

RETURN TO FENCING - ROADMAP GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS AND MEMBERS - FENCING IN ENGLAND **STEP 3**

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document lays out the measures that should be taken by fencers, clubs, officials, volunteers, coaches, and spectators before, during and after all recreational fencing activity as well as specific advice relating to clubs, coaches, lessons and sparring.

It applies to fencing activity from 17th May 2021 in England delivered by affiliated clubs and registered coaches to members of British Fencing. As such, these activities are classified as ‘Organised Sport’ and is covered by the government guidance published here:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): grassroots sports guidance for the public and sport providers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-the-public-and-sport-providers)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): grassroots sports guidance for safe provision including team sport, contact combat sport and organised sport events - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-safe-provision-including-team-sport-contact-combat-sport-and-organised-sport-events)

It is important to note that Fencing does not fall under the ‘Team Sport Framework’ or the ‘Contact Combat Sport Framework’.

Any resumption of and ongoing participation in fencing activity in England is at all times governed by

1. Government Legislation & [Guidelines](#) (this includes Public Health England)
2. The Government’s Roadmap for easing of Lockdown Restrictions as set out [here](#).
3. Venue Specific Rules (includes use of changing rooms, movement/volume of people, hygiene protocols)
4. British Fencing Guidelines including Fencing Specific Adaptations to meet measures such as social distancing.

This document refers to current UK Government guidance for England available as of 12th May 2021. It is subject to change in response to the current COVID-19 Alert Level, community prevalence of COVID-19 and/or to reflect additional or updated UK Government guidance.

Note: This document has been re-structured to align with the Principles set-out within the Government guidance. Text will only be marked in yellow if it has been updated (rather than moved from one section to another).

2. SUMMARY - INDOOR & OUTDOOR FENCING

The current roadmap for lifting restrictions allows for Organised Sport/Activity to take place in England. An Organised Fencing activity includes activities delivered by a BF affiliated club or

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registered coach, delivered to BF members, under BF policies and procedures (including those set out below).

This document describes the measures that should be put in place where fencing is permitted. Whether or not an activity is permitted, how many households can participate and whether people can travel to these activities is dictated by government guidance. BF have published a guide for the Roadmap Step restrictions in England [here](#) and the latest status for other Home Nations can be found [here](#). Before engaging in or providing any activity you must check to see which restrictions apply.

Where government guidance and Roadmap Step restrictions permit sport:

- All fencing is subject to a full risk assessment being in place.
- Restrictions over group size and numbers of households must be followed according to the Roadmap Step and venue guidelines
- Social distancing must be maintained at all times where possible, when not participating in the activity of fencing.
- ~~Fencers can rotate within the group, but social distancing must be maintained within this group where at all possible. You cannot move groups within a session.~~
- ~~More than one group may operate at one time, subject to venue guidelines and protocols being in place to prevent mixing of groups.~~
- Fencing activities (including 1:1 lessons, pairs work and sparring) where it may not be possible at all times to stay 2m apart are subject to adaptations and additional measures to reduce risk. This document lays out these adaptations (see below).
- There are strict equipment rules in place for use of fencing equipment (see below and [here](#)).
- Venue specific restrictions will be in place and you will be responsible for ensuring you adhere to these.

2.1 FENCING ACTIVITIES IN EDUCATION SETTINGS

- Clubs or coaches delivering fencing activities into schools or education settings (e.g. as part of curriculum or after school child-care) must comply with the relevant [Department of Education guidance](#).
- Clubs or coaches delivering out-of-school activities for children should also consult the [DfE guidance on Protective measures for out-of-school settings](#), which sets out the further practical steps providers of community activities, holiday clubs, after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school provision for children should follow to minimise the risk of transmission for children attending their settings.

2.2 SUMMARY ROADMAP STEP ACTIVITY GUIDE

U18 & Es = U18s and other Exemptions - these exemptions currently include:

- Supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s including those who were under 18 on 31 August 2020.
- Sport as part of the curriculum in education - does not cover extra-curricular sport (e.g. playing for a college team), is not available to community clubs/volunteers and any use of any education exemption by athletes or coaches should be agreed with and used under the remit of the appropriate educational institution.
- Activities for disabled people
- Elite sport that follows the [government's elite sport guidance](#). BF is currently running an Elite Training Activity/Environment to support athletes training for Tokyo Olympic Games. Outside of this UK Sport funded activity/environment, no elite exemptions exist.

'Adapted' – The BF guidelines set out the current adaptations and measures that should be in place for any of these activities. These include adaptations to lengths of bouts, types of moves permitted, equipment, hygiene measures and so on.

'Supervision' - In all steps, parent/guardian supervision for safeguarding purposes is permitted if necessary (to a maximum of one per fencer), subject to restrictions on space, social distancing and mixing. All affiliated clubs delivering community activities to children must (unless parents/guardians are present) have a welfare officer or equivalent present (this should not be the coach).

