

RETURN TO FENCING -INDOOR FENCING COMPETITIVE EVENT GUIDANCE FROM 19TH JULY 2021 (ENGLAND)

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document lays out the additional measures that should be taken by fencers, clubs, officials, volunteers, coaches, and spectators before, during and after all fencing competition activity in Step 4 of the Roadmap in England from 19th July 2021.

This document is ***in addition to the BF guidelines on indoor fencing and equipment cleaning protocols*** which sets out general measures to be followed by anyone participating in fencing (whether in competition or club).

In light of the increased risk of changes, cancellations and postponements (due a number of factors) competition organisers should ensure that they have a communication channel in place with all participants to notify them of any last-minute changes. We recommend that organisers (in the event they choose to take out specific event insurance) check their insurance policy – many policies will not cover costs arising from COVID-19.

For the purposes of this document the term '***participants***' refer to all individuals participating in the event – competitors, referees, event officials, coaches, spectators and so on.

For the purposes of this document the term '***event***' refers to the whole fencing event. There may be one or more '***competitions***' taking place in the venue at the same time on the same day.

2. EXCLUSIONS

This document is not intended for use by organisers of 'have a go' events. This is guidance for our member and affiliated clubs when holding BF licensed competitive events for members.

This document does not include all the requirements of an event organiser. This document sits in addition to the standard requirements and expectations on event organisers, as covered by BF's published policies and procedures.

3. GOVERNANCE

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

1. Government Guidelines (this includes Public Health England)
2. Venue Specific Rules (includes use of changing rooms, movement/volume of people, hygiene protocols, availability and provision of water/refreshments)
3. BF Guidelines including Fencing Specific Adaptations to meet measures such as social distancing. Including but not limited to policies and guidelines on Welfare and Safety.
4. Any additional guidelines put in place by any other event sanctioning body – eg FIE or EFC

This document is based on the Government Roadmap guidance for England, more information [here](#).

It is subject to change in response to community prevalence of COVID-19 and/or to reflect additional or updated UK Government guidance.

4. SIZE & FORMAT OF COMPETITION

Licensed BF competitions are considered ‘organised sport events’.

Safeguarding & Spectators

When holding an event, the event organising committee is responsible for the safety of **everyone** attending an event – this includes officials, fencers, parents, coaches and spectators.

This means that organisers must include everyone in their risk assessment and mitigation protocols.

We recognise that due to space restrictions and individual venue risk assessments it is unlikely that all organisers will be able to allow spectators/supporters (parents, coaches) to attend. Where supporters are present procedures must be in place to minimise the additional risk they present to event staff (organisers, volunteers etc) and athletes .

For younger competitors, if it is not possible for parents/guardians to stay, competition organisers **must** have the appropriate welfare procedures in place for the period of time that they are in the care of the organisers, with defined arrival and departure procedures. In these instances, we recommend consideration of competition formats that allow for specific pick-up windows, rather than knock-out formats in these cases.

Care must be taken to provide a supportive and equitable competitive environment, particularly for young fencers. Creating a situation where a young fencer, whose parents/guardians are unable to attend due to mitigation protocols is competing against another fencer whose coach is able to attend and is providing support is not the preferred experience. BF would encourage competition organisers to ensure there is a consistent, supportive atmosphere in place for all U18 competitors. This may mean organisers decide that no coaches or parents are permitted to stay and watch or that they are restricted to remaining in waiting areas which will not allow piste-side viewing/access.

Summary Table

	From 19th July
Spectators (at all times subject to venue restrictions and risk assessment)	Yes
Covid Officers	Yes (min 1 per competition hall, max 1:64 ratio for any one hall)
Welfare Officers	Yes (min 1 per event, max 1:32 ratio for unaccompanied U18 competitors).
Piste-Side Coaching	Yes, subject to risk assessment. Recommended that 2m distancing maintained from fencers and referee. Minute break/in-between bouts only. Subject to space.
Warm-up Lessons/Sparring	Yes. Subject to space and risk assessment.
Maximum No of Competitors	Limited by risk assessment. Consideration of venue layout, piste layout and

	recommended that there is enough space so that no individual is forced to get closer than 1m to another individual.
Permitted Formats	All formats (note that ranking events are limited to approved formats)

Remember – all event officials should, for the safety and respect to all participants:

- Avoid shouting
- Maximise social distancing where possible and avoid standing closer than 1m.
- Sanitise hand before and after touching any objects or surfaces
- Wear face coverings (and visors for certain roles) (unless exempt or U12)

5. SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

This guidance sets out the key principles that you should follow and communicate to providers and participants in your sport or physical activity. This advice applies to all types of sport and physical activity, but further advice is also provided below for team sports, contact combat sports and mass participation events.

