

# Artistic Swimming competitive training and competition

Guidance

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## Introduction

After announcements made by the Government on 12 July, Club activity can resume from 19 July with any number of participants.

All activity **MUST** be carefully managed so that the virus does not spread as a result of any Artistic Swimming activity. This is a collective responsibility and all requirements must be considered and managed by all organisers of all activity.

This document includes detailed information on the safe delivery of routine training and competitive activity for duets and teams.

The guidelines that follow are in place to mitigate the transmission risk of Covid-19 and safeguard athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers as we safely return to routine training. Returning to routine training should only happen once teams have completed the necessary risk assessments and comprehensive plans are in place with the club and the facility.

It is recommended that athletes stay within the same team groupings to reduce the risk of transmission whilst creating a bubble within their group.

In the meantime, please remember anyone who is deemed vulnerable in respect of Covid-19 is reminded to follow the Government's guidance, only returning to Artistic Swimming activity when it is right for them to do so. There is no pressure to return. Everyone's health, wellbeing and safety are the priorities.

Please also bear in mind the recent **Public Health England (PHE) report**, which has highlighted a greater risk from Covid-19 to people from ethnically diverse communities. As the current impact of this is not yet fully understood, we acknowledge that this may cause increased concerns and levels of anxiety for some members.

### **Important**

If you are showing symptoms of the virus or have been in contact with someone displaying symptoms within the last two weeks, then you must follow government guidance.

## Covid-19 can be transmitted in three ways:

- Droplet transmission when in close contact with others.
- Airborne transmission which is a risk particularly when indoors.
- Population – the number of participants likely to take part in proposed activity.

To ensure that our sport can return safely to competitive training activity, a number of considerations surrounding typical routine swimming will occur.

All involved in Artistic Swimming must familiarise themselves with this document to ensure the safe delivery of all activity.

Based on research undertaken on routines based analysis, expert advice from the sport, and existing Swim England guidance around activity in a chlorinated environment, we believe that Artistic Swimming presents a low-medium level risk as a sport.

Sport	Droplet and airborne transmission	Population
Artistic Swimming	The research demonstrates that Artistic Swimmers typically are face-to-face with another athlete less than three seconds within the maximum of a four minute routine.	Artistic Swimming team routines are small groups between four to a maximum of 10 athletes swimming at one time enabling numbers to be managed.  Swimmers are not typically in high risk groups.  Any swimmer with underlying health conditions can be advised accordingly and this is mitigated in the sport specific action plan.

## Test and Trace

All participants (athletes, coaches, and support staff) in the training session or competitions have the responsibility to notify the Club should they display symptoms of Covid-19 within 48 hours of a training session and or competition.

Anyone with symptoms should ask for a test online or call to arrange a test by calling 119 on the same day. They must complete the test within the government guidelines. The Club should be notified.

In addition to the above advice, The Club needs to contact all individuals that attended the training session to advise that an individual within that group has reported symptoms. If the individual is a coach, then all participants of all sessions will need to be contacted.

If a member of the club presents with symptoms within 48 hours of a competitive activity and has been in contact with swimmers and officials in the interim, then training/practice/competitions by the club must be suspended and a period of isolation as set out by the government followed, currently 10 days for an individuals. [Click here for more information.](#)

The name of the infected individual is not to be disclosed to protect anonymity.

All attendees of the session should be advised to isolate for 10 days (as per government guidelines) in case symptoms arise. In the event there is a confirmed positive case then the Club should advise.

For more information on the UK Governments Test and Trace and how it works, [click here.](#)

## Action Plan Guidance

This guidance and all activity detailed within this document should only recommence once all the following is in place. These are not exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with the UK government guidance.

- Appoint one person, if possible, to be responsible for music systems and have the music on one device.
- Read and understand this guidance in full.
- Risk assess activity within your organisation.
- Develop and activate a risk mitigation plan.

## The summary of main points from the return to competitive training for artistic swimming:

### Artistic Specific Swimming and Drills

Following on from our Return to Training guidance released in May 2021, if advice surrounding specific swimming and technical drills has been followed and athletes' fitness levels and technical skills have been built up progressively, we recommend that time spent doing technical drills and specific swimming can slightly reduce to allow more time for duet and team training.

