. The assistance dog should not be smoothed or patted by anybody other than the person(s) they are there to support.
- Assistance dog owners please follow the guidance from Assistance Dogs UK and the Animal and Plant Health Agency.
- Swimmers who use equipment to access the pool, travel on poolside or specialist equipment for training, should continue to use this equipment, to ensure safe practice in and out of the pool. Equipment commonly used:
  - wheelchairs / wet chairs
  - scooter/skateboard
  - prosthetic limbs
  - tapping device
  - starting equipment (bands, cords, towels etc.).
- All equipment (including above) must be cleaned with anti-bacterial wipes/spray **before** entering the facility.

- All equipment (including above) must be cleaned with anti-bacterial wipes/spray **after** the training/swimming session.
- Equipment (including above) must only be handled by the swimmer or their carer/chaperone.
- All swimmers must only touch and handle their **own** equipment.
- All carers/chaperones only to remain poolside if deemed essential and must adhere to social distancing rules during the training/swimming session.
- Those swimmers who require carer/chaperone to act as a tapper during training should continue to use the tapper and tapping device to ensure safe training, however the tappers on poolside must adhere to social distancing rules.
- For training sessions which contain more than one visually impaired swimmer, who requires the use of a tapper, we suggest having those swimmers in the same lane to minimise the number of tappers needed on poolside.
- Swimmers who require a hoist to enter/exit the water should continue to use the hoist for best practice and safety. Carer/chaperone should assist where required and follow the instructions of the leisure operator.
- We advise clubs to review all medical information provided by their members, update risk assessments and to identify members who are categorised as people at higher risk by the NHS.
- When swimmers return to training it should be gradual, progressive, and for those in high risk groups, (or anyone with concerns), we suggest they do so following consultation with their medical practitioner.

# Water Polo

This guidance focuses on training activity for water polo. Guidance has also been approved for competitive training and competitions. This can be found here with the [Swim England Return to Pool guidance](#).

It is important that clubs read this section in conjunction with the section return to training – all disciplines.

For guidance on swimming training, please refer to the competitive swimming section.

For water polo the following guidance should be followed:

## From 29 March

Outdoor swimming pools and venues will be allowed to open. Club activity can resume outdoors without restrictions on age. Clubs must still comply Swim England and with social distancing guidelines.

## Not before 12 April

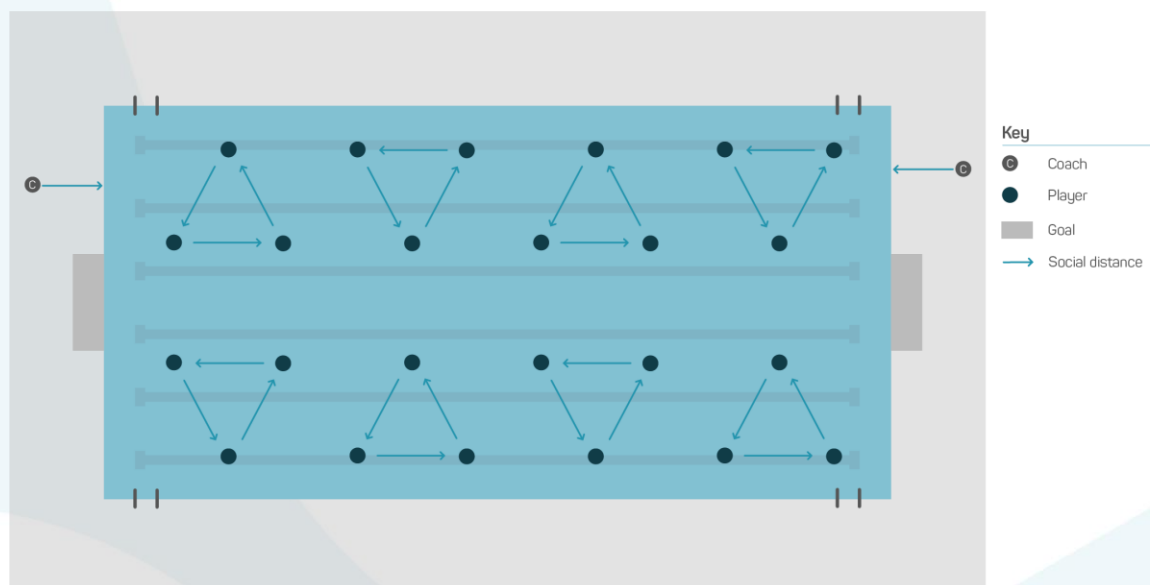
Club activity for water polo can resume indoors for under 18 year olds only. Those who were under 18 on 31 August 2020 but have turned 18 in the academic year 2020-21 are classed as under 18 and as such are included in exemptions.

Appropriate risk assessments should be undertaken and Swim England and Government guidelines must be followed.

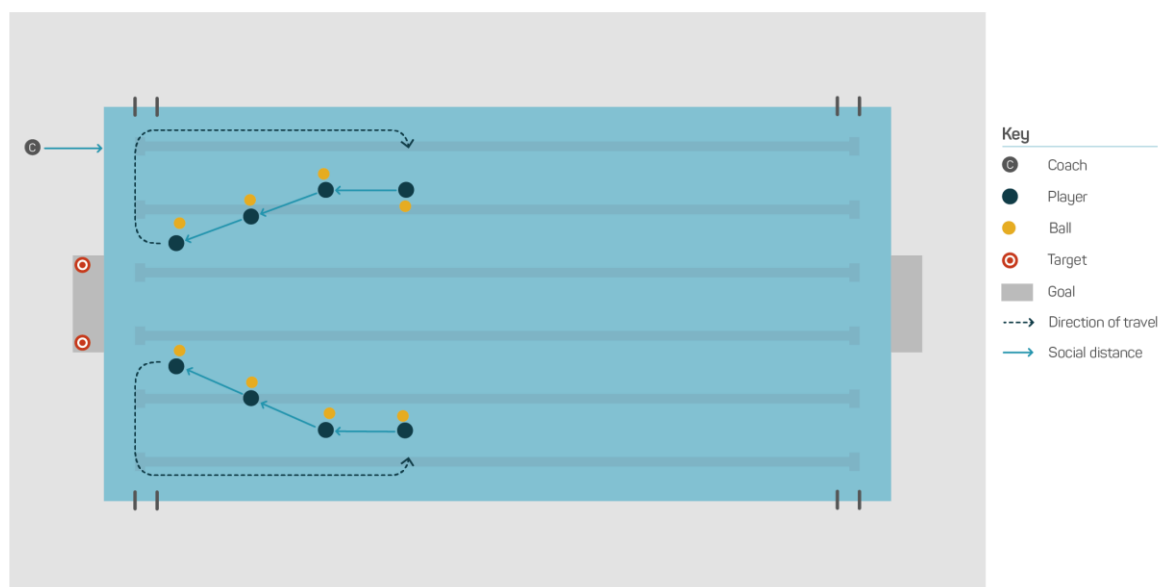
## Not before 17 May

Club activity for all ages can resume. Social distancing guidelines must be followed.