5.1 KEY PRINCIPLES

You should ensure that people can participate in your sport safely. You should consider the best way to approach this for your sport, including by issuing guidance (if you are a NGB or sport provider), following any relevant guidance from the sport's NGB, the sport provider or facility, or by choosing to make your own changes to operating models to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. The key principles below should form the basis of any provided guidance.

1. Communications and guidance

You should consider how you can inform visitors of important information and any changes to processes in advance of the activity, for example on your website, when booking by phone or email, and in your digital marketing. You should consider how to do this in a way that works best for your sport or physical activity provision and is accessible to all, including those with disabilities.

For example, you could email registered participants in advance of a league starting to set out the operational information they should be aware of and safety measures you have chosen to put in place. Then include a brief reminder of any key points or steps they must take in your follow-up communications or social media engagement.

Your communication to participants should include the following points.

Self-assessment: Before attending any sporting activities, all participants, officials, volunteers and spectators should self-assess for COVID-19 symptoms (a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; a loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste). If they, or anyone they live with, have one or more of these symptoms (even if they are mild), you should advise them not to attend any sporting activity, and to follow NHS guidance on testing and self-isolation.

Informed decisions: You should advise participants to consider their own health and circumstances (for example, if they are not yet double-vaccinated or they live with somebody vulnerable), so they can make an informed choice about whether they wish to participate. You should set out the safety measures you have put in place, and how you will mitigate any specific risks associated with your sporting activity. For example, you could advise participants that you are following your NGB's guidance, and any safety measures you are putting in place.

Self-isolation: Clearly communicate to participants that they should not take part in your activity if they need to self-isolate, for example because they have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace; are required to isolate after travel; or because they are displaying any COVID-19 symptoms (a high temperature, new and persistent cough, or a loss of/change in sense of taste or smell), even if these symptoms are mild. Advise them that if they, or anyone they live with, have one or more of these symptoms they should not attend, and should follow guidance on testing and self-isolation.

5.1 NHS TEST AND TRACE

Sport providers are no longer required to collect participants' contact details or keep records of your staff and visitors.

However, you are advised to continue to display an NHS QR code for participants wishing to check in using the app, to support NHS Test and Trace. You do not have to ask participants to check in, or turn them away if they refuse.

If you display an NHS QR code, you should also have a system to collect (and securely store) names and contact details for those who ask to check in but do not have the app.

(Whilst it is no longer a legal requirement, BF expects organisers to keep a record of event participants, for more information see below.)

5.2 PRE-PARTICIPATION SAFETY MEASURES

Consider whether you should ask participants to take a COVID-19 test before participating, where this is practical and possible. This can help to ensure your sport provision is as safe as possible, and reduce the risk of transmission.

You can also consider using the NHS COVID Pass to reduce the risk of transmission. The NHS COVID Pass allows people to demonstrate that they are at a lower risk of carrying COVID-19 and transmitting it to others, through vaccination, testing or natural immunity. It can help organisations to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

The NHS COVID Pass will be available through the NHS App, the NHS website, or as a letter that can be requested by ringing NHS 119. Participants will also be able to show text or email confirmation of test results.

If you use the NHS COVID Pass, you should ensure that you comply with all relevant legal obligations and guidance, including on equalities. The Government will publish more guidance on using the NHS COVID Pass shortly.

Even when using the NHS COVID Pass, it is still important that you follow the rest of the guidance and put measures in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading at your venue or event.

5.3 HYGIENE

You should continue to follow good hygiene practices, to reduce the risk of transmission in sport environments. For example, you should not spit or rinse out your mouth on or around the playing area. You can find more information in the guidance on how to stay safe.

Water bottles or other refreshment containers should not be shared. Advise participants to bring their own water bottle or refreshment container, in a labelled or highly distinguishable container. If you are providing water or other beverages, ensure that these are provided to individuals and are not expected to be shared.

You should consider whether there are any changes you can make to your sport provision, to reduce the risk of transmission. For example, you could ask teams not to shake hands after the match.

5.4 EQUIPMENT

Organise your sport or physical activity sessions to avoid sharing equipment where it is possible and practical, particularly that used around the head and face. Where equipment needs to be shared, it should be cleaned between users.

(BF has published equipment cleaning protocols which should be followed, see below for more information)

5.5 FACE COVERINGS

Face coverings are no longer required by law, but the government expects and recommends that people should continue to wear them in crowded and enclosed settings, to protect themselves and others. Where worn correctly, this can reduce the risk of transmission.

If a sport facility or venue where your provision takes place recommends the use of face coverings (when not participating in sport or physical activity), ensure this is communicated to your staff and participants.

