



WELSH ATHLETICS
ATHLETAU CYMRU

LIFTING ATHLETICS OUT OF LOCKDOWN

#StaySafe

Return to Officiating

This document has been created to provide sport-specific advice to help Competition Providers and Officials within the confines of the Welsh Government's roadmap to unlocking society. All Welsh Athletics guidance will be updated as per Welsh Government guidelines when they are made available or as soon as possible thereafter.

These guidelines will apply to Wales only.

All competitions should take account of local conditions and any risk assessment for normal activity should be undertaken along with a COVID-19 specific risk assessment. It is the responsibility of each competition provider, athletes, coach and facility to make assessments based on their local environment. The event risk assessment must consider mitigations and plans for when activities do not go as expected e.g. treatment of an injury whilst maintaining social distancing.

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Guiding Principles

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.

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 undertaken¹.

Health first	If you have any doubts or concerns about the risk to your health or that of others, stop and re-assess
Stay up to date	How will you make sure you, and those you're with, are following the latest guidance? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check the latest Welsh Government Guidance here.
Think ahead: Before, during, & after	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 level²:

- 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.

¹ <https://www.englandathletics.org/athletics-and-running/news/guidance-update-for-restricted-return-to-activity-for-coaches-leaders-athletes-runners-and-facilities/>

² https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/lifting-lockdown-how-approach-coronavirus-exit-strategy_0.pdf

Return to Activity Phases

Element of the sport	Lockdown	Red Phase 1	Amber Phase 2	Green Phase 3
Competition	All competition suspended. Virtual competitions only which must be undertaken solo in line with published Public Health Wales & Welsh Government guidance.	All competition suspended. Virtual competitions only which must be undertaken with one other person or small group in line with published Public Health Wales & Welsh Government guidance. Participation to remain local/from home.	All competition suspended. Virtual events still to be the primary form of competition but may now be undertaken in line with Public Health Wales & Welsh Government guidance. Athletes able to travel to facilities to participate/compete.	Events may resume whilst maintaining social distancing, in line with Public Health Wales & Welsh Government guidance.
Officiating	All competition suspended.	All competition suspended. Officials may support virtual competitions through the scrutiny of results.	All competition except virtual suspended. Officials may support virtual competitions through the scrutiny of results. They may also support virtual events at local facilities in line with Public Health Wales & Welsh Government guidance.	Officials should be able to resume 'normal' event roles at local events in line with Public Health Wales & Welsh Government guidance.

Proposed Timelines

- 31st July – Welsh Government announcement due
- 3rd August 2020 – Track & Field Licensing opens for competition until 30th September.
- 15th-16th August 2020 – Pilot competitions only to take place in conjunction with Welsh Athletics
- 17th August 2020 – Licensed competition to take place (subject to successful pilot events)

Proposed License Application Deadlines:

Competition Dates	License Application Deadline
17/08/2020 – 31/08/2020	07/08/2020
01/09/2020 – 30/09/2020	14/08/2020

General Overview

Everyone associated with a competition should monitor themselves daily for any sign of the virus as well as general health. This includes Officials and volunteers. Everyone should follow the advice of their GP or medical practitioner in all cases. Anyone showing signs of ill health or symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend the competition in any capacity.

In returning to any competition, all Officials will opt-in to the activity, acknowledging that they accept that any risk of COVID-19 transmission has been reduced but not eliminated.

There is no obligation for any Official to return to competitions.

Accepting Selections

There is no obligation for Officials to accept a selection to officiate at any meeting.

Officials will be contacted by the Competition Organiser directly and should accept their selection in writing. Competition Organisers may be required to submit proof of the Officials at their event when completing their license application. As a minimum, the numbers of officials appointed in each discipline will be needed on the application form.

Officials will be contacted who are local to the competition venue as a priority in order to minimise travel and accommodation requirements.

The Competition Organisers will communicate all health and safety measures that have been implemented, to Officials prior to the meeting, along with the usual pre-event information.

Officiating Duties During a Return to Competition

Officials and volunteers must ensure that they always adhere to social distancing laws in both warm-up and competition environments. Anyone involved in the competition should ensure they have followed government hygiene rules including washing hands and cleaning any equipment prior to use, in addition to any hygiene guidance put in place by the facility. All of this information must be circulated to all involved with the competition by the Competition Provider.

Given smaller numbers of athletes and the fact that some individual officials may have more duties than usual, it is envisaged that the pace of competition will be slower than 'normal'.

