



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
Sports Service

Safety @ Sport

ADDENDUM - COVID-19

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Version 1



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Safety@Sport

The Safety@sport guidance document has been produced by the University of Cambridge Sports Service to support University Sports Clubs in running safe, well managed, supportive, and successful clubs.

This Addendum has been produced in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. This document will be kept under continuous review and will be updated as regularly as is feasible. The document will be sent to clubs each time it is updated.



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SECTION 1) INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The impact of the pandemic on the world has been enormous and it will continue in the short-, medium- and long-term. At the time of writing, the situation in England has moved to a stage where more activities are beginning to be permitted and sports clubs are looking to remobilise. This content of this document provides information on when Clubs may be able to look to recommence, how recommencement will be authorised by the Sports Service as well as practical information on the management that will be needed.

It is important to understand that remobilisation itself is a process that is not to be rushed and that will need to be considered approaches based on difficult judgements – largely due to the lack of precedent and certainty in the situation and the nature of the hazard – but also because of concerns around liability should individuals become infected.

Sources of Information and Communications

Clubs should monitor the following sources of information:

1. NGB guidance
2. Sports Service Guidance (this document and other direct communications)
3. Communications from the facilities at which the club operates.

As they were in the period leading up to the lockdown, NGBs and their respective approaches to remobilisation and guidance to members, clubs and facilities will play a very significant role. **It is, however, important to understand the NGB guidance is not, in itself, a 'green light' for your Club to start practicing your sport again.** It is clear from early examples, that NGBs understand that safe management of the sport will depend largely on the facility operators and consideration of all specific arrangements within those facilities. In turn, facility operators will rely heavily on guidance and approaches from government, from overarching organisations (i.e. The University), from industry guidance and information from their insurers.

At the point at which it may become possible to recommence sporting activities, usually when the NGB is able to offer some guidance on safely conducting activities, clubs should contact the facility operators for their activities and seek to understand the arrangements that they are putting in place and the potential timescales that are likely to be involved. They should look closely at the NGB guidance and contact the Safety and Compliance Officer within the Sports Service to discuss how they intend to put appropriate management and control measures in place and adhere to control measures put in place by the facility.

Activities may only recommence once the Sports Service has been satisfied that the appropriate measures are in place, regardless of whether the activities are to take place on University facilities.

Clubs will need to understand that all facility operators – including the Sports Service - will have a multitude of issues to contend with prior to being able to reopen. All of the normal Health and Safety requirements remain unchanged and the first duty will be to ensure the safety of their own staff so far as is reasonably practicable. Issues such as PPE shortages, social distancing arrangements, shielding staff with underlying health conditions will all be challenges to overcome – along with financial issues and a myriad of other changes to the previous ways of operating. It is likely that there will be a time delay in reopening facilities once they are permitted to reopen by the Government, which may be a matter of weeks rather than days. Clubs must be understanding of the issues faced by facility operators and should not seek alternate venues simply because they may reopen more quickly, without consideration of the wider and longer-term implications of such a move.

If your club principally operates at the University Sports Centre, Wilberforce Road Sports Ground or Fenner's Sports Ground then the Sports Service will contact you when there are plans to reopen. At the time of writing, all facilities remain fully closed.

SECTION 2) MANAGEMENT OF SAFETY

Overview

Once recommencement becomes possible, the specifics of managing your sport will have to be fully considered.

Essentially, exposure to COVID is another hazard that will have to be managed in the same way as all hazards identified by the club. It therefore follows that the club will either have a specific COVID risk assessment or it will need to be added into the existing club risk assessment.

Once the risk assessment is undertaken, the identified control measures must be enacted and reviewed as necessary, e.g. whenever there is a relevant updates guidance. As with all safety management arrangements within the club environment, control measures must be effectively communicated throughout the club.

As well as completing your risk assessment, you will need to conduct some safety checks of your equipment and also consider

Risk Assessment

Whilst the Sports Service will endeavour to provide a template risk assessment, this will not be a straightforward task – given the huge variation between sports when it comes to numbers of participants, equipment, environment...

The principle item to be assessed will be the control potential virus spreading points and the section below has all list of items that you will need to consider.

It is likely that adding a new hazard to your risk assessment will have knock on effects elsewhere, so consideration of additional hazards that may result from new COVID-related control measures will also need to be recognised and assessed. Here are two possible examples:

1. Previously, activities required a minimum number of participants undertaking certain roles in order to be safe. Your new risk assessment may require reduced number of participants and you will therefore need to assess how the club ensures that activity is safe.
2. Your new risk assessment identifies, on advice from your NGB, insurer and/or facility operator that your equipment must be cleansed between uses. The club therefore has to put in place a cleaning regime and appropriate cleaning solutions into use, meaning that there are new risks with relation to safely managing and disposing of cleaning solutions.

Clubs will need to closely consider their full risk assessments and their ability to manage in line with guidance.

Hazards to consider

As above, the principle addition to your risk assessment will be control of possible spread of the virus. The hazards within that will be direct person-to-person transmission and transmission via contact with surfaces and items.

Person-to-person transmission will have to be controlled through social distancing. The example of high-level professional sport so far highlights that team sport environments is only possible with strict and comprehensive testing regimes and full sporting practices are likely to be ruled out for some time at lower levels. Several team sports have produced guidance based on phased return to full activities (but will be unable to put dates against each phase) and initially non-contact and distanced training may be the only type of activity that is possible. Social distancing measures will likely be outlined by NGB guidance.

Equipment will likely be the area that clubs have to find new ways of operating. Sharing of equipment will have to be, at the very least, greatly reduced if not eradicated for a long period of time. Cleaning regimes will also need to be far more comprehensive than they may have been previously. Clubs should look to consider the impact that this may have as soon as possible.

For your initial training sessions and activities, consideration will likely need to be given to the period of time since individuals have played the sport. Training programmes should be adjusted to suit the conditioning of members and considerate of a prolonged period away from practicing skills.

At the current time, first aid regulations remain largely unchanged, with the exception of removal of rescue breaths from CPR such that only chest compressions should be undertaken. Beyond that, it is likely that some facilities will not open indoor spaces initially and it is important that clubs be aware of changes to first aid arrangements and access to facilities.

Management of activities

The impacts of the pandemic will be felt across all club activities – not just the sporting side. Social events, travel and transport all elements of club activities will have to be considered when hazards and control measures are considered. The extent to which the impact will be felt is likely to only become clear over a period of months. Clubs need to be prepared to operate very differently to anything that has gone on before.

Travelling and Tours

It is likely that there will be tight restrictions on clubs undertaking travel and trips as part of their activities. Whilst it is still to be confirmed, the University is likely to not allow international travel in the coming academic year and clubs should plan to not conduct any trips or tours.

Monitoring

If and when a club is able recommence activities, it must ensure that the new control measures it identifies are fully implemented. The Sports Service will be completing inspections and audits of club activities to ensure they are in compliance with the risk assessment and to identify any possible improvements.

SECTION 3) TEMPLATE RISK ASSESSMENT

Template

It is not yet possible to provide a template risk assessment for COVID-19 measures but we hope to include one in future versions.

SPORTS SERVICE CONTACT FOR SAFETY



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