People should not generally wear a face covering while taking part in any strenuous activity or sport, unless they have been advised to do so by a physician.

*(All indoor events with a Competitive Event Licence must require face coverings, when not fencing/exercising for all participants (unless exempt or U12). Event organisers can choose to extend this policy to those 12 and under. Organisers of other recreational events **must** risk assess their events and if the event they decide face coverings are not required make a written note of the factors which led to the decision which should also be clearly communicated to all participants in advance. see below for more information.)*

5.6 MEDICAL PROVISION

Physios and other medical personnel should ensure that equipment and surfaces are frequently cleaned and disinfected, and maintain hygiene standards when treating participants.

Where close face-to-face contact is required, medical personnel may decide that they and patients should wear a face covering. This is particularly important when they are conducting treatments which require them to be in close proximity to a person's face, mouth and nose.

After contact with 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 applies in all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact.

Those working at a sport event should familiarise themselves with the guidance for first responders, in case of emergency situations.

5.7 FACILITY USAGE

Providers which work with or operate facilities should ensure they are familiar with the guidance for sport facilities below. This sets out information on ventilation and other important steps you can take to reduce transmission.

Where there is no facility operator (such as sport in a public park), the sport provider should review the guidance and consider following any relevant advice to reduce the risk of transmission.

5.8 SPORTING EVENTS

If you are organising large grassroots sport events, or expect a significant number of spectators, you should review the guidance for events and attractions and follow any relevant measures to reduce the risk of transmission at your event.

You can also use the risk management template to help you plan your event.

5.9 SPORT PARTICIPATION EVENTS

Sport participation events such as races, rides and walks can take place outdoors with no capacity caps for participants or spectators. In addition to your usual event organisation processes, you should ensure that you take steps to keep everyone safe, and reduce the risk of transmission at your events so you can continue to provide sport and physical activity safely.

As there continues to be a risk of infection from COVID-19, businesses still have a legal duty to manage risks to those affected by their business. The way to do this is to carry out a health and safety risk assessment including the risk of COVID-19, and put in place measures to reduce the risks you identify. You should review the guidance for events and attractions, which sets out advice on the risks you should take into account when managing events, along with options for managing and reducing these risks and a risk management checklist to help you plan your event. You can also use the risk management template to help you plan your event.

When planning your event, you should take into account the following factors:

Do not admit customers or spectators who have suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

If a participant or spectator presents with symptoms, or you become aware of a case of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 on-site, they should not be admitted or should be asked to leave the facility or

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event, unless they need to be transported to hospital for treatment. The customer should be advised to self-isolate in line with NHS guidelines and to take a PCR test.

Where possible, the individual should be assessed on-site (by a medical professional, if you have this provision). Unless they are in need of urgent medical attention and need to be transported to hospital for treatment, they should be encouraged to take a supervised lateral flow test. Any customer returning a positive result from a lateral flow test must be required to leave the facility or event. They should be advised to self-isolate in line with NHS guidelines and to take a PCR test.

Consider encouraging customers and spectators to wear face coverings, for example through signage, if your event is likely to include enclosed and crowded spaces.

Face coverings are no longer required by law, but the government expects and recommends that people should continue to wear them in crowded and enclosed settings, to protect themselves and others. Where worn correctly, this can reduce the risk of transmission.

Your workers may choose to wear a face covering, particularly if they are likely to come into contact with a lot of people during the event. You should support them in doing so, and ensure they are aware of guidance on using face coverings safely.

Consider recommending the use of face coverings by workers and spectators as a safety measure, in enclosed and crowded spaces where they may come into contact with people they don't normally meet. When deciding whether you will ask workers or spectators to wear face coverings:

You need to consider the reasonable adjustments needed for workers and spectators with disabilities. You also need to carefully consider how this fits with other obligations to workers and spectators arising from the law on employment rights, health and safety and equality legislation.

You should not ask people to wear face coverings while taking part in any strenuous activity or sport.

Remember that some people are not able to wear face coverings, and the reasons for this may not be visible to others. Please be mindful and respectful of such circumstances. Be aware that face coverings may make it harder to communicate with people who rely on lip reading, facial expressions and clear sound.

Consider displaying an NHS QR code poster so that customers can check in using the NHS COVID-19 app.

You are no longer required to collect customer contact details, or keep a record of your staff and visitors.

However, you are advised to continue to display an NHS QR code for customers wishing to check in using the app, as this will help to reduce the spread of the virus and protect your customers, visitors and staff. You do not have to ask customers to check in, or turn them away if they refuse.