## Pool layout example of passing



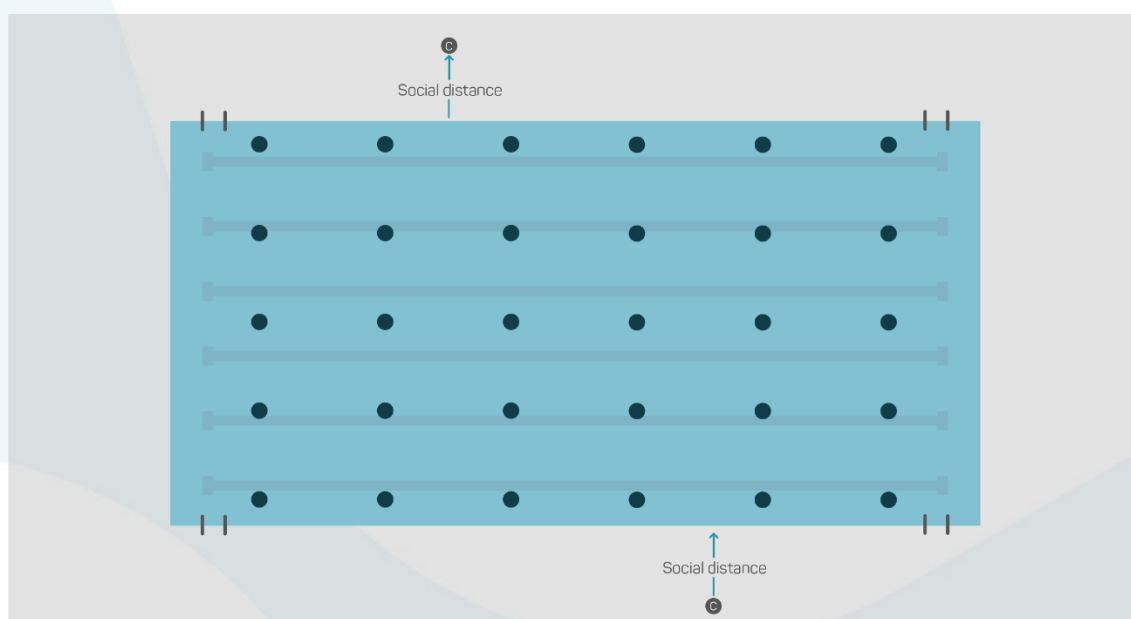
## Pool layout example of shooting

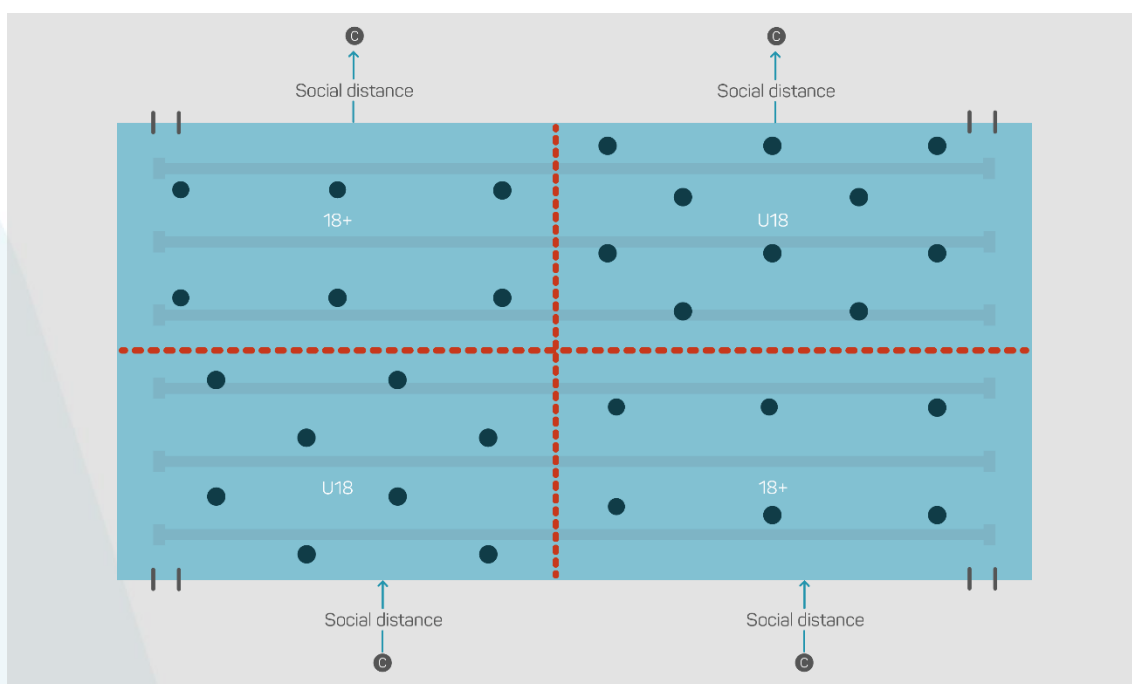
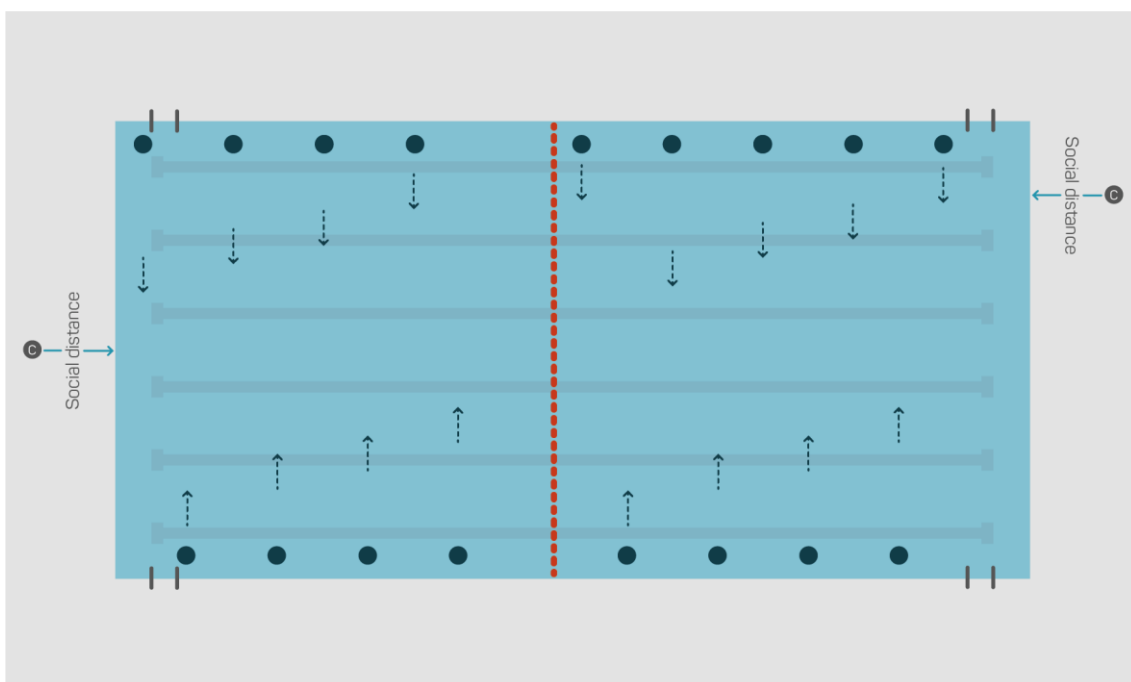


## Number of participants

We would advise during the current circumstances that there is a minimum of 6 m<sup>2</sup> per participant – this defines the maximum bather load.