Dates:

- Step 1. Outdoor (29th March)
- Step 2. Outdoor (no earlier than 12th April)
- Step 2. Indoor (no earlier than 12th April)
- Step 3. Indoor (no earlier than 17th May)
- Step 4. Indoor (no earlier than 21st June)

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Activity Type	Step 1. Outdoor	Step 2. Outdoor	Step 2. Indoor	Step 3. Indoor	Step 4. Indoor
Adapted Footwork, individual exercises classes	Yes, Socially distanced, no size limit	As per Step 1.	Individual indoor activity permitted. U18 & Es -> socially distanced, groups of 15 18 & over -> Group activity/classes not permitted indoors unless all participants are from the same household or support bubble.	Individual indoor activity permitted. No group size limit – capacity caps exist for indoor venue spaces (every person in the space counts irrespective of role) No age restrictions	TBC
Adapted sparring, pairs work, group coaching	Yes – Organised Sport Providers, groups of up to 15	As per Step 1.	U18 & Es -> groups of 15 18 and over -> household groups/support bubbles only	No group size limit – capacity caps exist for indoor venue spaces (every person in the space counts irrespective of role) No age restrictions – U18s and adults can fence each other	TBC
1:1 Adapted Lessons with registered coach	Yes. In outdoor sport facilities, and in private gardens, where it is formally organised and follows COVID-secure guidance.	As per Step 1.	U18 & Es -> Yes, coaches can give 1:1 lessons within 1 group (max 15) per session. 18 and over -> Yes, 1:1, no mixing between people from different households or support bubbles Not in private homes.	Yes, coaches can give lessons to anyone (no requirement to restrict to a group/bubble)	TBC
Travel to Fencing (Participants)	Yes, should be minimised and no car sharing	As per Step 1.	As per Step 1.	Yes, car sharing permitted following the government guidance for safer travel.	

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Activity Type	Step 1. Outdoor	Step 2. Outdoor	Step 2. Indoor	Step 3. Indoor	Step 4. Indoor
	People should not stay away from home overnight for sport and physical activity.			Overnight stays for sport and physical activity is permitted in line with social contact rules (i.e. 'rule of six'/two households).	
Travel to Fencing (Coaches)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GB League Sessions	Yes	Yes	Yes (U18s)	Yes	Yes
Competitions	No	BF licensed competition only, pre-agreed formats*	U18s BF licensed competition only, pre-agreed formats*	BF licensed competition only, in line with published BF guidance for event organisers.	TBC
Spectating	No	Spectators allowed outside on 'public land' subject to 2m distancing	No	Yes - the total number of all participants, coaches, officials and spectators must be aligned with the maximum occupancy permitted by the venue. Social distancing must be maintained between household groups.	TBC
Coach Education	N/A	NGB Coaching Courses	NGB Coaching Courses	Yes	Yes (groups of TBC)
Other adaptations	Sparring Limits No corps a corps, no handshakes	As per Step 1.	Sparring Limits No corps a corps, no handshakes	Sparring Limits No corps a corps, no handshakes	

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Activity Type	Step 1. Outdoor	Step 2. Outdoor	Step 2. Indoor	Step 3. Indoor	Step 4. Indoor
	<p>Fleching/Close quarter moves subject to risk assessment</p> <p>Face coverings/mask liners not required whilst fencing</p>		<p>Fleching/Close quarter moves subject to risk assessment</p> <p>Face coverings not required whilst fencing.</p> <p>In the absence of face coverings, mask liners recommended for 11+ fencing in community setting.</p>	<p>Face coverings not required whilst fencing.</p> <p>Club/Community Fencing:</p> <p>Fleching/Close quarter moves subject to risk assessment</p> <p>In the absence of face coverings, mask liners recommended for 11+ fencing in community setting.</p> <p>Licensed Competitive Events:</p> <p>Fleching/Close quarter moves permitted</p>	

3. OFF-PISTE ACTIVITY

Clubs and coaches should put in place measures to limit transmission risk from off-field activity, including:

- Strictly **limiting the time spent congregating at a venue before and after activity**. Meet-up times should reflect this.
- **Minimising use of changing rooms and shower facilities**. From 29th March, outdoor sport facilities can reopen but changing rooms should not be used unless in an emergency situation or by people with disabilities. Toilet facilities can be accessed. Participants must adhere to gathering limits while indoors and maintain social distancing wherever possible. Participants must avoid or minimise use where possible (e.g. by arriving in kit and showering at home) and to minimise the time they spend in the changing area. Talks/briefings and other gatherings should not take place in changing rooms under any circumstances.
- **Ensuring that participants maintain social distancing throughout warm-ups and when not on the piste**, and limit higher-risk activities like shouting (particularly when facing each other).
- **Ensuring that participants adhere to legal gathering limits**. Social interaction before and after playing any sport should only take place outdoors, in a group of up to 6 people, or as a group of two households including bubbles. Exceptions may be made where safety and safeguarding measures require this, such as supporting participants with disabilities (though minimal time should be spent waiting or in changing rooms). Participants must be reminded to act responsibly and limit transmission risk wherever possible.
- **Avoiding equipment-sharing where possible**.
- **Advising participants to bring their own water bottles and ensure they are labelled or highly distinguishable**. Water bottles or other refreshment containers should not be shared under any circumstances.
- **Advising participants to take their kit home to wash/clean it themselves**, rather than have one person handling a large quantity of soiled materials. Where kit absolutely has to be shared or kept together, each person handling it must wash or sanitise their hands immediately after.