What follows provides suggestions for safe competition delivery within the Rules for Competition using the minimum number of Technical Officials.

General & Domestic Arrangements

- Officials should be advised to travel to events separately by car unless they are from the same household. Public transport should only be used as a last resort where individual travel by car is not possible.

- Consider how officials will sign in for the event whilst avoiding any unnecessary contact with surfaces.
- Officials rest area should not be inside the stadium. Only outdoor areas should be used where there is capacity for separate access & egress and where social distancing can be maintained.
- Consider how you will provide officials with refreshments whilst ensuring that current hygiene measures are adhered to.
- All officials should be provided with PPE. As a minimum, masks and gloves are recommended.
- Accommodation needs should be kept to a minimum by using local officials.
- Consider how toilet access will be provided for officials. This will vary between facilities.
- Where radios are required for an event, these should be sanitised before and after use. Consider how they will be distributed whilst maintaining social distancing and avoiding any unnecessary transmissions between individuals.

Field Judges

Throws

Athletes must use the same implement throughout the competition for all throws.
Throwing circles must be swept and cleaned after each competition.

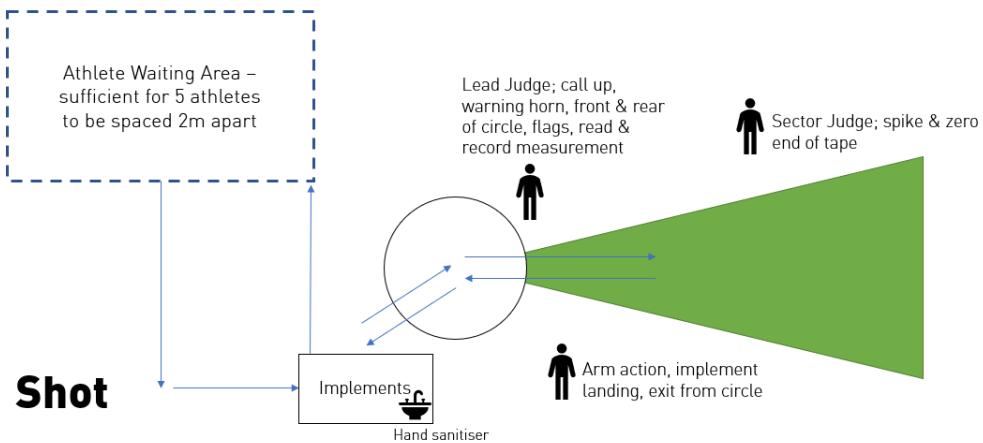
Warm up for throws events can mirror competition procedures. It is envisaged that a combination of personal implements and those provided by Competition Organisers will be necessary. Appropriate sanitising procedures should be in place to allow this to happen – where an athlete is using their own implement, this is not to be shared. During warm-up and competition, athletes should use the same implement (*in the case of personal javelins, this may be more than one*).

The diagrams below associated to each event are an example of how one-way routing can be used for both athletes and officials to ensure that social distancing is always adhered to. These are for illustration/example purposes only, and each Competition Provider should implement the most appropriate solution for their individual event and venue.

Shot Put

Athletes could retrieve their own implement after throwing. **NOTE: they will still be required to leave through the back of the circle.**

1. Lead Judge; call up; card 1; front & rear of circle; flags; read & record measurement.
2. Arm action; implement landing and exit from circle; pull tape through.
3. Sector judge; spike and zero end of tape.