- Clubs should plan their number of participants and make the necessary judgements based on the training plan and their ability to comply with social distancing guidelines and implement this guidance throughout the session including during rest periods.
- The **example** below is based on 25 metre by 10 – 12.5 metre pool and includes 30 players. As highlighted above, the application of this will depend on a number of factors and each club will need to plan and risk assess for their own environment.
- We recognise that training sessions may not look like a “normal” programme of training however the circumstances that we are operating under are not “normal” and clubs, workforce and participants will need to accept that to be able to utilise pools whilst complying with government guidance, they will need to adapt accordingly.





- Clubs should group participants to train together. As far as is possible, that group should continue to train together in subsequent training sessions.
- **Under 18-year-olds:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 12 April. Social distancing measures should still be applied. For more information, see [Water Polo Return to Team Sport guidance](#).
- **Adults:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 17 May. Social distancing measures should still be applied.

## Coaches positioning

- Squad swimming widths, coach stands on end, squad swims lengths, coach stands along the length (see competitive swimming section).
- Coaches to watch their group of athletes and be aware of passing other coaches, maintaining social distancing at all times.
- Coaches to have clearly defined areas to stand and walk.
- Maintain social distancing from participants at all times.

## Number of coaches required

- This will be dependent upon the number of people in the pool and also the number of lifeguards present at the pool.

## Use of equipment

Cleaning regime of equipment before and after all uses.

- balls cleaned before and after each session
- hats not required but can be used for safety purposes and should not be shared between players and be cleaned after each session.
- publish what equipment is required prior to sessions.

# Artistic Swimming

This guidance focuses on training activity for artistic swimming. Guidance has also been approved for competitive training and competitions. This can be found here with the [Swim England Return to Pool guidance](#).

It is important that clubs read this section in conjunction with the section return to training – all disciplines.

For guidance on swimming training, please refer to the competitive swimming section.

For artistic swimming training the following guidance should be followed:

## **From 29 March**

Outdoor swimming pools and venues will be allowed to open. Club activity can resume outdoors without restrictions on age. Clubs must still comply Swim England and with social distancing guidelines.

## **Not before 12 April**

Club activity for artistic swimming can resume indoors for under 18 year olds and people with disabilities only. Those who were under 18 on 31 August 2020 but have turned 18 in the academic year 2020-21 are classed as under 18 and as such are included in exemptions.

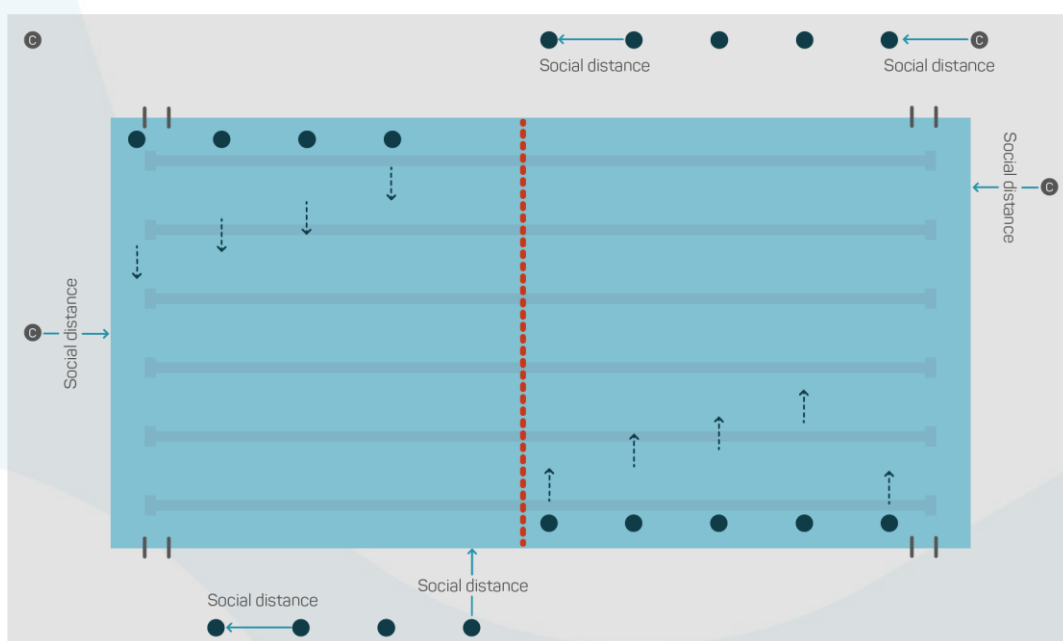
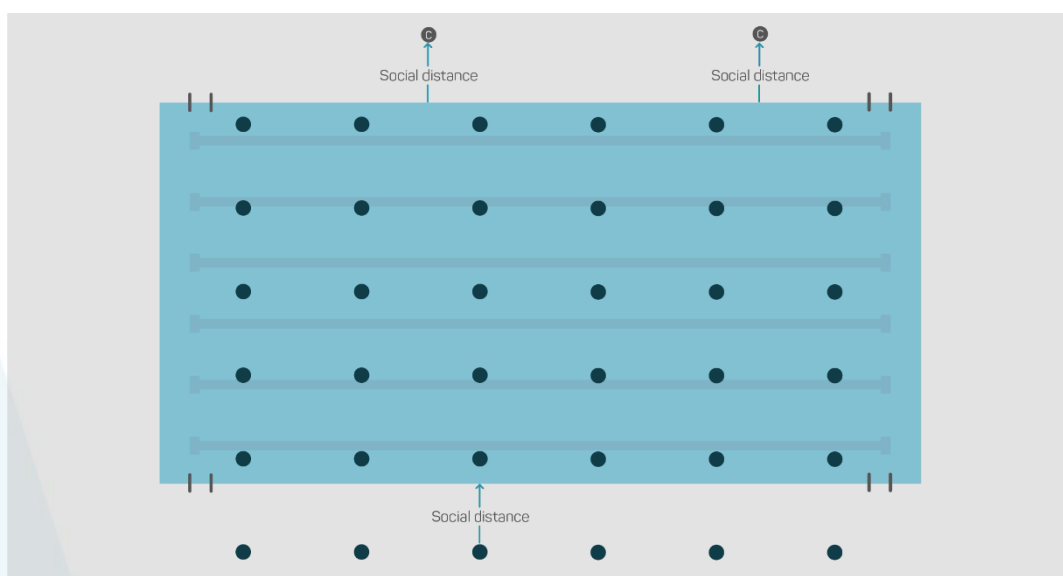
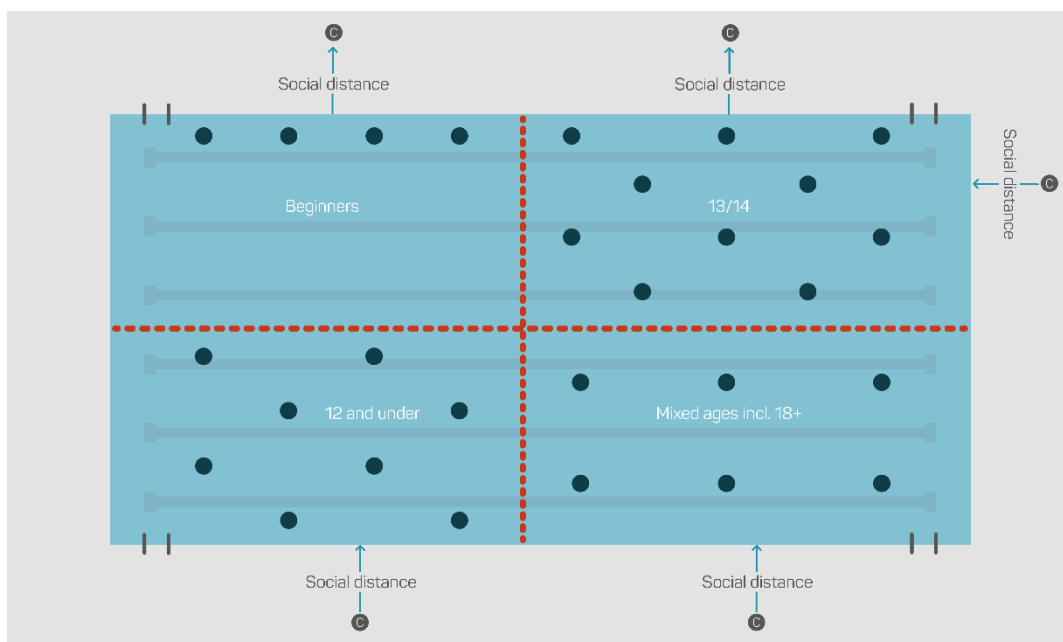
## **Not before 17 May**