If you display an NHS QR code, you should also have a system to collect (and securely store) names and contact details, for those who ask to check in but who do not have access to a smartphone or who prefer not to use the app.

Consider whether you should put in place safety measures to reduce the risk of transmission. For example, you could consider ways to distribute chips and medals which don't require contact

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between large groups of people. You could also consider organising bag-drops and equipment storage to minimise crowding and shared handling, and ensure hand sanitiser is provided. You can find more advice on the types of measures which may be appropriate for your event in the guidance on events and attractions.

Ensure that any safety measures are communicated clearly and consistently to all participants and support staff, including volunteers. You can find advice about how to do this in the guidance on events and attractions.

Consider how any safety measures will affect participants, staff and attendees with protected characteristics, and any adjustments you should make. You should also consider whether any special provisions should be made for children and young people under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults, if this is relevant to your event.

Ensure that there is sufficient access to toilet facilities (particularly for those with special needs and disabilities), and that they are well-ventilated and frequently cleaned. Particular care should be taken to clean portable toilets and larger toilet blocks.

Consider how best to provide refreshments during the event. Water bottles or other refreshment containers should not be shared between participants.

Ensure that any amenities at the event follow the relevant guidance, such as hospitality services (guidance for restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services) and retail outlets (guidance for shops, stores and branches).

Further information, including information for Sport Providers and Employers, can be found [here](#).

6. EVENT STAFF - BF GUIDANCE

This advice is in addition to the government guidance for events (see Section 5) and in addition to the standard BF Return to Fencing guidance which can be found [here](#).

All events must have a COVID-19 Officer and a Welfare Officer. These cannot be the same person unless the event is taking place in one hall with the total number of all participants less than 40. All BF Licenced events must have a registered Welfare Officer.

Whilst some measures listed below are not required by law, BF have implemented additional risk mitigation measures in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the fencing community.

6.1 COVID-19 OFFICER

Every organising committee must have at least one trained Event Covid-19 Officer who is familiar with the BF protocols including those on Equipment Cleaning Protocols, BF Indoor Fencing Guidelines & BF Competition Guidelines which can all be found [here](#).

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The role of the Covid-19 Officer is to ensure that all participants (spectators, coaches, competitors, referees) follow BF protocols. This includes overseeing the protocols/processes in relation to pre-event questionnaires, lateral flow tests (where required) and collation and retention of records event attendees.

COVID Officers should be independent at all times – e.g. they should not be attending as individual coaches for competitors.

6.2 WELFARE OFFICER

Every event must have at least one fully trained Lead Welfare Officer who has completed the Time to Listen (or BF equivalent) training (now delivered virtually) in the last 3 years.

Event organisers may also wish to have additional assistant Event Welfare Helpers must have attended a Safeguarding & Protecting Children training in the last 3 years (or the Scottish Equivalent – Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport training) and a current Criminal Record Check.

For U18 events ***where parents/guardians are not present:***

There should be a minimum ratio of one Welfare official per 32 U18s competing. One Welfare official can cover more than one competition for example if you are running 2 separate age group competitions at the same time in the same hall, you can have one welfare official (the Lead Welfare Officer)

The Lead Welfare Officer must review the competition risk assessment and any detailed welfare protocols to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are met. The Welfare Officer is responsible for ensuring that this information is shared to any Event Welfare Helpers.

Welfare Officers and Helpers should be independent at all times – they should not act as individual coaches for the competitions.

6.3 REFEREES

Any person undertaking refereeing (even if poules are 'self refereeing') must follow the additional guidelines below. The Event Lead Welfare Officer and the event COVID-19 Officer cannot also be an acting referee.

6.4 ARMOURERS

At this time, BF do not recommend that events an armoury service to fencers/their equipment. Fencers should be turning up with sufficient levels of fully working equipment. If an event wishes to offer an armoury service this must be risk assessed and protocols put in place to minimise risk to

those operating and those using the service. This must be documented as part of the written risk assessment for the event.

Clubs are encouraged continue putting in place hire schemes so that competitors can enter competitions with sufficient equipment.

Event organisers should put in place protocols to minimise additional armoury personnel requirements whilst the competition is in progress. Risk mitigation protocols must be in place for any set-up and take-down activity, and this must be included in the risk assessment.