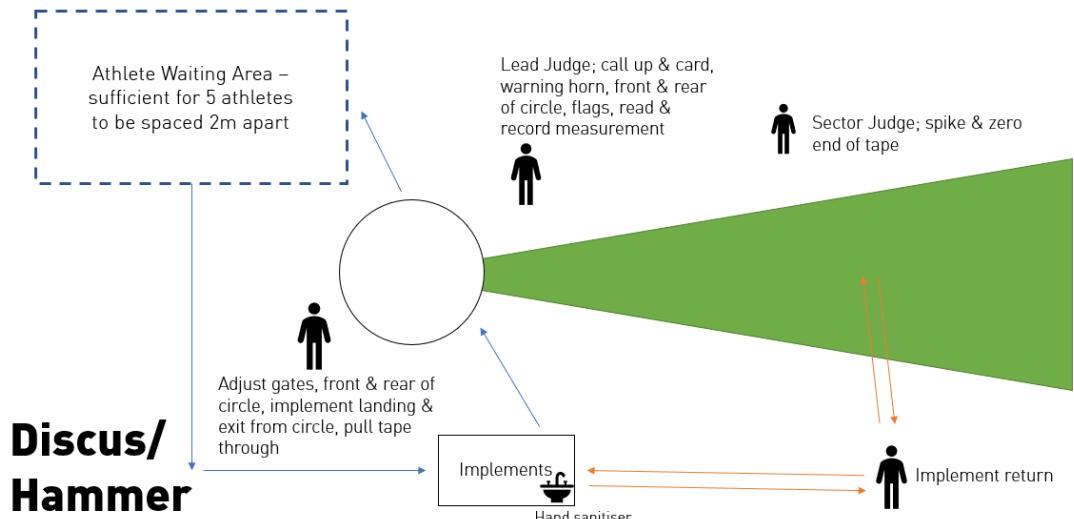


Discus and Hammer

Implements should be returned to a point at least 5m from the circle and athletes should retrieve from there.

Should an implement be caught in the net, it is the responsibility of one designated official/volunteer throughout the competition to retrieve that implement. Hygiene regulations must be adhered to once the implement has been retrieved. The implement must be sanitised before the athlete can continue.

1. Lead Judge; call up; card 1; warning horn; front and rear of circle; flags; read & record measurement.
2. Adjust Hammer gates; front & rear of circle; implement landing and exit from circle; pull tape through (*move to outside rear of cage to do so*).
3. Sector judge; spike & zero end of tape.
4. Return implements to designated 5m point from the circle.

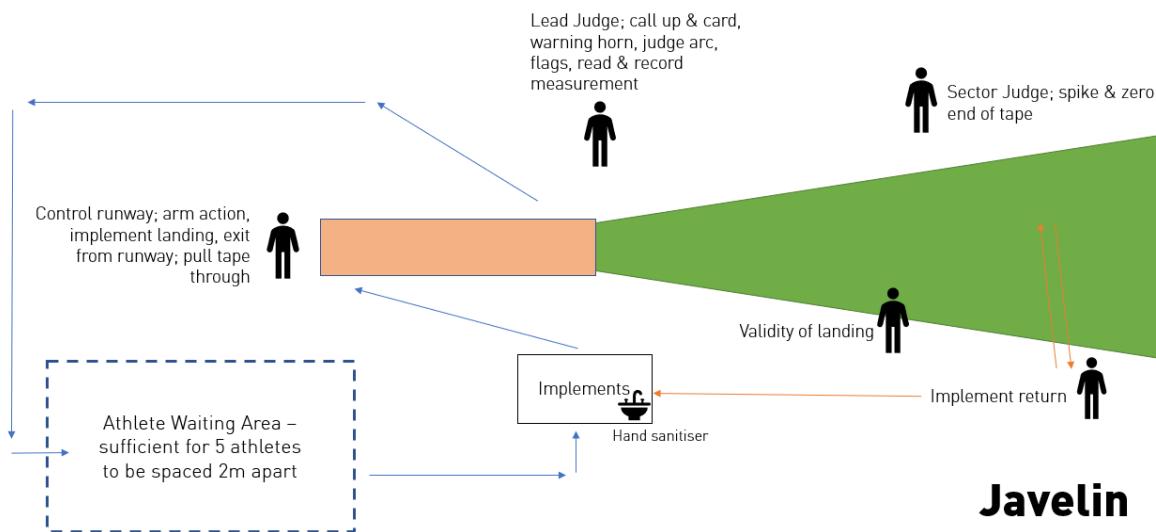


Javelin

Implements should be returned to a point at least 5m from the runway and athletes should retrieve from there.

To avoid the need for sanitisation of runway markers, the use of shoes, bottles etc. should be permitted.

1. Lead Judge; call up; card 1; warning horn; judge arc; flags; read & record measurement
2. Control runway; arm action; implement landing & exit from runway; pull tape through.
3. Sector judge; spike & zero end of tape.
4. Validity of implement landing.
5. Return implements to designated 5m point from the runway.



