

PHASED RETURN TO ACTIVITY GUIDANCE FOR SNOWSPORT ATHLETES

4th August 2020

This guidance might be updated in due course

Introduction

This guidance document has been developed with the continuation of developments in the guidelines outlined by the government on through June, July and August 2020, and can be used from 6th August 2020. All Snowsport England guidance will be updated as per government guidelines when they are made available or as soon as possible thereafter.

These guidelines apply to **England only** and are based on those detailing the use of public spaces, outdoor activity and exercise. More details are available [here](#). **We recommend that you stay up-to-date with government guidance at all times. Government guidance supersedes all advice given by the governing body and must be followed at all times**

The safety and wellbeing of all snowsport users, coaches and the wider community is at the heart of any guidance that Snowsport England is distributing.

We know that snowsport enthusiasts, athletes, coaches and Snowsport venues will be keen to resume activity as soon as it is safe and appropriate for them to do so. Snowsport England recognises that wish BUT at the same time wants to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of everyone in the snowsport community, facility providers and the wider community is considered as the priority.

The guidance that follows provides sport specific advice to help engage snowsport users. **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.**

Please check for any local lockdowns which may impact your ability to take part in snowsports.

It is the responsibility of each snowsport user, 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.

YOUR HEALTH

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

This guidance has been published on the understanding that it is an interpretation of government guidance relevant to all snowsport activity. It is likely to change at short notice, in which case we will publish updates through the [Snowsport England](#) and social media channels.

All parties should note the disclaimer at the end of this piece. Please also read:

1. Guidance for Snowsport Facilities – Phased return to activity
2. Guidance for Snowsport Instructors/Coaches – Phased return to activity
3. Guidance for Affiliated Snowsport Clubs
4. Health and Safety Guidance: Return to Activity
5. Covid Secure Environment

Before & After Training

Stay up-to-date

- Check all guidance that has been published, especially concerning social distancing and hygiene and any athletic specific guidance.
- Be aware guidance can change quickly and more restrictive rules may be applied in the future, so please refer to the [Snowsport England](https://www.snowsportengland.co.uk/) website regularly.
- **[UPDATED]** Snowsport activity can now take place in unlimited numbers as long as it is within a COVID secure environment (which can be an outdoor slope, cycle track (for roller skiing), indoor slope (25th July) open space such as a park. Where a COVID secure environment is not in place groups will need to be either 2 household units or a maximum of 6.
- **[UPDATED]** A coach can carry out a coaching session with a group, the group sizes should be agreed with the facility and ensure the sizes of the groups does not impact ability to ensure Covid Control Measures are followed.
- It is recommended that a time buffer is built in between sessions to enable social distancing and adequate cleaning, according to guidelines, to take place.
- Check directly with your Club on their policy, outdoor slope facilities should only open at the discretion and with the consent of the facility owner, provider, or contractor.

Before leaving home

- Follow all hygiene guidance including washing your hands.
- Ensure that all arrangements have been made prior to leaving home so that any government advice on social distancing, as an example, can be maintained at any facility. This may mean prior coordination of activities with your coach or the facility management.
- At this point in time only outdoor facilities may be used. Indoor facilities can open from the 25th July 2020– see our **Guidance for Snowsport Venues** document for further guidance.
- Athletes should ensure they are prepared and have planned for circumstances where injuries or other accidents occur, and they have mitigating procedures and plans in place to resolve the issue while maintaining all government guidance.
- Ensure you have enough food and hydration for the session.
- Be aware that changing facilities and toilets may not be open.
- Athletes should ensure that any risk has been assessed in carrying out their activity.

Equipment/Facility

- Take hand sanitizer with you.
- Read all the facility guidance in our Guidance for Snowsport Venues document.
- Ensure that all equipment is cleaned before and after use.
- Government advice on cleaning is [here](#).

Training and coaching

- Do not congregate before or after training, return home.
- Ensure specific event guidelines are followed – read [Section 2](#) of this document.

Section 2: Athlete Guidance

Younger athletes (under 18 years of age)

- **[UPDATED]** A coach can carry out a coaching session with a group, the group sizes should be agreed with the facility and ensure the sizes of the groups does not impact ability to ensure Covid Control Measures are followed.
- **[NEW]** Young people (under 18's) should be coached / led in groups of no more than 15. More info can be found via [Department for Education](#)
- Coaches must ensure they have the permission/agreement of the responsible parent or guardian of an athlete who is under the age of 18 to coach that athlete.
- Coaching of young athletes should only be undertaken **in sight of** the parent or guardian due to the one-to-one nature of coaching restrictions at the current time.
- Social distancing guidance must be maintained at all times.

