



WELSH ATHLETICS  
ATHLETAU CYMRU

# LIFTING ATHLETICS OUT OF LOCKDOWN

#StaySafe

## Return to Coaching

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## Guiding Principles

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The safety and wellbeing of all athletes, runners, coaches, officials, volunteers and the wider community is at the heart of any guidance that Welsh Athletics is distributing.

### **Always check current Welsh Government Guidelines**

The guidance that follows provides sport specific advice. It is important to say that any return to activity must take account of local conditions and any risk assessment for normal activities should be undertaken as well as ensuring that all government guidance around Covid-19 is taken into account.

It is the responsibility of each athlete, coach and facility to make that assessment based on their local environment. Risk assessment must take into account mitigations and plans for when activities do not go as expected. Planning scenarios around, for example, an injury occurring to an athlete and the need to support that athlete while social distancing should be undertaken.

<b>Health first</b>	<b>If you have any doubts or concerns about the risk to your health or that of others, stop and re-assess</b>
<b>Stay up to date</b>	How will you make sure you, and those you're with, are following the latest guidance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Check the latest Welsh Government Guidance here.</a></li></ul>
<b>Think ahead: Before, during, &amp; after</b>	What do you need to do before taking part? Have you assessed the risks? How will you get to and from where you're going?

When lifting restrictions please consider the following at a local level<sup>1</sup>:

- Can the measures be implemented effectively in practice?
- How will you clearly communicate the changes to all without disadvantaging any parties?
- Will you need to provide extra encouragement or incentives to bring people back to the sport?
- Ensure you consider any consent issues – any decision to participate should be voluntary and informed.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/lifting-lockdown-how-approach-coronavirus-exit-strategy\\_0.pdf](https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/lifting-lockdown-how-approach-coronavirus-exit-strategy_0.pdf)

## Return to Coaching activity phases

Element of the sport	Lockdown	Red Phase 1	Amber Phase 2	Green Phase 3
Coaching	All face to face activity suspended	Online/via correspondence training only. Potential for Elite Athlete Coaching to take place	Potential return to coaching /leading activity on a one-to-one basis or in small groups whilst maintaining social distancing	Individual and group Face to Face Coaching resumes at all facilities with group size limits and social distancing

As the Welsh Government unlocks the ability for coaching to happen further guidance will follow.

It is reasonable to note that any guidance provided going forward will take account of local facilities /conditions and any risk assessment for normal activities should be undertaken as well as ensuring that all government guidance around Covid-19 is considered.

It will be the responsibility of each athlete, coach, and facility to make that assessment based on their local environment. Risk assessment must consider mitigations and plans for when activities do not go as expected. Planning scenarios around, for example, an injury occurring to an athlete and the need to support that athlete while social distancing should be undertaken.

This Guidance covers the following areas:

- Before you coach
- Preparing for a coaching session
- Prior to the session
- During the training session
- When Coaching is permitted with athletes from a different household
- Safeguarding

## General Guidance Notes for a return to Coaching

As the Welsh Government unlocks restrictions aligned to Coaching of Athletics (Lockdown moves to Green) there are general guidelines that should be considered / adhered to:

These general guidelines outline the robust measures Welsh Athletics would like coaches to take, in conjunction with athletes and clubs, to maintain their own, and others safety, as we travel along the roadmap to unlock our sport.

The measures proposed cover each step of the journey from preparation at home to the outdoor area used for exercise and back home again and will be confirmed in line with guidance from Welsh Government.

All guidance measures should always be followed when released during the appropriate phases of the unlocking journey.

Welsh Government announced that as of 13/3/2021 that all outdoor sport and leisure facilities, are allowed to open. The operators of these grounds and facilities must take all the necessary measures to manage risk and maintain physical distancing. You can only participate with up to 6 people from 2 households unless you are taking part in an organised activity (applicable only to U18's at present).

**Organised activity** – Currently this is restricted to Junior (U18) outdoor activities, with no limit in place. The required risk assessment (carried out by the responsible person) will determine the maximum number of participants that can be present at a specific facility.

No organised activities are currently permitted for Adults. A maximum of 6 people from 2 households are permitted to exercise together.

There are no travel restrictions currently in relation to exercise.

**A Responsible person is defined as “A coach/leader who has an active/up to date qualification, a club Covid officer (becomes the Chair if the club has not elected an officer), or a member of Welsh Athletics staff who is delivering an activity.”**

### 1. Before you coach

You or your athlete(s) must stay at home if you or they:

- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 10 days.
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 10 days.
- Have COVID-19 symptoms or are feeling unwell.
- Have been told to self-isolate as part of any contact tracing measures in place.

Please check with your GP prior to coaching if you are in a high-risk health category or are in the vulnerable and shielding category.