4. PRIOR TO ALL FENCING ACTIVITY

4.1 ALL PARTICIPANTS

All participants – fencers, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators – should:

- Check for symptoms of COVID-19 before travelling to training. In line with current UK Government Guidance, if an individual is symptomatic and/or living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection, you should remain at home and follow UK Government guidance. In addition, any participants who have been asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they are a contact of a known COVID-19 case, must not exercise outside their home or garden and must not exercise with others.
- Follow UK Government guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19 (found [here](#)) if it applies to them.

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- Comply with all public health restrictions and avoid high risk behaviour outside the sports setting to reduce the risk to their fellow participants when you do attend a fencing club or venue.
- Carry out personal hygiene measures before and after fencing activity.
- Bring your own hand sanitiser where possible and maintain strict and frequent hand hygiene measures at all times.
- Follow UK Government guidance on best practice for travel, including minimising use of public transport and limiting car sharing (found [here](#)).
- Turn up in clean equipment and freshly washed clothing - follow BF's guidance in relation to equipment cleaning (found [here](#)).
- Ensure that you are familiar with the instructions issued by the club specifically in relation to hygiene and social distancing.
- Ensure that your use of the any changing rooms and toilets adheres to the latest UK Government guidance and facility guidance. Whilst using these facilities people should avoid mixing between groups or households (depending on the Roadmap Step) and maintain social distancing wherever possible.
- If possible, arrive at club sessions changed and ready to undertake the activity you are participating in.
- Bring your own water bottles and ensure they are labelled or highly distinguishable. Water bottles or other refreshment containers should not be shared under any circumstances.
- Ensure that your contact details are up to date on the BF membership system and the club records. Membership of BF is a requirement – a free 90-day Introduction membership for new members is now available.
- On arrival ensure that your attendance is recorded (this can be through an online mechanism provided by the club).

4.2 ALL CLUBS - CLUB PREPARATION

- Must have a named Club COVID-19 Officer, which must be registered with BF.
- Must have a nominated Session COVID-19 Officer in place for each session. The responsibilities of a COVID-19 Officer can be found [here](#).
- Must have a Club Risk Assessment including COVID-19 mitigation Action Plans in place to ensure their operations are compliant and in line with legislation and guidance from UK Government /PHE /BF relating to COVID-19. Risk mitigation measures must be put in place and regularly monitored. These must include ensuring that operators, organisers and volunteers are aware of modifications to fencing or the activity structure. The club mitigation Action Plan must be distributed to all relevant personnel, including coaches and welfare officers
- Must ensure those in charge of the session take part in specific Club COVID-19 training, as necessary to deliver the Club COVID-19 mitigation plans identified in your Club Risk Assessment.
- Must ask participants to consider if their underlying health may caution against participation.
- Should make all participants aware of expected social distancing and hygiene measures during fencing and whilst on site.
- Should ensure that BF's guidance on equipment usage is followed and protocols are in place to reduce participant's contact with shared equipment – e.g. spools.

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- Should establish specific cleaning and disinfecting protocols for fencing equipment and ensure that all participants are aware of their responsibilities. Clubs are responsible for ensuring that officials have the appropriate equipment and training to follow protocols. (See [here](#).)
- For clubs that hire venues, they must ask for a copy of the venue risk assessment and confirmation from the venue that they are compliant with current UK Government legislation including legislation and guidance related to COVID-19.
- For clubs that operate their own venue, they must ensure that the facility is compliant with current UK Government legislation including legislation and guidance related to COVID-19. A risk assessment should have been completed and risk mitigation measures put in place and monitored.
- All clubs running activities for children should also consult the [DfE guidance on Protective measures for out-of-school settings](#), which sets out the further practical steps providers of community activities, holiday clubs, after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school provision for children should follow to minimise the risk of transmission for children attending their settings.
- (Checklists and surveys can be found [here](#))

4.3 ALL CLUBS & COACHES - NHS TEST & TRACE

- Must implement a pre-booking system which will enable you to keep attendance records for all attendees - participants/coaches/spectators/officials for a minimum of 21 days. This will enable you to manage the number of people attending each session and their allocation into groups, allowing for you to maintain social distancing measures. You cannot allow people to attend without them having pre-booked their attendance. You must be able to record who has fenced/coached/participated in each group within your session and collect all information required by NHS Test and Trace. For the latest information in relation to NHS Test and Trace and what your club needs to do in relation to this, please click [here](#).
- BF has an online booking system (Playwaze) available to affiliated clubs (at no cost) which enables you to manage your session and groups in line with social distancing requirements and information that may be required by NHS Test and Trace.
- Regulations require venue operators (indoor or outdoor) to display an NHS QR code that visitors, customers and staff must scan.