Club activity for all ages can resume. Social distancing guidelines must be followed.

## **What numbers can realistically participate in these sessions?**

We would advise during the current circumstances that there is a minimum of 6 m<sup>2</sup> per participant – this defines the maximum bather load.

- Clubs should plan their number of participants including any groups of over 18's and make the necessary judgements based on the training plan and their ability to comply with social distancing guidelines and implement this guidance throughout the session including during rest periods.
- The example below is based on 25 metre by 10 – 12.5 metre pool. As highlighted above, the application of this will depend on a number of factors and each club will need to plan and risk assess for their own environment.
- We recognise that training sessions may not look like a “normal” programme of training however the circumstances that we are operating under are not “normal” and clubs, workforce and participants will need to accept that to be able to utilise pools whilst complying with government guidance, they will need to adapt accordingly.





- Clubs should group participants to train together. As far as is possible, that group should continue to train together in subsequent training sessions.
- **Under 18-year-olds:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 12 April. Social distancing measures should still be applied.
- **Adults:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 17 May. Social distancing measures should still be applied.

## Coaches positioning

- Coaches to watch their group of athletes and be aware of passing other coaches, maintaining social distancing distance at all times.
- Coaches to have clearly defined areas to stand and walk.
- Avoiding close contact with swimmers.

## Number of coaches required

- This will be dependent upon the number of people in the pool and also the number of lifeguards present at the pool.

## Use of equipment

- Cleaning regime of equipment before and after all uses including music equipment.
- Publish what equipment is required prior to sessions.

# Diving

It is important that clubs have followed the guidance in the section return to training – all disciplines and that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken.

## How will social distancing be applied - pool

- Social distancing will be applied both on the poolside and the diving boards themselves.
- Each facility will need to be assessed and reviewed to establish the maximum number of athletes and coaches that can safely operate whilst maintaining strict social distancing.
- A one way system should be considered with clear routes up to the boards from the water identified for each board.
- Platform divers to stay one person to a flight of stairs when accessing platforms with no return back down the stairs.
- Waiting queues should also be clearly marked for each board.
- Floor markers should be considered to assist with this.
- Session planning should be undertaken between all coaches involved considering restricting different groups to certain areas of the pool to assist with the management of social distancing.
- Once within the pool training environment, any athlete should ensure that if their coach has required them to warm up on the pool side, then this should be performed following government guidance on social distancing.
- If warm up mats are to be used, do not share mats. Ensure all mats are cleaned before and after use. Athletes should be encouraged to bring their own mat.
- Once in pool training has commenced, follow the principle of one person per board/platform (unless synchro training is being completed where two is permitted as long as boards allow for participants to follow government guidance on social distance).
- Poolside coaches should follow government guidance on social distancing. Athletes should be advised not to come up to the coach for coaching comments and feedback.
- Athletes that use chamois style towels (sometimes referred to as shammies) must take extra precautions with the chamois towel. The dropping of towels from platforms should be done with more care than previously, so as to ensure that the towel is not in another person's way, touches another person, or is hanging from a part of the tower that is hard to reach.
- It is important to ensure that, like water bottles, no chamois towels are to be shared, and only your own chamois is to be touched.

## How will social distancing be applied – dry land

- Dry land training and usage of dry land facilities should be reviewed at each facility and where possible be delivered online using previous guidance.
- For dry land activities that cannot be undertaken at home a review and risk assessment of the dry land facilities available at your venue must be undertaken. Any use of dry land facilities must maintain social distancing.
- Separate work areas (and the equipment in them) so that divers and staff maintain social distancing from each other while training.
- Provide hand foam for each training area/station.
- Divers should use their own rolled towel for the head for any exercises requiring them to be face down and wipe down all equipment before and after exercise.
- Limit equipment to one athlete (per board or side of platform, somersault box, lifting station etc.) to maintain distance between athletes.
- Avoid alternating sets between athletes on equipment/mats/blocks in the gym and dry land areas.
- Facilitate cleaning of dry-equipment (Olympic bars, somersault boxes, mats etc.) and handrails between athletes.

## What practices can reasonably be delivered?

- A staged return to training should be implemented for divers of all ages and levels starting with basic jumps and entries building up volume and height over time.
- Following this the build-up of required and basic dives can be introduced followed by lead ups and eventually optional dives.

## What practices cannot be delivered during these times?

- Diving can on occasion result in injury that requires ambulance care. Whilst this cannot be predicted extra precautions should be taken. Any dives that could be considered dangerous/new/risky should not be undertaken during the initial training period to avoid the risk of injury and requirement to contact emergency services putting additional pressure on the NHS.

## What numbers can realistically participate in these sessions?

- This will be dependent on your facility size and set up and should be evaluated in detail along with the facility operator to ensure sessions can be planned appropriately.
- Clubs should plan their number of participants and make the necessary judgements based on the training plan and their ability to comply with social distancing guidelines and implement this guidance throughout the session including during rest periods.
- Clubs should group participants to train together. As far as is possible, that group should continue to train together in subsequent training sessions.