Please bear in mind that technical drills and specific swimming need to be done throughout the season and this will significantly help the standard of routines by increasing aerobic/anaerobic capacity, technical ability, and body awareness. We therefore advise to continue to incorporate these aspects into the athletes' warm-ups or that the athletes' are encouraged to do extra sessions alongside routine training to help personal development. Please see below some advice on how to progress training in these areas further as routine training starts to increase.

To replicate the routines more closely, we recommend both building up the specific swimming to include more anaerobic work such as breath holding and sprints, and incorporating speed of movement exercises to facilitate fast twitch muscle recruitment in athletes.

Once the athletes have re-mastered their vertical alignment and body awareness, technical work can progress to include both longer endurance focused sculling holds and fast/explosive movements such as barracudas.

## Duet and teams

This guide has been developed for Participants, Coaches and Facility Operators.

Who	Area	Guidance
BEFORE Artistic Swimming Return to competitive training, grade days and competitions:		
Clubs / Facility Operators	Basics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone should be reminded to maintain good hand hygiene on arrival at the venue.</li> <li>Clubs/teams should ensure they are affiliated for the 2020/21 season ahead of any grading and competitions.</li> <li>Each club must only return to sport when they are ready and have the appropriate measures in place as developed by Swim England and general Government guidance in relation to recreational sport.</li> <li>All clubs must identify a volunteer who will be responsible for developing a risk assessment prior to the restart of any activity.</li> <li>The appointed volunteer at each club will be responsible for clearly communicating all relevant information to its members, coaches and volunteers.</li> </ul>
	Arrival reminders	<p>Clubs/facilities should consider further mitigations to ensure safe arrival at venues, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In line with current Government guidance, all participants (swimmers, coaches, club and officials, volunteers, spectators etc.) should check for symptoms of Covid-19.</li> <li>If an individual is symptomatic and/or living in a household with a possible Covid-19 infection they should remain at home and follow Government guidance. In addition, any participants who have been asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they are a contact of a known Covid-19 case, must not exercise outside their home or garden and must not exercise with others;</li> <li>Clear signage (e.g. for one-way systems) to manage entry and general movement around the venue.</li> </ul>
	Safety briefing	In competitive artistic swimming activities, the volunteer/or appointed coach for each club must ensure a safety briefing is provided before the commencement of any training/grading/competitions. This briefing will remind swimmers and officials about their responsibilities in complying with the Code of Behaviour set out in <b>Appendix 1</b> to this guidance.
	Local Lockdowns	In the event of local lockdowns, Swim England will follow government guidance according to the specific implications for Artistic Swimming in each case which may vary.
	Pre-Attendance Symptom Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All swimmers, officials, volunteers and spectators must have completed a <b>health survey</b> and <b>return to training declaration</b> prior to returning for the first time. No-one should leave home to participate in any form of Artistic Swimming if they, or someone they live with, has any Covid-19 symptoms.</li> <li>Should an individual have demonstrated any such symptoms, they must not participate. Instead they should follow NHS and PHE guidance on self-isolation: <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/">nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/</a></li> </ul>

	Pre-Attendance Symptom Check <i>(continued)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone who has already been instructed to self-isolate by a health care practitioner or PHE should continue to follow this advice and may not participate.</li> <li>• Participants (or parents) will be made aware of any increased risk associated with taking part in activity, based on the assessment undertaken by the club.</li> </ul>
	Safe guarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you choose for your child to take part, you will need to give your written consent to the club and or coach by completing the Return to Training Declaration.</li> <li>• You may already be aware that the period of isolation may have resulted in your child becoming anxious or unsure whether to resume previous activities. Please only support their return to activity when they feel confident to do so and you feel the activity is safe and right for them.</li> <li>• Ensure your child takes their own water bottle, equipment and their own hand sanitiser, both clearly marked with their name. They must not share these with anyone else.</li> <li>• Please ensure your child/children know how to maintain good hygiene and hand washing.</li> <li>• Despite the changed circumstances the organiser of the activity still has a responsibility to implement safeguarding requirements. Anyone involved in activity directly with children (anyone aged under 18), must have an in-date DBS Check, is responsible for ensuring the environment is safe and should have completed the approved safeguarding training.</li> <li>• Coaches must ensure the ratio of coaches to children is appropriate – see Swim England safeguarding policy, <a href="#">Wavepower</a>.</li> </ul>
DURING Artistic Swimming Return to competitive training, grade days and competitions:		
	Routine training	<p>See below a series of steps and considerations that we advise you adopt as part of returning to competitive training.</p> <p>Clubs should determine the appropriate ratio of coaches to participants, following the relevant Swim England safeguarding policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible maintain training bubbles to minimise the risk of transmission.</li> <li>• Where club members train at multiple venues or clubs, it is their responsibility to register with each Club and inform them of their training bases to ensure Test and Trace is appropriately managed.</li> <li>• Any spectators at training sessions (including parents and carers) must follow the facilities guidelines.</li> </ul> <p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face to face arm movements are allowed, including changing patterns.</li> <li>• Connected moves can be face to face unless under water.</li> <li>• Patterns can be performed as normal.</li> <li>• Face to face arm choreography can be performed</li> </ul>