Note – in some outdoor sport facilities in public places it may not be possible or practical to collect information from spectators if they are not connected with the activity in any way. (e.g. members of the public passing by)

4.4 ALL CLUBS - PRE-ATTENDANCE SYMPTOM CHECK

- Should ensure that all participants and attendees (including players, officials, organisers, volunteers and spectators) are aware of COVID-19 symptoms and the need to self-assess before attending every sporting activity.
- Should ensure that any participant or other attendee reporting symptoms does not attend and is directed to follow [NHS and PHE guidance on self-isolation](#).
- Must ask participants to consider if their underlying health may caution against participation.
- Should make all participants aware of the increase in transmission risk associated with participating in group activity (even when social distancing is observed at all times) and should ensure that all participants are clear that they are opting to participate in fencing activity.
- Should ensure that all participants are aware of any increased risk associated with taking part in the session or sporting activity, based on this guidance and your risk assessment.
- Should ensure that all participants are aware that they are choosing to take part in the modified version of the game, including any relevant COVID-19 measures, and should comply with these measures as a condition of participation.
- Should ensure that all participants are strongly advised to comply with public health restrictions and avoid high-risk behaviour outside the sports setting to reduce the risk to their fellow participants when they do attend.
- (Checklists and surveys can be found [here](#))

4.5 ALL CLUBS - TRAVEL

- Organised sports providers must ensure their plans align with travel restrictions and wider [government guidance on safer travel](#).
- You should advise your participants to consider how to minimise associated risk such as using active travel and avoiding public transport as much as possible especially during peak periods. People should minimise travel wherever possible, can travel to exercise and take part in informal and organised sport, where necessary.

5. DURING ALL FENCING ACTIVITY

5.1 GENERAL ADVICE

- All activity must take place in line with the UK Government guidance and venue specific guidelines, specifically those around social distancing **and indoor capacity caps for organised sport**.
- Fencing activity may take place with the specific adaptations (see below) which includes restrictions on certain moves, bout limits and suspension of rules.
- Participants should enter the salle and prepare their personal equipment whilst maintaining social distancing.
- Where at all possible fencers should limit sharing of equipment. If they do, they must practise strict hand hygiene before and after use and the equipment must be cleaned before use by another person.

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- All participants should sanitise their hands prior to the start of the activity and before and after touching any shared equipment (e.g. spoils).
- Spaces should be ventilated as much as is practically possible.

5.2 MANAGING YOUR SESSIONS

- Your sessions must be managed by the designated session Covid-19 Officer. This person may be able to take part in activity (e.g. a coach giving a lesson) depending on numbers but must be able to manage the session. The ability to maintain social distancing and the space available will determine the total number of people in your sessions.
- There will be a maximum number of fencers that can be grouped together (see below); the number will be determined by
 - Where in the Roadmap we are
 - Venue restrictions
 - Ages of the participants
 - Location of the activity (indoor/outdoor)
 - Available space you have in order to maintain social distancing at all times whilst not fencing.
- There will be a maximum number of fencers that can be in a session; from Step 3 the number will be determined by
 - Venue restrictions
 - Size of venue (100sqft/9.29sqm per person)
 - Location of the activity (indoor/outdoor)
 - Available space you have in order to maintain social distancing at all times whilst not fencing.
- You can have more than one group in a hall. This depends on the space available and your ability to maintain social distancing.
- The indoor space must allow for 100sqft/9.29sqm per person and be suitably ventilated. The government has published requirements covering space and ventilation on the [working safely during coronavirus section of the government's website](#).
- You must use your pre-booking system to manage and keep all records in relation to participation and attendance at your session. You must manage the number of people attending each session and **any decision to allocate** into **sub-groups**, allowing for you to maintain social distancing measures **and reduce risk of transmission**. You cannot allow members to fence without them having pre-booked their attendance. You must record who has fenced/coached/participated in within your session and collect all information required by NHS Test and Trace (see section above).
- You must also keep records of all the club volunteers/coaches/welfare officers/parents/**spectators** that attend a session. They count towards the total number of people attending a session and this must not exceed the total number of people permitted in the space, based on Government and Venue guidelines. Procedures must be in place to ensure 2m social distancing is observed where possible at all times.
- If collecting monies from fencers, you should use online or contactless payment wherever possible.

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- For coaches delivering back-to-back sessions, there should be a suitable period of time between the end of the first session and the start of the next session to provide enough time for safe, socially distanced change overs of fencers and any equipment cleaning. **Fencers should not participate in more than one session per day.**
- More advice and tools to help you run and organise sessions can be found [here](#).

Participating in, and coaching fencing in itself carries some degree of risk and whilst being mindful of the guidelines regarding COVID-19, coaches and clubs should not lose sight of the normal safety rules or safeguarding standards relating to fencing and coaching which continue to apply and must be complied with (DBS, safeguarding, First Aid etc.).