7. SUMMARY MEASURES FOR COMPETITION ORGANISERS

7.1 PRE-COMPETITION

- Appoint Event COVID-19 Officer and Event Organising Committee including lead Welfare Officer
- Check updated local and national restrictions and guidance
- Read the relevant BF Guidance (including specific COVID Indoor Fencing Guidelines, Equipment Cleaning Protocols and Competition Guidance)
- Liaise with Facility provider over requirements. Some venues may have specific additional requirements
- Complete first draft risk assessment, which will include mitigation plans to reduce risks in relation to
 - Competitors – local, national, or international
 - Event Officials – COVID-19 Officer, Welfare Officer(s), referees, armourers, DT, other event volunteers
 - Spectators
- Apply for a BF event licence
- All British Ranking events require all participants aged 12 and over attending the event to take a COVID-19 Self-Test Rapid Antigen Test (Lateral Flow Test) within 24 hours prior to attending the event (or PCR test within 3 days if part of a workplace testing scheme). Non-ranking event organisers are recommended to put similar measures in place. Organisers should include testing requirements within the pre-event information.
- Publish details to ensure all participants are informed in advance of the additional requirements particularly in relation to face coverings, testing.
- Appoint and train dedicated event staff to oversee COVID-19 specific measures
- Ensure that sufficient PPE is available for medical purposes
- Prepare a Crisis Management Plan for
 - potential positive tests/'pings' in the event team (organisers, referees) in the run up to the event
 - changes in restrictions that mean the event will need to be altered or cancelled
- Prepare and display clear information (posters, flyers, videos etc.) in the competition venue, with regards to hygiene and reminders of any procedures in place to reduce risk of COVID-19.
- Prepare detailed hygiene procedures
- Make sure that general and fencing specific rules will be communicated and applied

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- Entry Process should be online and in advance and entries should be available to current members ideally through the BF Platform <https://bf.sport80.com/> (see section below). All participants should confirm that they have read the relevant BF documents and any event specific terms and conditions. Cancellation policy should be published.
- Put in place Event Screening Questionnaire.
- Perform an Event staff briefing – Recommend that this is done online at the latest the evening before the event.
- Plan a dedicated area/room for event volunteers/referees as a rest area.

7.2 ON ARRIVAL AT COMPETITION

- The event organisers should publish the arrival procedures in advance
- For Ranking events, mandatory temperature checks for all participants will be performed before entering the venue and prior to any warm-up. Participants testing with temperature $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ and/or displaying any Covid-19 Symptoms will not be permitted access to the venue. Other indoor event organisers are recommended to adopt similar protocols.
- Participants that have not completed their Screening Questionnaire or negative lateral flow test result (where required by organisers) will not be permitted access.
- Sanitiser Station should be made available near entry and exits
- It is recommended to aid flow of participants that one-way entry and exit systems remain in place where possible.
- It is recommended that organisers continue to allow competitors allocated a bag/rest space areas to allow participants space to access their bag and rest between rounds.
- Spare face coverings/lateral flow tests should be made available to those attending the event where face coverings/negative lateral flow test results are mandatory.

7.3 DURING COMPETITION

- Piste areas, including areas for fencers, referees, coaches and spectators should be clearly marked. It is strongly recommended (mandatory for Ranking events) that organisers should continue to allow additional space, clear of coaches and spectators, around the fencing area to allow fencers and referees space whilst not fencing and reduce crowding at the end of pistes. Organisers of competitive events are encouraged to introduce Field of Play barriers and/or accreditation to limit the number of people around the pistes at one time or mitigation measures such as no coaches/parents at the end of pistes during poules.
- All indoor events with a Competitive Event Licence must require face coverings, when not fencing/exercising for all participants (unless exempt or U12). Event organisers can choose to extend this policy to those 12 and under. Organisers of other recreational events **must** risk assess their events and if the event they decide face coverings are not required make a written note of the factors which led to the decision which should also be clearly communicated to all participants in advance.
- Measures should be taken to allow air flow throughout the venue (air conditioning systems or opening doors for ventilation)

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- Medal ceremonies -all participants to wear face coverings (unless exempt). Medal winners must sanitise hands before picking up any medal or trophies which should be made available on tables. No handshaking or physical interaction between the medal winners, or any other medal ceremony participants
- **Referees**
 - Poule sheet, Direct Elimination slips, and Incident reports should be processed electronically, whenever possible. BF recommend that organisers look into using packages like Engarde Smart.
 - It is recommended that referees should be allocated equipment for the duration event (weights/gauges/clip charts/pens/tablets). If sharing is unavoidable, each person is recommended to wash or sanitise their hands regularly/before and after handling the equipment.
- Procedures should be in place to communicate results of poules, DE tableau in such a way to avoid crowding around notice boards or TV screens. Event organisers should consider publishing results/tableaus electronically so that fencers can access results using mobile devices.
- Regular handwashing/sanitisation should remain in place

7.4 POST COMPETITION

- Retain a record of the competition – fencers, bouts and referees.
- Should anyone attending the event test positive then you must inform BF and everyone at the event. Whilst our expectation is that the QR/Test and Trace system would inform participants ***you should not rely on this***. You do not need to ask participants to isolate, unless there was any specific incident (eg medical, welfare) which meant that a participant spent 15mins or more less than 2m away from another participant.
- Ensure hygiene procedures are followed to protect those responsible for event equipment 'take-down'.