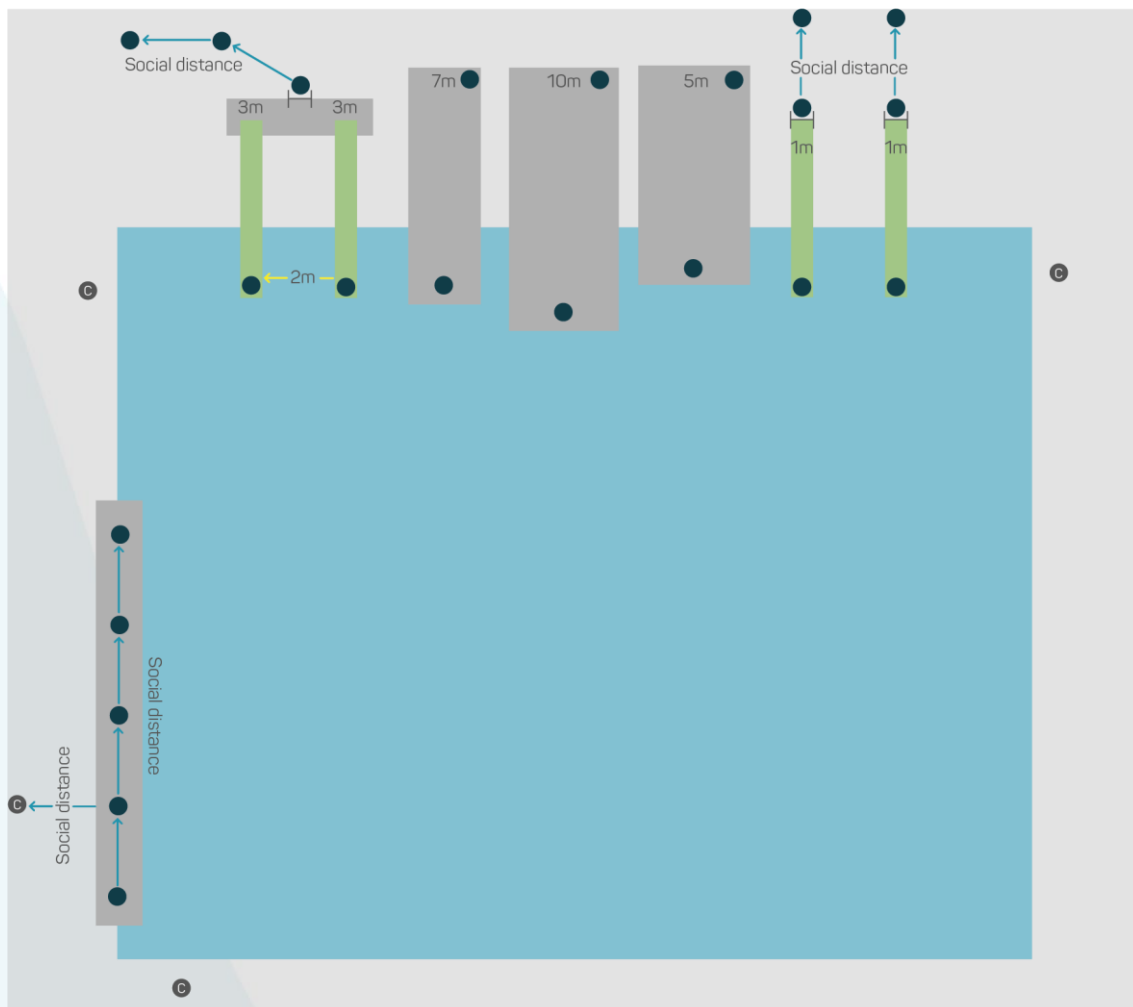
- **Under 18-year-olds:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 12 April. Social distancing measures should still be applied.
- **Adults:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 17 May. Social distancing measures should still be applied. 1:1 personal training can resume indoors not before 12 April.

## Coaches positioning

- Coaches should maintain social distancing from athletes, lifeguards and other coaches in designated areas, marking out coaching areas for each board should be considered.

## Number of coaches required

- This will be dependent upon the number of people in the pool and also the number of lifeguards present at the pool.



# Updates

Version 14 to 15.

## Page 23:

Updated:

As long as the land training session is formally organised by a qualified instructor, club, NGB, company or charity, then land training can **continue outdoors in unlimited numbers**, provided that participants are socially distanced and do not mix. ~~We will confirm the detail of land training indoors following further updates we expect to receive after 5 April 2021.~~

**Organised club land training sessions can take place indoors for under 18s, not before the 12 April, in groups of up to 15 participants. Multiple groups of 15 plus staff can participate at the same time but groups should not mix and there should be adequate space, social distancing and ventilation at all times.**

## Page 27:

Updated:

- Organised indoor club activity for under 18 year olds and athletes with disabilities can resume following the reopening of facilities **in groups of up to 15 participants. Multiple groups of 15 plus staff can participate at the same time but groups should not mix and there should be adequate space, social distancing and ventilation at all times. Details surrounding numbers and additional restrictions will be shared following further detail received from DCMS. Outdoor activity can resume from 29 March for all ages in unrestricted numbers.**

## Page 29:

Updated

The lane swimming diagram below gives **an example 25m pool layout** of how this could be implemented for competitive swimming training using single-width lanes.

## Page 31:

The above diagrams are examples of how you could run the session. **These diagrams are not drawn to scale.**

## Version 13 to 14.

### Page 2:

Updated from:

As different parts of the country move into different Covid tiers, with differing levels of restrictions, it will be important for clubs to check the situation for their specific area and follow the relevant government guidance.

To:

As the country emerges from the national lockdown it will be important for clubs to understand the restrictions that will be in place for each stage of the re-emergence.

We are publishing this guidance with the current information that has been shared to National Governing Bodies. **For some areas of this guidance there will be further updates as the government releases further guidance in due course.**

### Page 2:

Updated:

Under 18s and those with disabilities can undertake any club activity without restrictions when indoor pools are allowed to reopen (not before 12 April). This also covers people who were aged 17 on 31 August 2020 but who turn 18 this academic year.

### Page 2:

Updated:

Outdoor swimming pools will be able to open from 29 March for club activity with no restriction on the age of participants. Club activity indoors and outdoors must adhere to Swim England and Government guidance.

### Page 2:

Updated:

Parents attending a club session in a safeguarding/supervisory role are permitted. Supporters, parents, and other spectators must adhere to legal gathering limits whilst attending events when they are permitted to attend again.

### Page 2:

Removed:

Under the tier 4 restrictions indoor gyms and sports facilities will close therefore no club activity can take place indoors.

## Page 2/3:

Updated from:

Outdoor swimming pools can remain open for individual exercise, and for people to use with others within their household, support bubble, or with one person from another household. Organised outdoor sport for under 18s and disabled people will be allowed.

To:

Outdoor swimming pools will be able to open from 29 March for club activity. There will be no restrictions placed on clubs with the exception of adhering to the government social distancing guidelines.

Removed:

Under current government guidance, no organised club sessions are allowed in tier 3 areas in any discipline (for over 18s).

In tier 1 areas: organised indoor team sport can only take place in groups of up to 6 people (or larger groups if all from the same household or support bubble), for instance 3 v 3 water polo would be allowed. Other organised indoor sport, including sport coaching, can continue to take place with larger numbers present, provided that participants are in separate groups of up to 6 people which do not mix with other groups.

In tier 2 areas: organised indoor sport (including team and individual sport, personal training and exercise classes), can only take place where there is no mixing between households.

There are no restrictions in any tier for disabled people. This means that if clubs have a disability section or Para-swimmers they can continue to train following the Covid-19 guidelines.

## Page 3:

Updated:

- It is strongly suggested that each club should have a dedicated officer **in the Covid-19 Lead role**, making sure that from the club's perspective they are up to date with central or local government recommendations. This person will also have a key responsibility to liaise with the pool operator and be aware of the rules and guidance set by the facility (for all facilities used by the club). More information can be found in the [Covid-19 Role Description](#).

## Page 3:

Added:

- All volunteers undertaking the club Covid-19 Lead and Liaison roles must be a Swim England member. The role does not require the individual to undertake a DBS check or attend safeguarding training.