5.3 GROUP SIZES

- ~~Fencers cannot change groups within a session. They must stay within their allocated group but are able to change groups at the next session.~~
- ~~Coaches can only give 1:1 adapted lessons within groups and these should be a maximum of 30min. If coaches are giving 1:1 adapted lessons they count towards the group size. Coaches are only permitted to give adapted lessons within one group per session. Clubs must ensure that groups are appropriately supervised if coaches are giving 1:1 lessons. It may not be sensible or practical to deliver sessions to groups as large as 15 (where these are permitted). Decisions on group sizes for your setting should be based on:~~
 - ~~the current government guidance on social distancing~~
 - ~~the ability of the participants to maintain social distancing and practice hand hygiene~~
 - ~~the age of the participants~~
 - ~~your session plan (expected movement, use of space)~~
 - ~~the size or layout of your premises~~
- ~~To reduce the risk of transmission within a setting, club should aim to minimise the number of different people each person comes into contact with. Our recommendation is that groups of 15 are sub-divided for fencing activity, as it is not typically necessary that one person will need to fence 14 other people in one session.~~
- ~~More information and advice can be found [here](#). Please note that Coaches and Welfare Officers and other officials (unless they are participating in the fencing activity or giving lessons) are not included in the group sizes.~~
- ~~You can have more than one group operating separately in a hall, providing you are able to maintain social distancing within the space available and the total number of people (including non-fencers) within the hall does not exceed government and venue guidelines on use of indoor space.~~
- ~~In relation to group sizes Under 18s include those under 18 on 31 August 2020.~~
- ~~From 12th April supervised indoor fencing activity can take place for U18s in groups of up to 15 in [COVID 19 secure venues](#).~~
- **From 17th May, affiliated BF clubs can deliver organised sport in group sizes limited by the venue restrictions and capacity (see above) and the ability to maintain social distancing whilst not fencing. Capacity calculations and venue layout must be included in Club Risk Assessments.**

5.4 ADAPTATIONS SPECIFIC TO FENCING TRAINING

General Points

- Club fencing activity should be for recreational purposes- this includes GB league sessions and training days.
- Community competitions must be licensed with BF – additional guidelines apply, available on request from BF.
- 2m social distancing should be respected where possible (see below for piste layout options). When not fencing, participants should be 2m socially distances at all times, including when taking breaks and before and after bouts.
- Spaced areas must be marked for participants waiting between sparring or lessons and any equipment storage
- Whilst not engaging in activity everyone should wear face coverings. Face coverings are required in most indoor settings. Although this does not include gyms and leisure centres, some facilities may require you to wear them before or after activity, or in some areas of the building where they are legally required (e.g. a shop).
- No physical contact should be made between participants (handshaking, high fives etc). **The handshaking rule is suspended.** Fencers should replace the end of bout handshake with a salute observing 2m social distancing.
- Participants should avoid any shouting/screaming/conversing loudly, particularly during 1:1 activity.
- Footwork/warm-up exercises must respect 2m social distancing at all times and should not be performed face to face indoors.

Adapted Sparring & Lessons

- Where indoor activities include 1:1 lessons and sparring, clubs are recommended to implement a system of temperature checking on arrival.
- Adapted sparring between two individuals within in a club session can take place up to a '30 hit total' = eg 2 x 15 hits OR 6 x 5 hits, up to a maximum of 20mins of fencing time and 30 mins of elapsed time. When it is not possible to count hits (e.g. adapted pairs training), the appropriate fencing/elapsed time must be set by the coach and in no cases exceed 20mins/30mins respectively.
- In BF licensed competitions this is increased to a '40 hit total' allowing two individuals to meet each other (as an example) 2 x 5 hits and 2 x 15 hits – 2 rounds of poules, DE with Repechage. For more information please see the separately published BF Indoor Fencing Competition Protocols.
- After any hit, extra care must be taken to ensure fencers must immediately return to a position where they are 2m or more apart. This may require fencers to be at a certain level of ability. The coach is responsible for risk assessing this ability and in conjunction with the COVID-19 Officer agreeing and noting any further mitigation actions (reduced sparring time) on the risk assessment.
- **Corps a corps and any actions that result in body contact are not permitted.**
- **Fleching and close quarter moves within sparring and lessons is permitted subject to a safety/competency risk assessment** to be performed by the BF registered coach to ensure that there is sufficient surrounding space and competency levels for the move to be executed safely, with no body contact whilst maintaining 2m distancing from any other sparring pairs and immediately returning/passing to 2m distance after performing the move. The coach is

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responsible for risk assessing this and in conjunction with the COVID-19 Officer agreeing and noting any further mitigation actions (e.g. reduced sparring time, no fleching) on the risk assessment. **In BF Licensed Competitions fleching and close quarter moves are permitted.**

- Coaches can deliver a maximum of 30 min lessons to individuals within a club session **but cannot give lessons to fencers in different groups within the session.**

Fencing Equipment

- Personal equipment should not be shared during sessions – this includes all items of fencing clothing, fencing masks and gloves.
- Body-wires and weapons may be used by more than one participant provided they have been disinfected in line with the BF guidelines.
- Spools/Boxes – In cases where it is unavoidable that certain non-personal equipment must be touched by more than 1 individual, each person must fully sanitise their hands prior to and after touching that equipment. The equipment must be disinfected (or quarantined) between sessions by a club official in line with BF protocols.
- The BF specific protocols around equipment cleaning and sharing are available [here](#).

Face Coverings and Fencing Mask Liners

- Face coverings should be worn whilst coaching (excluding lessons, see below) and refereeing. Hand signals should be used where possible in place of verbal signals.
- Face coverings and/or mask liners are not required when fencing outdoors although individual participants may choose to continue using these.
- Individuals can choose to use face coverings under fencing masks for low intensity training. Participants (fencers and coaches) wearing face coverings should monitor their breathing and heart rate and take regular breaks. Where face coverings are used, coaches should adapt lessons and training to keep physical intensity levels low with frequent breaks.
- Indoors – In the absence of face coverings, fencing mask liners are recommended (but not required) for community groups consisting of fencers aged 11 and over when participating in 1:1 lessons and sparring.