7.5 TEST & TRACE - USING THE BF PLATFORM

- All competitions must be licensed through the BF Events Platform (Sport:80)
- **All entries must be registered on the platform** – this can be done either through direct entry on the BF Membership Platform <https://bf.sport80.com/> or uploaded separately by the competition organiser as soon as practically possible. For direct entry there is no requirement to take payment through the platform. As a reminder, organisers should check that entrants have a valid BF membership at point of entry.

This is to ensure that:

1. BF can keep all competition participants up to date with the latest regulations in a consistent way. (Important where participants may be travelling to different areas/Home Nations to compete, and the competition organisers may not have the resources to keep participants up to date with changes in guidance).

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2. Competition organisers can be confident all participants will have the required memberships in place for insurance purposes - the system will automatically alert organisers if memberships expire.
3. BF can support test and trace – we will hold a central record of who has participated in each event on which date. An individual competition organiser does not have access to information about other competitions that someone may have participated in. BF will be able to contact individual fencers directly in the event of positive tests, and support competition organisers to navigate the requirements (particularly where participants have travelled from different Home Nations).

Note on additional functionality

- The BF Platform supports QR code check-in - participants and volunteers can scan the event code on arrival and they will automatically be 'checked in' to the event on the platform. (Wi-Fi/mobile data connectivity required)

7.6 WELFARE

- It is the expectation of BF that fencers attending competitions that they are capable of performing the basics of competing without requiring assistance from parents and coaches. This will also help to minimise transmission of viruses. This includes being able to sanitise hands regularly, take fencing kit on and off safely, plugging themselves into spools and plugging weapons into body wires. If there is a risk that competitors are unable to perform these basics, competition organisers should consider including training/education as part of their pre-competition briefing information and on the day assigning Welfare Helpers to support fencers in these tasks.
- Competitors with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their carers and the Lead Welfare Officer must work with the participant/carer to ensure that the needs of the participant are met.
- For the duration of the event, the Event Welfare Officer will be responsible for their welfare – from the moment that the child arrives until they leave.
- There must be procedures for signing children in and out appropriate to the age of the child. These should be communicated in advance to all U18s and their parents and guardians.
- We recommend that unless specific permission is given in writing to the event organiser, children under the age of 14 should not be permitted to leave the venue alone.
- Where competitions include athletes under the age of 14, we recommend that formats are used which allow organisers to pre-publish a pick-up time/window.
- Fencers with disabilities/additional needs who require a carer presents during the competition should contact the Event Welfare Officer in advance of the event.

7.7 MEDICAL

- Injuries should still be treated, as participant safety is of the utmost importance.
- At the minimum there must be a qualified first aider at the competition at all times who will have access to PPE and first aid kit.
- All 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.
- Fencers should bring a small first aid kit and be encouraged to self-treat minor injuries where possible.
- Only **the assigned first aider** can approach the injured fencer and they **must wear face-coverings, gloves and a visor**.
- It is recommended that the patient wears a face covering where this is possible and practical.
- PPE should be included in the first aid kit located in the DT office and is to be used by the trained first aider.
- There must be a defined process (agreed with the venue operator) for dealing with major injuries/emergency situations which should be communicated in advance to all staff. Parents/guardians of U16s are requested to remain within 15 minutes of venue to collect in case the fencer requires non urgent treatment.
- After contact with an injured participant, 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.
- Medical personnel should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with, for test and trace purposes. Records should be kept for 21 days and then destroyed.

7.8 DT

- Each official and member of the DT should have an allocated chair >1m distanced.
- >1m Social distancing should be respected at all times in the DT area.
- If possible, consider installing a light plexiglass shield on the front side of the DT desk. Alternatively, it is recommended that a barrier (eg table) and markings can be put in place to maintain social distancing wherever someone needs to interact with the DT.

8. SUMMARY MEASURES FOR PARTICIPANTS

8.1 ALL PARTICIPANTS

Every person present at a BF licensed competition is considered a participant and must comply to these guidelines. This includes spectators, event officials, coaches, referees and fencers.

Prior to the Event:

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- Read and follow the published BF guidelines specifically including the Guidelines for Return to Indoor Fencing, paying particular attention to the hygiene requirements
- Read and follow the event organiser guidelines.
- Temperature test before leaving to travel to the event.
- Do not travel to event if displaying any of the NHS listed covid symptoms and follow NHS guidance
 - Do not attend the event if you have been told to isolate or are isolating
 - Complete and sign the Event Screening Questionnaire on the day of the event, prior to arriving at the venue.