Removed:

- Clubs should consider double width lanes when setting up for lane swimming.

## Page 13:

Wording update:

- Can the club be moving ahead with [Stronger Affiliation accreditation](#) or [SwimMark accreditation](#).

## Page 16:

Updated:

This guide aims to support the club in formulating a return to pool timetable. This timetable may need to be revised as government guidance changes. The timetable is based on activity for athletes **who are free from Covid-19** and applies to the social distancing measures in place within re-opening of facilities. This guide should be followed in line with the support three document for social distancing in general.

## Page 19:

Updated from:

- 48 hours notice is required before anyone on the furlough scheme can return to any form of work; admin, land delivery, pool activity etc.

To:

- Any conditions relating the furlough scheme relating to bringing workforce back must be observed.

## Page 19:

Updated:

- Do any of the club's coaches, either paid or unpaid, fall into the **'at risk'** category? You can visit the [NHS website](#) for support with this area.

## Page 21:

Wording updated from

## Latest Government Guidance – 4 Tiers

On 19 December 2020, the Government introduced a four tiered system of local COVID Alert Levels in England. Every part of England is now in one of three Covid-19 alert levels: tier 1 (medium), tier 2 (high), tier 3 (very high) and tier 4 (stay at home). Here is guidance on what this means for aquatic clubs:

### Tier 1 (medium)



The national restrictions continue to apply. Therefore all aquatic clubs operating in a medium (tier 1) Local Covid Alert Area remain unaffected by the latest Government announcement and should continue to operate as previously, following the guidance set out in this document and ensuring social distancing is maintained.

Team sports including water polo and artistic swimming should continue adhering to the 'rule of six', which means playing or performing in a group of no more than six people.

There are some important exemptions to this including under-18s and disabled people, who can continue to take part in aquatic sports in any number. If you were under 18 on the 31 August 2020 you are classed as being under 18 for the remainder of the academic year 2020-21 (even if you turn 18 during this time period) and as such are included in the exemptions.

## **Tier 2 (high)**

The same exemptions as tier 1 apply.

Club activity for Swimming and Diving members aged 18 years and over can continue as long as individuals from different households don't socially interact pre, during or post training.

For team sports including water polo and artistic swimming, participants. Over 18-years-old can do individual, socially distanced activities that don't involve interaction between participants or the use of shared equipment.

## **Tier 3 (very high)**

No indoor Club training can take place for members aged 18 years and over.

## **Tier 4 (Stay at home)**

Indoor gyms and sports facilities are closed. Outdoor swimming pools remain open for people to use with members of their own household, support bubble, or with one person from another household. Organised outdoor sport for under 18s and disabled people will be allowed.

To:

## **Latest Government Guidance**

### **From 29 March**

Outdoor swimming pools and venues will be allowed to open. Club activity can resume without restrictions on age. Clubs must still comply with social distancing guidelines.

### **Not before 12 April**

Club activity for swimming, diving, water polo and artistic swimming can resume indoors for under 18 year olds and athletes with disabilities. Those who were under 18 on 31 August 2020 but have turned 18 in the academic year 2020-21 are classed as under 18 and as such are included in exemptions.

For all aquatic sports it is important for participants to adhere to social distancing when not undertaking activity in the water.

## Not before 17 May

Club activity for all ages can resume. Social distancing guidelines must be followed.

### Page 21:

Updated:

It is particularly important that the “risk assessment – social distancing” section of the **Swim England Guidance for Operators** is taken into account **by all clubs as** this covers our guidance on how close participants can come to each other during training sessions. **Water Polo and Artistic Swimming clubs should also refer to the return to competitive training and competition guidance for those sports.** Clubs should adopt these principles and apply them to their own unique circumstances in order to plan safe and effective sessions.

### Page 23:

Updated:

#### Additional Level X **Racing** considerations

All of the above pool planning areas need to be considered if choosing to run a Level X **Racing** opportunity.

These will also include:

3. The inclusion of qualified Technical Officials as per the Level X **Racing** conditions requirements.
- ~~4. **Backstroke ledges should not be used.**~~
5. The Club Covid-19 lead will ensure the relevant risk assessment is carried out prior to any activity starting.

### Page 23:

Updated:

As long as the land training session is formally organised by a qualified instructor, club, NGB, company or charity, then land training can continue (~~indoors or~~ outdoors **only**) in larger numbers than the rule of 6, ~~based on the capacity of the venue~~, provided that participants are socially distanced and do not mix. **This is the case for all coronavirus alert levels. We will confirm the detail of land training indoors following further updates we expect to receive after 22 March 2021.**

### Page 23:

Updated:

As long as the land training session is formally organised by a qualified instructor, club, NGB, company or charity, then land training can continue (outdoors only) ~~in larger numbers than the rule of 6~~, provided that participants are socially distanced and do not

mix. We will confirm the detail of land training indoors following further updates we expect to receive after **5 April 2021**.

## Page 24:

Updated:

The **Water Polo guidance** and **Artistic Swimming guidance** have been approved by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). ~~The Artistic Swimming guidance has been submitted and we await confirmation from DCMS.~~

Before considering any form of **racing competition** Swim England strongly recommends a consistent and progressive period of training ~~no less than six but more appropriately eight weeks~~ before moving onto competitive ~~race pace~~ activities. A swimmer's **perceived** ability and fitness to **compete** should be determined and directed by the Coach. **Please ensure you consider the individual discipline Return to Competition guidance documents for additional information and support.**

Intra-club **competition** in a daily training environment is permissible through our Level X **Racing** programme. ~~This has been designed specifically for club swimmers to record times during their regular training session. This is not a gala but a training activity with a racing skill focus.~~

~~Level X Racing must be swum under Swim England Laws and Regulations and the Technical Rules of Swimming and compliant with this current Return to Training Club Guidance.~~

Other **competition** opportunities including licensed meets and other club galas are not permissible at this current time.

**Competition guidance for both Swimming and Diving is currently being developed and will be available soon.**

## Page 25:

Updated:

- Clubs should ask participants/workforce that have had Covid-19 during lockdown to ensure they only resume training when they are completely recovered and they follow **relevant advice** (link) and any medical instruction.

## Page 25:

- Clubs should ensure that athletes are 'fit' for training, and have the pre-requisite level of fitness for the activities that are planned. ~~To help with this, clubs can use the Health Survey.~~ If in any doubt, then the volume and intensity should initially be low to enable participants to gradually build up fitness whilst minimising injury risk.

## Page 27:

Updated from:

- It is advised that until further lockdown restrictions are lifted, clubs continue to use online/virtual sessions for land based training or outdoor training in small groups to minimise transmission risk links below:

To:

- Organised indoor club activity for under 18 year olds and athletes with disabilities can resume following the reopening of facilities. Details surrounding numbers and additional restrictions will be shared following further detail received from DCMS. Outdoor activity can resume from 29 March.

## Page 29:

Removed:

- Clubs should plan their sessions taking into account the factors outlined above. **For example:**
  - ~~If a club is working with skilled swimmers, in a 25 metre by 12.5 metre pool using a steady pace then 36 swimmers in the pool may be suitable (see diagram below).~~
  - ~~If however, the club is working with larger athletes doing different strokes at a varied pace (more difficult to implement a steady flow) then the number of swimmers would need to be smaller to allow for appropriate distancing to be maintained.~~

## Page 30:

Diagram update.