5.5 OFFICIALS & COACHES

- Club officials are empowered to ensure that COVID-secure measures are adhered to, and to enforce this through appropriate sanctions.
- Officials, coaches, instructors and club volunteers should all observe the organised sport providers guidance in the same way as participants. Where **capacity caps** apply, people participating in a work or volunteering capacity (such as officials, coaches) are **not** exempt and **therefore included in the number of participants**. They must remain socially distanced from participants where possible.

6. AFTER ALL FENCING ACTIVITY

- All participants should sanitise their hands after the completion of activity.
- Participants should exit whilst maintaining social distancing.
- Where possible, individuals should remove all items of personal equipment and clothing and be responsible for cleaning/washing before the next session (according to the BF guidelines). Where kit absolutely has to be shared or kept together, each person handling it must wash or sanitise their hands immediately after.
- One club representative/volunteer should be responsible for collecting and disinfecting any shared equipment.
- Regular cleaning of equipment should take place, particularly between one group finishing, and the next group starting.
- Clubs should encourage all participants to report any infection of their household to the NHS Test and Trace system following use of the facility to limit the spread of the virus (section 3): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>.

7. ADDITIONAL ADVICE FOR COACHES

- These measures cannot cover every eventuality and coaches must conduct a risk assessment, ensuring appropriate measures are put in place to keep participants and coaches safe.
- Participating in, and coaching fencing in itself carries some degree of risk and whilst being mindful of the guidelines regarding COVID-19, coaches and clubs should not lose sight of the normal safety rules or safeguarding standards relating to fencing and coaching which continue to apply and must be complied with (DBS, safeguarding, First Aid etc.).
- Coaches must be on the BF Coaches Register.
- Coaches should make themselves aware of and abide by all guidelines set out by the UK Government, the venue and BF.
- It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that they coach fencers in a safe environment and follow relevant guidelines.
- Coaches should explain the safety guidelines of what is expected pre, during and post session including what participants are expected to do to maintain compliance with social distancing guidelines and all other health and safety guidelines.
- Coaches participating in indoor group sessions must restrict lessons to a maximum of 30 min ~~within one group~~ and follow guidance previously issued (low intensity, long distance lessons) with additional mitigation strategies (see previous guidance) especially in relation to face coverings/fencing mask liners. Close quarter training where distance is maintained at 1m or less is not permitted. Fleching is permitted based on the competency and mitigation indicators as listed in the specific fencing adaptations listed above and should be appropriately minimised to reduce risk to both fencer and coach.

8. SAFEGUARDING

- All Clubs must have a trained designated Welfare Officer in place (see [here](#)) to ensure safeguarding requirements are met.

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- It is very important to be aware of, and to focus on, mental health and well-being at times of uncertainty. Remember that many of your members may have been through a difficult period and need reassuring on their return to fencing.
- Adults supervising U18 activity in a safeguarding role **are not exempt from the capacity calculations.**
- Due to the restrictions on **capacity**, fencing activity providers must ensure that 'in loco parentis' welfare procedures for U18s are up to date.
- Parents or other adults who are not acting in a supervisory role are considered to be spectators and must follow the restrictions on spectators. **They are not exempt from the capacity calculations.**
- Fencing activity providers should have procedures in place so that all spectators are aware and follow the rules regarding hygiene, social distancing (2m) and interaction outside of household/support bubbles. **Provided spectators do not interact with individuals in an activity group they do not count towards the activity group size.**

9. INJURIES & EMERGENCIES

- Injuries should still be treated, as participant safety is of the utmost importance. Physios and other medical personnel should take care to protect themselves and others through rigorous cleaning and personal hygiene, including increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting equipment and surfaces. Face coverings should be worn by both medics and patients, where this is possible and practical.
- After contact with an injured participant, physios and other medical personnel should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. This advice is applicable to all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact or the minimum social distancing was maintained. They should also avoid touching their mouth, eyes and nose.
- Physios and medical personnel should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with, to support NHS Test and Trace (advice set out above in the section on NHS Test and Trace may be helpful). Records should be kept for 21 days and then destroyed. Those working at a sport event should familiarise themselves with the guidance for first responders, in case of emergency situations.

10. SANCTIONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE

(adapted directly from the government guidance)

Organised sporting activities are permitted despite wider restrictions on informal leisure activities because of the benefits of sport and physical activity for people's physical and mental wellbeing. If people act irresponsibly when participating in sport (including off the piste, and when socialising before and after any activity) they jeopardise public health and undermine the case for safe organised sport to take place.

It is the responsibility of National Governing Bodies such as British Fencing to ensure that clubs are running activities safely and take action to address any issues. BF reserve the right to suspend the membership or affiliation of any clubs, coaches or members who do not adhere to guidance. Clubs

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are also empowered to take action against participants that do not adhere to guidance including suspension from the club.

It is our recommendation that, rather than relying on sanctions (which should be underpinned by documented club disciplinary procedures), clubs educate and inform their members and as part of the session sign-up forms ask participants to agree to the COVID-19 mitigation protocols as set out by the club.

11. INCLUSION

Remember, some fencers may need additional support or adaptations to support their participation. Further guidance is available [here](#).