Routine training (continued)	<p><b>Routine figures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tapping routine figures and movements can be done.</li> </ul> <p><b>Lifts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifts can be performed as normal.</li> <li>• Training lifts can happen as normal.</li> </ul> <p><b>Arm movements/eggbeater</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training arm movements can be done as normal.</li> </ul> <p><b>Deck work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All deck work practice can continue as normal.</li> <li>• Consideration may given to utilise options to minimise the risk of transmission, such as; some/all athletes to start in the water, use different levels, athletes to look out away from each other</li> </ul>
Shouting	If possible, swimmers, officials and coaches and spectators should avoid shouting or raising their voices when facing each other at all times.
Injury treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injuries during activity should still be treated, participant health and safety is of utmost importance.</li> <li>• The best form of protection is through rigorous cleaning, personal hygiene and regular hand hygiene. An increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces and equipment, working with your facility operator.</li> <li>• If a participant gets injured, a member of their household or bubble can assist if present and appropriate.</li> <li>• If there is a team physio, first-aider or other medical personnel present, they should be equipped with the appropriate PPE (including face coverings) to protect themselves and others if they need to provide medical assistance.</li> <li>• After contact with an injured participant, the person who has administered first aid should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity.</li> <li>• This advice is applicable to all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact.</li> <li>• The first aider should also avoid touching their mouth, eyes and nose. Physios or their equivalent, should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with for test and trace purposes.</li> <li>• If a participant becomes symptomatic during the activity, they should immediately remove themselves from the activity and return home as soon as possible.</li> </ul> <p>Further information for those who may need to act as a ‘first responder’ role in a sports setting, appears <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>NHS guidance on further management of symptoms should be <a href="#">followed</a>.</p>

	Spectators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You should work with your leisure provider to understand their rules and regulations regarding spectator attendance.</li> </ul>
	Facility usage	See existing guidance for more information on working with your facility provider on creating a safe environment.
AFTER Artistic Swimming Team Activity:		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All participants should sanitise their hands after the completion of activity.</li> <li>One club representative/volunteer should be responsible for collecting and disinfecting any shared equipment.</li> <li>Clubs should encourage all participants to report any infection in their household.</li> </ul>

# Appendix 1. – Codes of Behaviour

## Code of Behaviour

Covid-19 is a highly infectious and dangerous disease. A continuation of competitive training and competition is only achievable if those involved create and maintain a controlled environment that minimises the threat of infection.

Risk in sport cannot be completely eradicated but with caution and care these risks can be reduced.

Each swimmer will need to decide when to return to competitive training and competition, based on their own circumstances and the arrangements that have been put in place for a safe return.

This is particularly the case for swimmers from ethnically diverse communities or those with underlying health conditions. All those returning must adopt the following code of behaviour:

- Be aware of your own personal health. If you show any of the Covid-19 symptoms you must stay at home, inform NHS Test and Trace and seek medical advice.
- Be responsible.
- Practise good hygiene. Wash your hands regularly.
- Support NHS Test and Trace. You're likely to be asked to provide your details so that in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak those potentially infected can be traced. This is to everyone's benefit so please co-operate.
- Avoid shouting or raising your voice if face to face with others.
- Changing rooms use may be restricted.

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