## Page 30:

Diagram updated.

## Page 31:

Diagram updated.

## Page 31:

Diagram update.

## Page 33:

Updated

Swimmers who are **at higher risk (clinically extremely vulnerable)** should follow the medical guidance issued to them. ~~People in this category should have received a letter from the NHS informing them that they are at high risk. If they have not we suggest they contact their GP or hospital/local care team.~~ It is very important they follow the general advice on social distancing.

**Information and advice for anyone at a higher risk during this time is accessible on the NHS website.**

**Page 33/34:**

Removed:

## People deemed at high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable)

**(Important - the list below may not include everyone who's at higher risk from coronavirus and may change as we learn more about the virus).**

People at high risk from Covid-19 include people who:

- have a problem with your spleen or your spleen has been removed
- are an adult with Down's Syndrome
- are an adult who is having dialysis or has severe (stage 5) long term kidney disease
- have been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgment and an assessment of needs
- have had an organ transplant
- are having chemotherapy or antibody treatment for cancer, including immunotherapy
- are having an intense course of radiotherapy (radical radiotherapy) for lung cancer
- are having targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system (such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors)
- have blood or bone marrow cancer (such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma)
- have had a bone marrow or stem cell transplant in the past 6 months, or are still taking immunosuppressant medicine
- have been told by a doctor they have a severe lung condition (such as cystic fibrosis, severe asthma or severe COPD)
- have a condition that means they have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID or sickle cell)
- are taking medicine that makes them much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppressant medicine)
- have a serious heart condition and those who are pregnant.

## People at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable)

**(Important - the list below may not include everyone who's at higher risk from coronavirus and may change as more is known about the virus).**

Swimmers at moderate risk from coronavirus can go out to work (if they cannot work from home) and for things like getting food or exercising but they should try to stay at home as much as possible.

It is very important they follow the general advice on social distancing. Unlike people at high risk, they will not get a letter from the NHS. The advice for those who are at moderate risk is dependent on the tier that you live in.

The information below is accessible on the [NHS website](#) and highlights some people who are at moderate risk:

- are 70 or older
- are pregnant
- have a lung condition that's not severe (such as asthma, COPD, emphysema or bronchitis)
- have heart disease (such as heart failure)
- have diabetes
- have chronic kidney disease
- have liver disease (such as hepatitis)
- have a condition affecting the brain or nerves (such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis or cerebral palsy)
- have a condition that means they have a high risk of getting infections
- are taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids)
- are severely obese (a BMI of 40 or above).

## Page 34:

Updated:

- We advise clubs to review all medical information provided by their members, update risk assessments and to identify members who are categorised as people **at higher risk** by the NHS.

## Page 35:

Text removed:

The following information is correct for tier 1 areas. For clubs in tier 2-4 areas, please consider this in line with the 'Government's 3 tiered system' below.

- As it is a team sport, Water polo activity for adults (over 18s) is now limited to groups of six. Multiple groups of six may train at one time in a venue however groups must not mix or share equipment and must maintain distance from each other at all times.

- All supervised activity for participants under 18 can continue to take place in larger numbers, providing appropriate risk assessments are undertaken and Swim England and Government guidance is being followed.
- The coach can be in addition to the playing group of six (18 and over), however the coach must ensure that appropriate social distancing is adhered to at all times.
- A group can have a mix of under 18 year-olds and over 18-year-olds within it but the group must be limited to six players only.
- All forms of training and competition for over 18s must only take place in groups of six, unless everyone is from the same household or support bubble.

## Government's 3 tiered system

On 19 December 2020, the Government introduced a four tiered system of local Covid-19 Alert Levels in England. This section explains how Water Polo clubs have been impacted:

**Tier 1 (medium)** – The national restrictions apply, therefore clubs should continue adhering to the 'rule of six' and social distancing guidance outlined in this document.

The only exemptions to this include Under-18s and disabled people who can play in any number. If you were under 18 on the 31 August 2020 you are classed as being under 18 for the remainder of the academic year 2020-21 (even if you turn 18 during this time period) and as such are included in the exemptions.

**Tier 2 (high)** – Any activities which involve interaction between participants or contact with shared equipment such as passing a ball to each other should not go ahead.

Activities that can be done individually with social distancing measures maintained and no interaction between participants can continue. Examples include shooting into an empty goal or individual drills with the ball. It's recommended your club completes a risk assessment to help minimise the risk of transmission if undertaking such activities.

The same exemptions as tier 1 apply.

**Tier 3 (very high)** – No club activity can take place for members aged 18 years and over.

The same exemptions as tier 1 apply.

**Tier 4 (Stay at home)** – Indoor gyms and sports facilities will close. No club activity can take place indoors.

Outdoor swimming pools remain open for people to use with members of their own household, support bubble, or with one person from another household. Organised outdoor sport for under 18s and disabled people will be allowed.

The rest of this section must be read taking into account the information on the Government's 4-tiered system above. Clubs must ensure they only undertake training activities that are allowed given the tier that applies to their locality and the participants taking part within the session.

## What practices can reasonably be delivered?



If social distancing is maintained at all times and equipment not shared, these exercises could be performed by all under 18's and those who were under 18 on 31 August 2020 in all tiers and 18 and over's in tier 1 only.

- Individuals having own space in pool, practicing movements, jumps, treading water, sculling.
- Players have a ball each, when focusing on ball handling skills.
- Throwing ball against a rebound wall or net. Ball retrieved by thrower observing social distancing.
- Centre forward shots unopposed, maintain social distance, various shots at wall/poolside.
- Shooting at goals with targets in upright corners or netting with holes to shoot through if available, player retrieves own ball.
- One player at a time shooting at goal with goalkeeper. All players maintaining social distancing whilst waiting to shoot. Please note, the goalkeeper would need to be removed in over 18 tier 2 and 3 areas.
- Participants could do widths to spread athletes out.
- Use alternative start ends if doing work that requires longer rests.
- Training should focus on technical drills, which can be performed on the spot and athletes should adhere to social distancing guidelines.
- Cool down can be done as flex drills using bands and further flexibility can be performed at home.

## Next progressions for under 18s

None of these exercises are suitable for over 18s in tier 2 or 3 areas.

- Individuals having own space in pool, practicing movements, jumps, ball skills treading water and sculling.
- Passing ball in threes, in triangles, clockwise and anti-clockwise, two balls / triangle pressure passing, hand to hand, hand to water, water to hand, hold, slow, medium, fast passing, left hand and right hand alternating passing.
- Shooting at goal from 5 metre collecting own ball after shot four. Centre forward shooting on 3 metre at goal.
- One player at a time shooting at goal with goalkeeper. All players maintaining social distancing whilst waiting to shoot.
- Set plays in front of goal unopposed, 3v3, 4v2, 6v6 (adhering to social distancing and government guidelines on maximum numbers at all times).
- Set plays in front of goal opposed - zonal defences only maintaining social distances.
- Scrimmages and contact drills are allowed but a phased return based on the appropriate needs of the player is strongly recommended.

Updated to:



For water polo the following guidance should be followed:

### **From 29 March**

Outdoor swimming pools and venues will be allowed to open. Club activity can resume outdoors without restrictions on age. Clubs must still comply Swim England and with social distancing guidelines.