12. FURTHER SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

These guidelines are accurate at the date of publication but are subject to change in line with government guidance. Keep checking www.britishfencing.com for the latest version and supporting tools and information.

13. DISCLAIMER

Please note that the subject matter covered in this guidance is in no way exhaustive and the material does not stand on its own nor is intended to be relied upon as a substitute for obtaining specific legal advice. Individual circumstances will differ. The information contained in this guidance is given in good faith but any liability of British Fencing or its professional advisors (including their respective members or employees) to you or any third party which may arise out of the reliance by you or any other party of the contents of this guidance is hereby excluded to the fullest extent permitted by law. British Fencing and its professional advisors accept no duty of care or liability for any loss occasioned, whether caused by negligence or otherwise, to any person acting or refraining from actions as a result of any material in this guidance.

14. APPENDIX A - PISTE LAYOUT

Clubs and coaches will need to ensure that the layout of their pistes is done in such a way that social distancing is maintained, except when 2 individuals are fencing each other.

Care must be taken to provide space for those individuals who are not engaged in the activity to remain socially distanced from each other and those doing activity.

During any 1:1 fencing activity (lessons, sparring, 1:1 technical training) there must be a clear space around the area being used to allow social distancing to be maintained. Clubs should also be mindful of standard (pre-covid) safety measures which must also be considered (position of ground leads, boxes, walls etc in relation to fencing activity)

The diagrams below show some sample layouts for club to consider and adapt based on the space available and areas required for movement (eg entry, exit, piste access).

Adaptation of the sample layouts are permitted subject to a risk assessment to be performed by the BF registered coach/club official to ensure that there is sufficient surrounding space and competency levels to maintain 2m distancing between active sparring pairs and other non fencing participants where possible. Options include:

- For free sparring, the clear area (clear of people) between two sparring pistes can be reduced to 1m. Any decision to do so should be noted on the Club Risk Assessment with additional mitigations noted.
- Reducing the length and width of the piste

Participants – including referees, club officials - not actively engaged in fencing (sparring, pairwork, lessons) must maintain 2m social distancing. Queue systems should be carefully managed.

Participants may temporarily enter the designated clear areas during the activity provided it is safe to do so and there is no risk of breaching the 2m social distancing guidelines.