Jumps

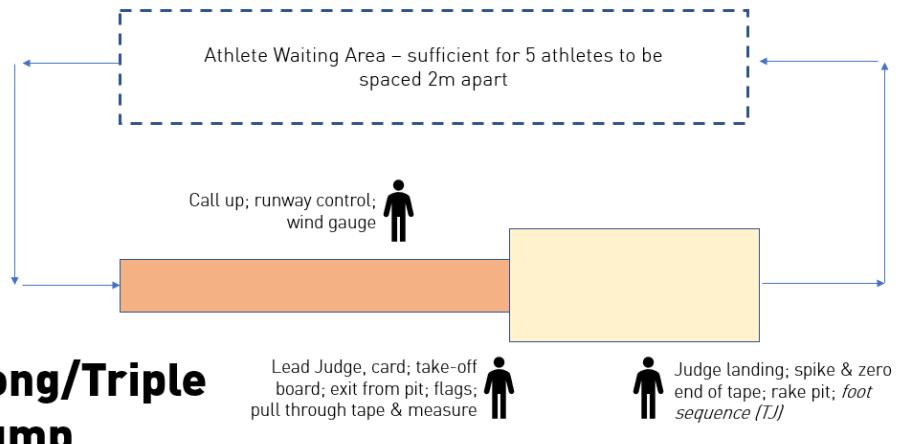
Long & Triple Jump

To avoid the need for sanitisation of runway markers, the use of shoes, bottles etc. should be permitted.

Athletes may be grouped in pools according to their preferred take-off board in order to minimise the number of times the boards are changed.

1. ; card 1; take-off board; exit from pit; flags; pull tape through and Lead Judge measure.
2. Judge landing; spike & zero end of tape; rake pit (foot sequence in Triple Jump).
3. Call-up; runway control; wind gauge.

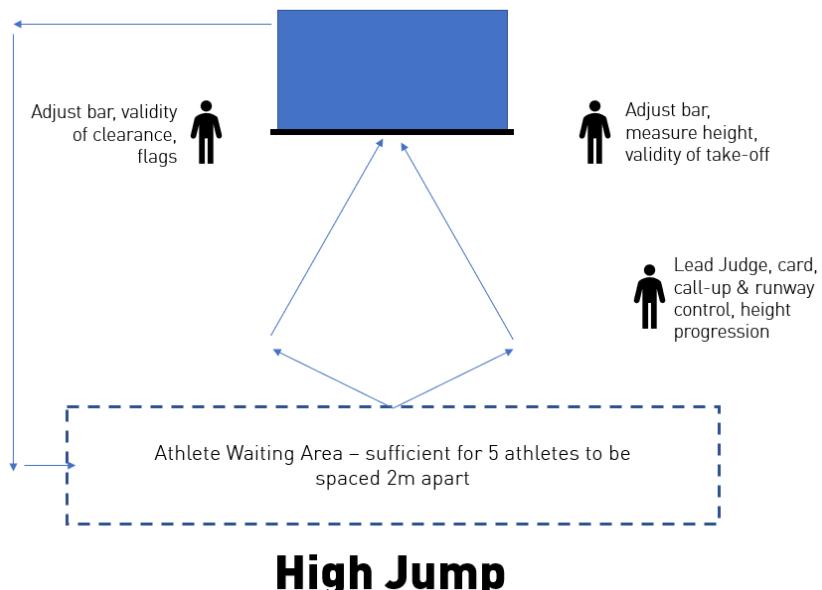
If possible, an additional raker on the opposite side of the pit would help to speed up the pace of the competition. If no wind gauge (although this is recommended for Power of 10), Chief Judge could call up athletes from the board.



High Jump

Disinfecting the landing area remains the responsibility of the facility provider. The process for this should be communicated to Officials prior to the competition by the Competition Provider.

1. Lead Judge; card; call-up & runway control; height progression.
2. Adjust bar; measure height; validity of take-off
3. Adjust bar; validity of clearance; flags.