Masters athletes

- All guidance applicable to coaches and athletes in this document is relevant to Masters athletes.
- In addition, government guidance on vulnerable persons should be adhered to, if relevant, and taken into account by coaches and individual athletes.

Disabled athletes

- Higher Risk: athletes in the higher risk groups should follow any medical guidance they have been given about ensuring good health and welfare. If there are further concerns, please consult with your medical or national organisations for support and best practice.
- General Assistance: disabled athletes requiring support are permitted to bring one carer with them to training provided this person is part of their normal 'family' unit. This could include athletes with an intellectual impairment, athletes needing support fastening boots, changing, stretching etc. Coaches should maintain social distancing guidance.
- **[UPDATED]** VI Guides: currently, with the social distancing rule of 1m+ being in place, unless the guide is a family member or part of a family unit then snowsport guiding should only be done if guidelines can be safely followed.
- Equipment: para athletes will be permitted to use their personal snowsport equipment. Hygiene guidance should be followed at all times.
- Accessible Toilets: see our Guidance for Snowsport Venues document, be aware that these may not be open.

Communication and facility liaison

- Coaches and athletes should ensure when they are planning to use a facility that they coordinate all activities prior to coaching to ensure social distancing, as well as health and safety and cleaning protocols, can be carried out.
- This communication should take place between all coaches or coaching coordinators and facility providers.
- Coaches and athletes can access and utilise facilities with the permission of the facility owner/ management. They should not access any facilities if they do not have permission to use and should at all times adhere to any guidance put in place.
- Coaches and athletes should be aware of any restrictions around toilets and specific access issues for athletes with a disability or vulnerable athletes. In all cases they should ensure government guidance is followed and a risk assessment in place before any coaching takes place.

Pre-Session guidance

- In all cases normal coaching practice with risk assessment and high-quality practice should be adhered to as well as implementing any requirements around social distancing and hygiene.
- All coaches and athletes should ensure they have followed government hygiene rules including washing hands and cleaning any equipment prior to use. (See our Guidance for Snowsport Venues document).
- All coaches and athletes must follow any hygiene guidance put in place by a facility.

During the Session

- Coaches and athletes should ensure they maintain social distancing appropriate for the activity.
- ONE mat gap is not socially distanced.
- Stubbies and full-sized gates can be used by **one** training group at a time provided the equipment is thoroughly cleaned according to club/ facility guidance before and after each session. During the session, only the coach of this session should handle the equipment whilst wearing appropriate PPE
- Coaches and athletes should ensure all equipment (skis, snowboards, roller skis, helmets/pads and boots) is used by one athlete and then thoroughly cleaned according to guidance before and after each session.
- Moveable freestyle equipment may be used using the group sizes set out above. All equipment is to be cleaned before and after each session and used by one group at a time. When moving equipment social distancing guidelines should be followed and appropriate PPE to be used when cleaning and moving.
- Coaches should ensure they maintain social distancing at all times as well as maintain social distancing from any other coaches and athletes using adjacent space.
- Coaches are encouraged to be creative around event specific drills and other activities to bring athletes out of 'lockdown' in preparation for when this equipment can be used in a later 'step'.

Roller Ski Sessions in a public space

- **[UPDATED]** Snowsport activity can now take place in unlimited numbers as long as it is within a COVID secure environment (which can be an outdoor slope, cycle track (for roller skiing), indoor slope (25th July) open space such as a park. Where a COVID secure environment is not in place groups will need to be either 2 household units or a maximum of 6.
- **[UPDATED]** A coach can carry out a coaching session with a group, the group sizes should be agreed with the facility and ensure the sizes of the groups does not impact ability to ensure Covid Control Measures are followed.
- Coaches and athletes should adhere to all restrictions that may be placed on a public space by the owner of that space.
- A coach can carry out a coaching session with one athlete group and then coach another group after the conclusion of the first session. Coaches should not coach more than one group at any one time.
- Coaches should ensure they have carried out a standard risk assessment of any training space or route, as they would normally, prior to the session taking place.
- Coaches and athletes should ensure they carry out standard safety procedures (e.g. phones, route planning etc) when accessing 'wild' public spaces.
- Coaches and athletes aiming to access trails and mountains or public spaces a long way from assistance and emergency services should make themselves aware of any local guidance/considerations prior to travel/training. Consideration of whether the activity could add to pressure on emergency services should be taken.

Section 3: 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 Snowsport England 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. Snowsport England 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 Snowsport England.