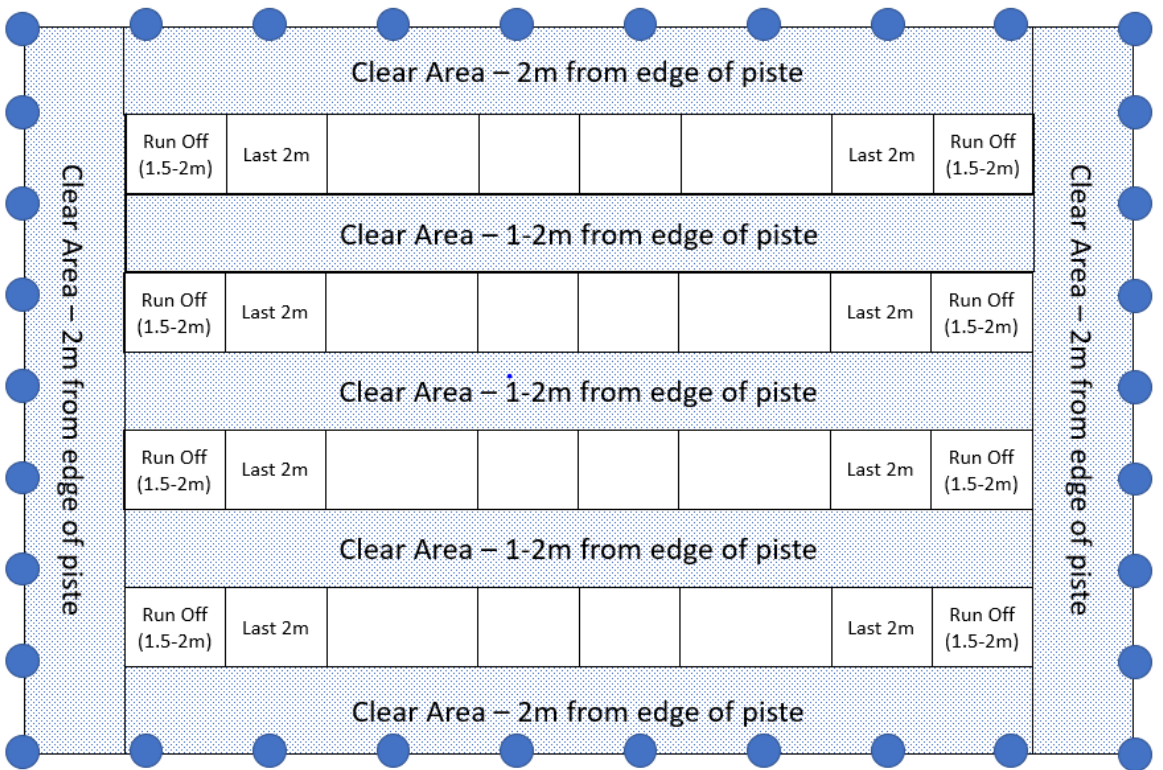
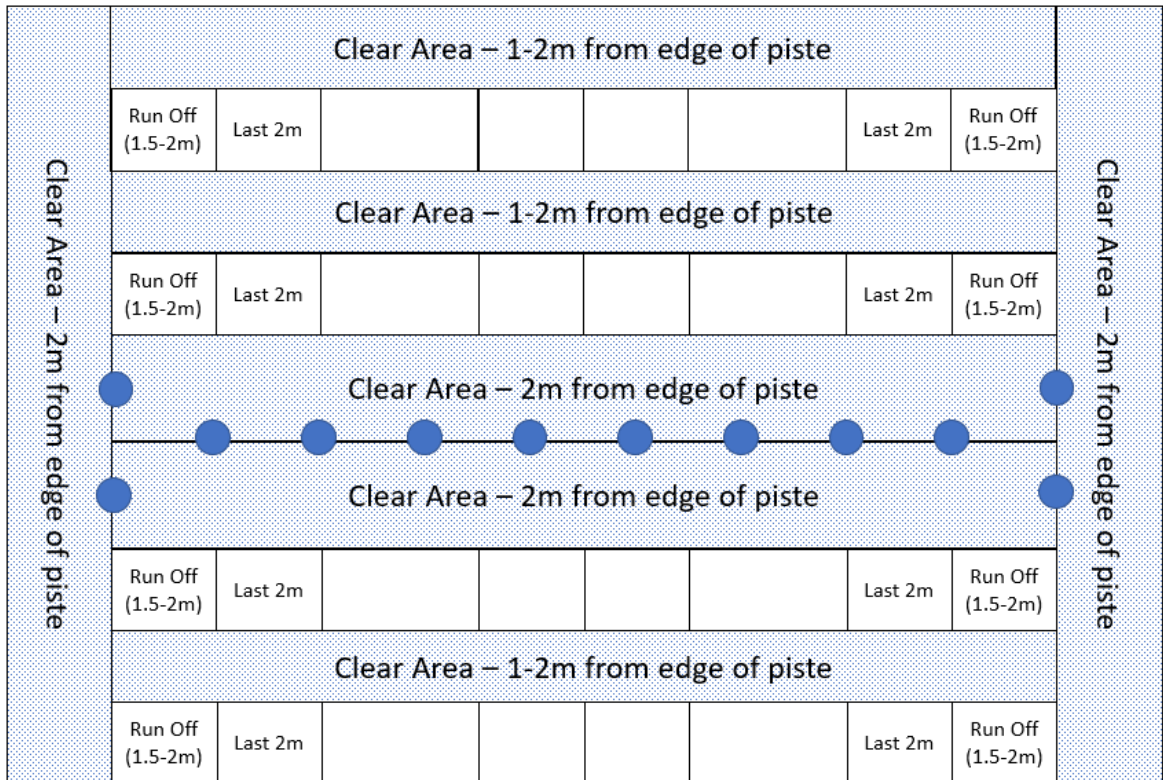
14.1 SAMPLE LAYOUTS

- The length of a standard piste is 14m, with 1.5-2m run-off on either end. The width of the piste is 1.5m.
- These diagrams are not to scale
- Blue dots represent fencers not actively engaged in fencing activity – these should be socially distanced.
- Entry/exit/movement areas not shown – these will need to be defined by the club based on the venue layout.
- For formal/competition piste set-up please refer to [BF's Indoor Competitive Event Protocols](#).

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Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste	Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste								Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste
	Run Off (1.5-2m)	Last 2m					Last 2m	Run Off (1.5-2m)	
	Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste								

Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste	Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste								Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste
	Run Off (1.5-2m)	Last 2m					Last 2m	Run Off (1.5-2m)	
	Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste								
	Run Off (1.5-2m)	Last 2m					Last 2m	Run Off (1.5-2m)	
	Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste								
	Run Off (1.5-2m)	Last 2m					Last 2m	Run Off (1.5-2m)	
Clear Area – 2m from edge of piste									



15. APPENDIX B - ADVICE FOR FENCING CLUBS OPERATING THEIR OWN FACILITIES

- Prior to re-opening, club representatives should ensure that their facility is compliant with current UK Government legislation including legislation and guidance related to COVID-19. A risk assessment should have been completed and risk mitigation measures put in place and monitored.
- On any day of the activity, club representatives and volunteers should ensure that all COVID-19 measures are in place according to the club operating and safety plans, whilst maintaining social distancing – developing your own ‘opening up checklist’ is helpful for this. This should include:
 - Set-up of public health operating procedures and access signage.
 - Set-up of any equipment (e.g. boxes, spools) and floor markings
 - The duty of care which the club already owed remains and therefore other matters such as First Aid must continue to be provided. First Aid equipment (including AEDs where available) and suitable PPE for First Aid must be made available. Advice on First Aid during the COVID pandemic is available from St John Ambulance.
- Clubs should make hand washing facilities and/or hand sanitiser available for all site users.
- Clubs must have entry and exit, and parking arrangements to venues that ensures social distancing can be maintained and implement traffic flow systems where possible and appropriate.
- Clubs must outline socially distanced areas for teams, officials, and spectators.
- Clubs must ensure that all accessible provision within the site and the facility are available.