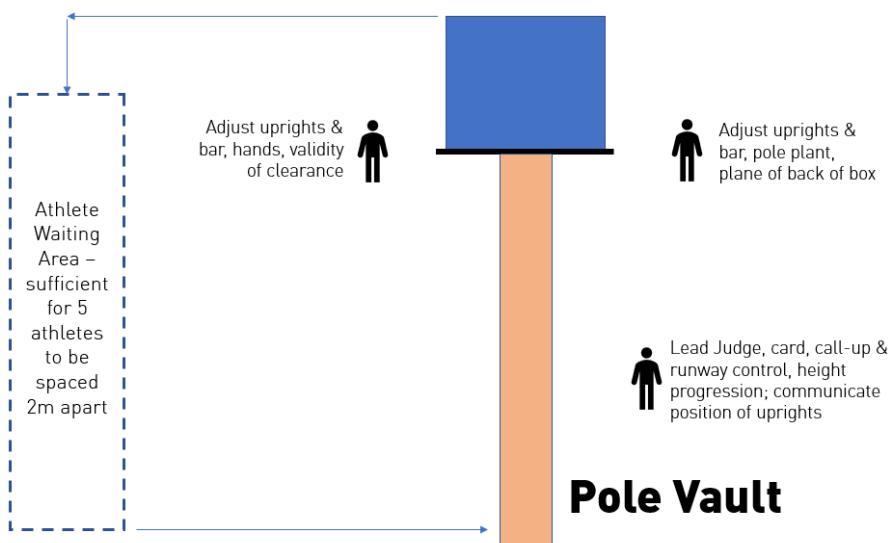


Pole Vault

Athletes should be encouraged not to share poles wherever possible, but if this is absolutely necessary, poles should be re-gripped, and anywhere outside the grip should be cleaned before being used by a different athlete.

Disinfecting the landing area remains the responsibility of the facility provider. The process for this should be communicated to Officials prior to the competition by the Competition Provider.

1. **Lead Judge**; card; call-up; runway control; height progression; communicate position of uprights.
2. Adjust uprights & bar; hands; validity of clearance; flags.
3. Adjust uprights & bar; pole plant; plane of back of box (*may need to adjust position when uprights are adjusted*).



Photofinish

Consider the space available in the photofinish room and whether social distancing will be possible. Additional cabling and use of additional spaces/rooms might allow safe arrangements to be made. This will be specific to each venue.

It is not regarded as good practice to use only one photofinish operator. Suitably experienced teams of two, who can take appropriate action should system problems occur, may be effective for smaller meetings. It will be for Competition Organisers to decide what is acceptable for the production of valid results.

It is envisaged that leg numbers will not be required during an initial return to competition as athletes will not be permitted to leave their lane or change their lane draw, and numbers in each race will be limited. Results should be transferred electronically to the results team.

No paperwork should be printed, but electronic records kept only. Radio communication may be used to confirm when results are final should any races require further checks.

Mice, keyboards and other equipment must not be shared, and should be used by one person only for the duration of the meeting. All computer equipment should be wiped and cleaned in line with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidelines before and after use (*anti-viral wipes*).

Starters/Starters Assistants

Competition Organisers will decide the composition of heats and lane draws, including the number of athletes in each race, in accordance with Welsh Government and Public Health Wales guidelines, and Governing Body requirements. These should not be changed by officials.

It should be possible to carry out duties as normal whilst still maintaining required social distancing. It is envisaged that one Starter and one Starters' Assistant could cover what is required during an initial return to competition.

Officials should not handle blocks under any circumstances. It is the responsibility of the Competition Organiser, working with the facility operators, to ensure that suitable hygiene and cleaning procedure are in place.

Athletes will be required to wash their hands immediately before and after each race to avoid the need to sanitise the starting area (400m & below) between each race. If it is not possible for athletes to clean their hands immediately before and after their race, the starting area of the track surface should be sprayed clean by one designated Official or volunteer before the next heat/competition can take place.

Timekeepers

It is envisaged that a maximum of three Timekeepers, including a referee could operate in a grandstand at the finish line whilst maintaining social distancing.

Even where Photofinish is in operation, at least one Timekeeper must be appointed.

Timekeepers must use their own equipment including, but not limited to, stopwatches and timing pads. Consider issuing timing sheets to timekeepers via email prior to the competition so they can print and bring with them to the event.

Track Judges

It is envisaged that a maximum of three Track Judges, including a referee could operate at the finish line whilst maintaining social distancing. In this instance, one would be at the top of the stand, a second might be on a raised step in front of the stand, with a third operating at track level.

Avoid using a lapboard and bell.

Umpiring positions can safely be accommodated whilst maintaining social distancing.

Management Roles

Officials in a management role should wear full PPE as they will need access to all competition areas.

The Meeting Manager should not occupy any other Officiating role during the competition to enable them ensure that all present at the event are adhering to social distancing regulations and any other mitigations put in place by the Competition Provider at all times.

Non-Technical/Volunteer Roles

Any volunteers/marshals at registration should wear full PPE. At the registration desk, bib numbers (if used) should only be handled with gloves on. No safety pins should be distributed at the event – athletes should be instructed to provide their own.

If an announcer is to be used, consider that officials will have more challenges communicating with athletes when wearing PPE.

No seeding will be done on the day of competition – heat and lane draws will be pre-determined by the Competition Organiser and distributed to athletes prior to the event. No paper startlists or results should be required.

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 acting or refraining from action on any of the contents of this guidance.

This guidance has been prepared by Welsh Athletics Ltd.

- [**The full suite of Return to Athletics guidance documents are available here**](#)