If an athlete/coach/parent becomes unwell after training, they should first contact their GP/NHS 24, update any contact tracing App in use at that time, and then inform their club / Welsh Athletics Welfare Team. Further Information on this is in Appendix 1.

## 2. Preparing for a coaching session

It is permissible to undertake face to face coaching, but coaches must ensure that they practice social distancing at all times. All coaches must plan and prepare with their athletes for each face to face training session and the planning must be aimed at minimising the risk of infection / transmission.

- At this time sessions should only take place outdoors and in public spaces or facilities that have now opened following the Welsh Government guidelines on the 13th March 2021. Please note your usual local facilities may be closed, please check with your local facility operator.
- Prepare a risk assessment based on planned activities/outdoor training space/age etc. of the athlete(s).
- Ensure that a booking system and register is in place to control numbers attending and that you have the relevant consent and data to pass on to the NHS Test, Track & Protect service if required – Further Information on this is in Appendix 1.
- Hygiene: Cleaning, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures and provision should be made for these. Clear guidance and plans must be in place for cleaning of equipment and waste disposal. Note: toilets and other washing facilities may not be available.
- Identify and mitigate all circumstances where injuries or other accidents might occur and have agreed procedures and plans in place to manage such an issue while respecting all government guidance.
- Please consider your athletes current physical and psychosocial state when planning specific training sessions, please take into consideration their current training level given the lockdown restrictions, their readiness to return to training (physical and psychological) and the lack of support services available in phase 1. A risk assessment should be carried out ahead of each planned training session.
- Coaching and training decisions should be made to minimise the injury and illness risk/NHS burden as a priority consideration.
- Where the athlete is under 18 the parent in attendance will have first aid responsibilities as the coach should not be within 2m of the child.
- Consult beforehand with your athlete (and their parents/carers if u18) on how sessions will be delivered safely.
- Remember that athletes and parents may be anxious about resuming training in public spaces so be prepared to discuss the arrangements in detail and amend to suit individual needs.
- Acknowledge that some athletes will not want to meet face to face at this stage.
- Maintain a register of training sessions, who attended, where and when. This information may be necessary for government contact tracing initiatives.
- Communicate the training arrangements in writing beforehand. Parents should be asked to reiterate the advice to their children pre-training.
- Ensure where necessary that you get permission to carry out your session at the chosen outdoor space.

### **3. Prior to the session**

- Athletes of any age should not travel to and from training with a coach or other athlete unless they are in the same household or support bubble.
- Athletes should bring their own technical equipment.
- Athletes should arrive and leave via the agreed access/exit point and as close as possible to when you need them to be there.
- Preferably only one parent/guardian from the family should accompany an athlete under 18 years of age.
- Athletes should arrive ready to train as changing facilities are not available.
- Athletes and coaches should bring with them hand sanitizer and/or antiseptic wipes.

### **4. During the training session**

- At all times, coaches, athletes, and their parents and carers, should adhere to the Welsh Government's physical distancing guidelines of staying at least 2m away from others including when giving feedback and when athletes are resting.
- Only those who need to be at the training sessions should attend.
- For athletes over 18 athletes should make every effort to maintain social distancing.
- Athletes must run in order of ability with the fastest athlete starting first to minimise overtaking.
- Hygiene: Cleaning, hand and respiratory hygiene measures must always be followed.
- Equipment: Do not let the athletes handle any coaching equipment (cones etc.). Only the coach should do this.
- Equipment: Athletes must always use their personal equipment and follow hygiene guidance. Personal equipment should not be shared, and measures must be put in place to reduce the risk of contamination.
- Be aware of what surfaces you or your athlete(s) touch. You must clean all equipment and surfaces thoroughly with disinfectant before you leave/before another session.
- When training finishes athletes/coach must leave promptly.

### **5. Safeguarding**

- Coaches must ensure they have the permission/agreement of the parent or guardian to coach an athlete who is under the age of 18
- In line with our safeguarding policies, athletes under 18 years of age should always be accompanied by a parent or a guardian throughout the session.
- Preferably only one parent/guardian from the family should attend in these circumstances.
- Coaching of athletes aged under 18 should be undertaken in sight of the parent or guardian.

Your health: it is of paramount importance that coaches monitor themselves for any signs of the virus, as well as general health. All coaches should follow the advice of their GP or medical practitioner in all cases.

### **6. Test, Trace & Protect**

Those taking responsibility for organising / coaching supervised sessions should be aware of the Welsh Governments Guidance on Test, Trace & Protect – Please see Appendix 1 for Guidance

## 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 Welsh Athletics Ltd 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. Welsh Athletics Ltd 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. We would strongly recommend that you consult professional advisors on specific issues before refraining from action on any of the contents of this guidance.

This guidance has been prepared by Welsh Athletics Ltd, 2021

[Related Welsh Athletics guidance](#)