### **Not before 12 April**

Club activity for water polo can resume indoors for under 18 year olds only. Those who were under 18 on 31 August 2020 but have turned 18 in the academic year 2020-21 are classed as under 18 and as such are included in exemptions.

Appropriate risk assessments should be undertaken and Swim England and Government guidelines must be followed.

### **Not before 17 May**

Club activity for all ages can resume. Social distancing guidelines must be followed.

## **Page 37:**

Updated from:

- **Under 18-year-olds:** On 23 November 2020, the Government introduced a three tiered system of local Covid-19 Alert Levels in England. They confirmed under-18s were exempt from any number restrictions however social distancing measures should still be applied. On 19 December a new Tier 4 was introduced. Indoor facilities will close and there is no exemption for under 18s club activity. For more information, see [Water Polo Return to Team Sport guidance](#).
- **Adults:** In tier 1 only the maximum number of adults in a group is 6. Multiple groups of 6 can participate at the same time, however mixing of these groups is not allowed. The club will need to maintain adequate separation between the groups to respect social-distancing guidance. In tier 2 areas players can only perform individual drills that are distanced and involve no interaction. In tier 3 and 4 areas no indoor club activity can take place for adults.

To:

- **Under 18-year-olds:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 12 April. Social distancing measures should still be applied. For more information, see [Water Polo Return to Team Sport guidance](#).
- **Adults:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 17 May. Social distancing measures should still be applied.

## **Page 39:**

Updated from:

It is important that clubs read this section in conjunction with the section return to training – all disciplines.

To:

This guidance focuses on training activity for artistic swimming. Guidance has also been approved for competitive training and competitions. This can be found here with the [Swim England Return to Pool guidance](#).

It is important that clubs read this section in conjunction with the section return to training – all disciplines.

## Page 39:

Text removed:

The following information is correct for tier 1 areas. For clubs in tier 2-4 areas, please consider this in line with the 'Government's 3 tiered system' below.

- As it is a team sport, Artistic Swimming activity for adults (over 18s) is now limited to groups of six. Multiple groups of six may train at one time in a venue however groups must not mix or share equipment and must maintain distance from each other at all times.
- All supervised activity for participants under 18 can continue to take place in larger numbers, providing appropriate risk assessments are undertaken and Swim England and Government guidance is being followed.
- The coach can be in addition to the group of six (18 and over), however the coach must ensure that appropriate social distancing is adhered to at all times.
- A group can have a mix of under 18 year-olds and over 18 year-olds within it but the group must be limited to six participants only.
- Training for over 18s must only take place in groups of six, unless everyone is from the same household or support bubble.

## Government's 3 tiered system

On 19 December 2020, the Government introduced a four tiered system of local Covid-19 Alert Levels in England. This section explains how Artistic Swimming clubs have been impacted:

**Tier 1 (medium)** – The national restrictions apply. Participants over 18 must adhere to the 'rule of six' referred to in this section but can undertake all of the activities that are outlined.

Under-18s, disabled people and those who were under 18 on 31 August 2020, can swim in any number and undertake a greater range of activities.

**Tier 2 (high)** – Over 18s can only undertake activity that does not require them to interact with others and/or share equipment.

This means that over 18s can only undertake activity set out in this section if it can be performed individually whilst maintaining distancing. For example figures and individual exercises are possible but routines cannot be performed.

It's recommended your club completes a risk assessment to help minimise the risk of transmission if undertaking such activities.

The same exemptions as tier 1 apply.

**Tier 3 (very high)** – No club activity can take place for members aged 18 years and over.

The same exemptions as tier 1 apply.

**Tier 4 (Stay at home)** – Indoor gyms and sports facilities will close. No club activity can take place indoors.

Outdoor swimming pools remain open for people to use with members of their own household, support bubble, or with one person from another household. Organised outdoor sport for under 18s and disabled people will be allowed.

## What practices can reasonably be delivered?

- Drills, skills and underwater work can still be practised.  
NB: coaches should be careful to build-up underwater work gradually taking account that participants have not trained in water for a considerable time.
- Alternatively you could do widths to spread athletes out.
- Use alternative start ends if doing work that requires longer rests.
- Training should focus on technical drills, figures and elements which can be performed on the spot and with athletes following social distancing guidance.
- Solo training can be continued, other athletes in pool need to be aware of travel and stick to low numbers and performing drills and figures.
- In all tiers teams made up of under 18's can be performed in groups of any number with social distancing in place. In tier 1 only, team's made up of over 18's must not be in groups larger than six, must stay in these groups and social distancing must be in place at all times. Further restrictions apply for tier 2 and 3.
- Lifts and any close contact is not permitted.
- Cool down can be done as flex drills using bands and further flexibility can be performed at home.

## What practices cannot be delivered during these times?

- Performing lifts or any highlights.
- Connected movements between two or more athletes.
- Close patterns in routines.

Updated to:

For artistic swimming training the following guidance should be followed:

### **From 29 March**

Outdoor swimming pools and venues will be allowed to open. Club activity can resume outdoors without restrictions on age. Clubs must still comply Swim England and with social distancing guidelines.

### **Not before 12 April**

Club activity for artistic swimming can resume indoors for under 18 year olds and people with disabilities only. Those who were under 18 on 31 August 2020 but have turned 18 in the academic year 2020-21 are classed as under 18 and as such are included in exemptions.

### **Not before 17 May**

Club activity for all ages can resume. Social distancing guidelines must be followed.

## **Page 41:**

Updated from:

- **Under 18-year-olds:** On 23 November 2020, the Government introduced a three tiered system of local Covid-19 Alert Levels in England. They confirmed under-18s were exempt from any number restrictions however social distancing measures should still be applied. On 19 December a new tier 4 was introduced. Indoor facilities will close and there is no exemption for under 18s club activity.
- **Adults:** In tier 1 only maximum number of adults in a group is 6. Multiple groups of 6 can participate at the same time, however mixing of these groups is not allowed. The club will need to maintain adequate separation between the groups to respect social-distancing guidance. In tier 2 areas participants can only perform individual drills that are distanced and involve no interaction. In tier 3 and 4 areas no indoor club activity can take place for adults.

To:

- **Under 18-year-olds:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 12 April. Social distancing measures should still be applied.
- **Adults:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 17 May. Social distancing measures should still be applied.

## **Page 44:**

Updated from:

- **Under 18-year-olds:** On 23 November 2020, the Government introduced a three tiered system of local Covid-19 Alert Levels in England. They confirmed under-18s were exempt from any number restrictions however social distancing measures should still be applied. On 19 December a new tier 4 was introduced. Indoor facilities will close and there is no exemption for under 18s club activity.
- **Adults:** In tier 1 only the maximum number of adults in a group is five plus a coach. The club can have multiple groups of five training at one time led by the same or different coaches. The club will need to maintain adequate separation between the

groups to respect social-distancing guidance. In tier 2 areas club activity can continue, as long as individuals from different households don't mix pre, during or post training. In tier 3 areas no organised club activity can take. 1:1 personal training can take place. In tier 4 areas no indoor club activity can take place.

To:

- **Under 18-year-olds:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 12 April. Social distancing measures should still be applied.
- **Adults:** Club activity can resume outdoors from 29 March and indoors not before the 17 May. Social distancing measures should still be applied. 1:1 personal training can resume indoors not before 12 April.

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