All British Ranking events require all attending the event to take a COVID-19 Self-Test Rapid Antigen Test (Lateral Flow Test) within 24 hours prior to attending the event (or PCR test within 3 days if part of a workplace testing scheme). Non-ranking event organisers may the requirement of a negative test for entry to event.

On Arrival

- You may wish to scan the venue QR Code (if available)
- Follow sign-in procedures (note that additional welfare procedures may be in place for U16s)
- Be ready to confirm if asked that you have taken a COVID-19 Self-Test Rapid Antigen Test (Lateral Flow Test) within the last 24 hours (or PCR test within 3 days if part of a workplace testing scheme) and received a negative result (if required). You may be required to show proof of your result (text message, email, using the NHS app).
- Even if you are familiar with the venue do not assume that the procedures will be the same when a competition is held.

During the Event:

- All indoor events with a Competitive Event Licence must require face coverings, when not fencing/exercising for all participants (unless exempt or U12). Event organisers can choose to extend this policy to those 12 and under. Organisers of other recreational events **must** risk assess their events and if the event they decide face coverings are not required make a written note of the factors which led to the decision which should also be clearly communicated to all participants in advance.
- Bring your own:
 - bottle(s) of water. These must not be shared. Refill stations may not be available.
 - small first aid kit
 - hand sanitiser and anti-viral hand wipes
- Participants must adhere to any additional measures/protocols (eg one-way systems, use of toilets/changing rooms) put in place by the competition organiser, venue operator.
- Shouting/screaming should be avoided where possible at all times.
- Routinely clean and disinfect hands before and after touching any objects/surfaces. For example, should you sit down at a chair, you should sanitise your hands before and after.
- Any participant (fencer, coach, parent, spectator etc) that repeatedly breaches the COVID rules and guidelines will, at the discretion of the organisers in consultation with the Welfare Officer and the Covid Officer, be asked to leave the venue and reported to BF for possible disciplinary action.

After the Event

- Leave the venue as soon as is practically possible
Inform the competition organisers if in the following 2 weeks you subsequently test positive.

8.2 COMPETITORS

In addition to the advice for all participants, competitors should

Before the Event

- Check you have a valid British Fencing membership.
- Read and follow the guidance on clothing and equipment hygiene.
- Ensure that you have sufficient clean, working equipment for the event (no sharing permitted) - Fencing masks, gloves and weapons must be disinfected/sanitised.
- Prepare a small tool kit – you may not share allen keys, screwdrivers, weights, gauges etc,
- Check you are fit to fence – if you are not back to competitive sparring in club, we do not recommend that you attend a competition. Should you have any underlying health concerns you should consult a doctor before resuming any activity.
- Unless fencers have a related disability (which should be communicated in advance to the competition Welfare Officer) fencers must be independently able to participate in a fencing competition without requiring personal assistance. This includes putting on and taking off clothing and equipment, plugging and unplugging from spools, using hand sanitiser.
- Bring enough clean face towels to wipe off sweat from your face. Do not use your hands or wipe the sweat with the sleeve of your fencing jacket. Do not put your face towels on chairs, it should be placed in a bag or on your water bottle on the floor whilst you are fencing.
- It is the expectation of BF that fencers attending competitions are capable of performing the basics of competing without requiring assistance from parents and coaches. This will also help to minimise transmission of viruses. Fencers with disabilities/additional needs who require a carer presents during the competition should contact the Event welfare officer in advance of the event.

During the Event

- The customary handshake at the end of bouts is replaced with a salute.
- Sharing equipment with another participant is not allowed. Fencers are expected to bring their own spare equipment in the event of a failure.
- Screaming after the hit is scored is not permitted. Competitors that persist in screaming will be asked to leave the competition.
- Congratulatory hugging, kissing, elbow touches or handshakes are not permitted.
- Between matches and during rest periods, fencers should remain 1m+ from each other, referees, coaches etc.
- Personal kit must stay in fencing bags when not in use – do not hang items of clothing (towels, t-shirts, fencing equipment) on any benches or chairs.

After the Event

- Equipment to be sanitised in accordance with [BF equipment hygiene protocols](#)
- Any participant testing positive within 2 weeks must inform the event organiser.

8.3 COACHES

In addition to the advice for all participants,

- Coaching is permitted at the discretion of the organisers subject to a risk assessment..
- There is to be no coaching during fencing and between hits. Where permitted, coaching can be done during minute breaks and between bouts. (No coaching is permitted during poules at Cadet & Junior Ranking events)
- Organisers must ensure that the environment is inclusive – it may be more appropriate to decide that no fencers can receive piste side coaching to avoid a situation where a young fencer is on their own, unsupported, against another fencer who is receiving significant support.
- Organisers may provide an allocated space by the piste for piste-side coaches.
- Coaches must be on the BF Coaches Register
- Shouting is not permitted – support can be shown in other ways eg clapping.

8.4 SPECTATORS/PARENTS/GUARDIANS

In addition to the advice for all participants:

- Depending on restrictions and venue space it may not be possible to accommodate spectators (including parents and guardians).
- Spectators should remain at least 2m away from piste boundaries at all times. This is for safety reasons.
- Shouting should be avoided – support can be shown in other ways eg clapping.

8.5 EVENT OFFICIALS

In addition to the advice for all participants, event officials:

- Must be members of BF and on any appropriate register for the role performed (eg welfare officer, referee)

Referees

- Should use hand-disinfectant before and after each bout.
- Should maximise use of FIE hand signals to reduce verbal signals
- May wish to wear a visor in addition to face coverings whilst refereeing including when performing a weapon test.

Doctor and medical staff

Must wear appropriate PPE during treatment of injuries (see specific section on Medical below).

9. 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.

10. DISCLAIMER

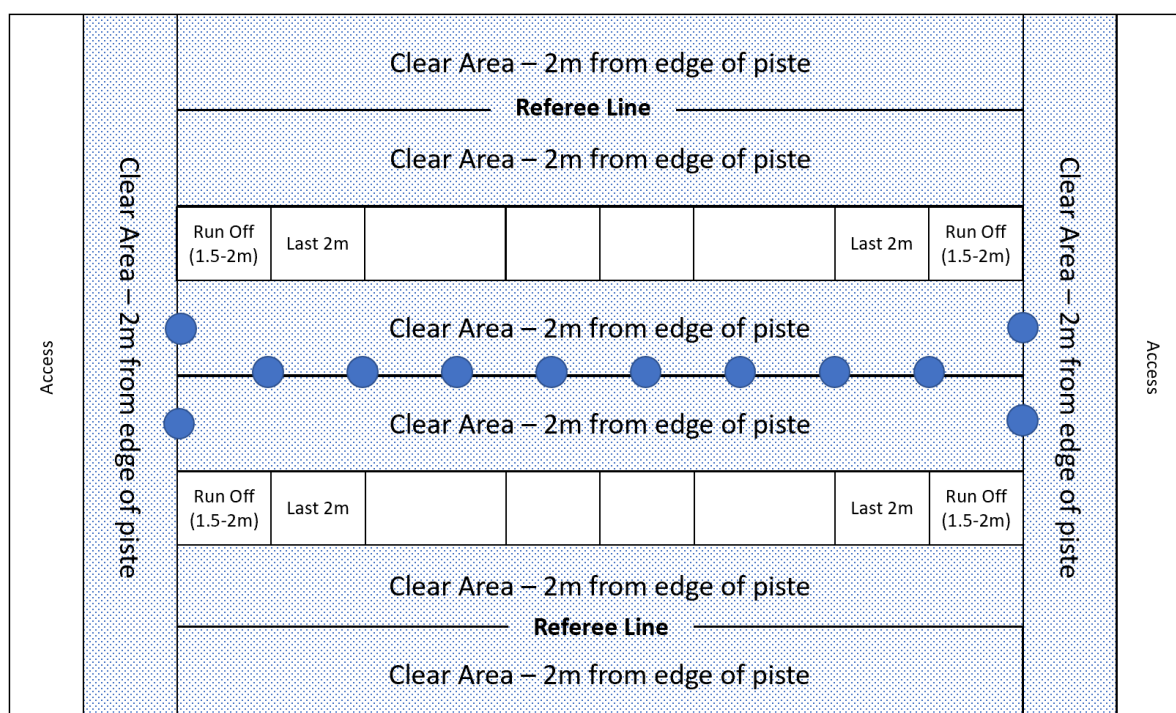
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11. APPENDIX A - RECOMMENDED PISTE LAYOUTS

- As an example of good practice, there should always be sufficient distance between pistes and their position, as well as the position of scoring tables and apparatus to allow personal space for participants
- Space should be allowed for the referee to maintain a safe distance from participants
- Event organisers may wish to section off/mark allocated seating/standing areas to allow for personal space, unless fencing or warming up for participants.
- The diagrams below show how space could be arranged, allowing for 2m distancing. This can now be reduced in line with event risk assessments to >1m.

During bouts:

- Fencers must stay within the piste boundaries where at all possible.



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