**COVID-19**

A framework for UK Synchronized Skating Return to

Team Training

ISSUED BY:

SYNCHRONIZED TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE July 2020

Version 3: 13/04/21

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**Guidance update from the 12th April:**

It has now been advised that all disability sport can take place from the 12th April. This means that all persons who have a disability will be able to take part in both individual and group training.

All under-18 activity will be allowed to resume. The cut off for under-18s is measured from 31 August 2020, in line with school years. So those who were under 18 on or before 31st August 2020 will be able to train from the 12th April, following the guidance set out on this document.

Government rules do not currently allow for any adult skating to take place as part of step two. This is still being challenged by all organisations.

We appreciate your patience as information is released, we are continuing to work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and will supply updates on our website: www.iceskating.org.uk

**1. Introduction**

This document sets out a framework for the return to on-ice **training** of Synchronized skating teams, following the opening of the leisure & sport sector (including indoor ice rinks) following closure of venues due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides the basis for Clubs and Coaches to develop their own required technical operating guidance for skaters, chaperones and coaching staff, in line with Government, Ice Rink Managers Association (IRMA) and National Governing Body (BIS) guidelines, once the Government has said facilities or parts thereof may open.

It is not intended to be exhaustive in covering every possible scenario, but aims to provide a clear direction of travel for Synchronized skating. Clubs and Coaches may make their own decisions, based on guidance and risk assessments, from their own venue in addition to guidelines and best practice contained in this document.

It is essential that all participants comply with the Government “Sports action plans and guidance” to ensure that the associated risks via droplet transmission, fomite transmission (handling and transfer of equipment) and population (the number of participants likely to take part plus any risk factors such as ill health) are minimised.

2. **Guidelines**

Although it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk, these guidelines aim to minimise that risk and ensure skaters are able to return to training as safely as possible.

The Covid-19 Officer and Coaches should ensure that all skaters are clear that they are opting to participate and are aware of the increase in transmission risks of participating therein.

* From the 12th of April only participants under the age of 18 and disability sport will be allowed to return to activities advised in this document.
* Guidance supplied by DCMS states that group activities should not exceed a limit of 15 participants. More than one group is able to be on the ice dependent on rink size.

· If not provided by the venue, the club must display Public Health England (PHE) or equivalent posters in relation to social distancing and cleanliness/hygiene protocols throughout the areas utilised by club members, chaperones and coaching staff.

· Each Club must appoint a COVID-19 Officer, who will be responsible for ensuring all Club members and officials follow the required guidelines as set by central or local Government, IRMA and BIS and also for the provision of hand wipes/sanitisers and have the ability to direct club members to where they can clean their hands.

· Clubs and Coaches will commit to the wellbeing of their members. Anyone to show/have any signs of COVID-19 (temperature, cough and difficulty breathing), will be asked to return home to follow Government regulations. This will also apply to any member present at that training session. The Covid-19 Officer must also inform the venue immediately.

· Venue Operators must comply with any documentation issued by the Government and IRMA. The Club Covid-19 Officer and Coaches should be aware of these guidelines and ensure that they are being followed as closely as possible.

· Clubs and Coaches will ensure that social distancing is adhered to as far as possible through accurate planning and conduct during all training sessions. Where skills require skaters to be in hold, refer to the 'Synchro skills risk chart' Appendix B.

· BIS guidelines are that face coverings are strongly advised, especially for coaches due to high levels of verbal communication in order to limit the exchange of droplets.

· Skaters should be encouraged not to verbalize unless absolutely necessary.

· Club members should take personal responsibility in following the guidelines set out for them from both the Club and the venue.

· If a Club member comes into contact with, for example, a high-contact point such as the barrier, door handles, hand rails, or toilets, it is their responsibility to wash their hands or, if this is not possible, hand sanitize immediately.

· Hand wipes/sanitisers will be available at rink side (or it should be easily directed to where people can clean their hands).

· The World Health Organisation (WHO) advises that it is preferable not to wear gloves but to regularly wash hands. The wearing of gloves is, therefore, not mandatory.

· When entering/exiting or using changing rooms/showers/toilets, all Club members and Coaches must follow instructions set by the venue, in line with Government, IRMA and BIS and ensure social distancing at all times.

· Coaches will monitor appropriate spacing throughout the session using cones or other ice markings to follow social distancing as required and set out by the Government and other leading authorities.

· Any personal items such as water bottles, skate guards, clothing etc, must not be passed between anyone from outside of family 'bubbles'. It is advised that minimal items are taken to the ice side and kept in an allocated area which allows for suitable social distancing when requiring access.

· Members should not cluster in groups before or after sessions and must always maintain social distancing, following venue guidance for access to general and specific areas etc.

**3. First Aid**

Synchronized Skating Coaches and chaperones are always the first contact. This should run alongside venue provision. The COVID-19 Officer and persons responsible for the Club's first aid must ensure that the first aid kit contains the following items, in addition to the standard legally required items:

◦ Gloves.

◦ Resuscitation masks.

◦ Face masks for general first aid.

**4. Additional Information**

· BIS guidelines for on-ice training sessions are, no more than 15-1 skater to coach ratio as standard. It is necessary, therefore, to have responsible and adequately trained chaperones in attendance, should this ratio not be possible.

· Social distancing, ~~by area, is recommended by BIS to be no less than 3 square metres per skater. It is, therefore, recommended that no more than 30 skaters should be training on any given training session and it is advised that coaches and clubs operate the initial training session for each group with no more than 20~~

~~skaters (full size 60x30 ice surface) to ensure everyone becomes accustomed to the social distancing requirements~~. Guidance supplied by DCMS states that group activities should not exceed a limit of 15 participants. More than one group is able to be on the ice dependent on rink size.

· Off-ice training sessions can continue as long as social distancing is in place and in line with Government guidelines.

· Wherever possible, payments should be made by contactless card payment or bank transfer

· Clubs and Coaches should give special consideration and hold discussions with skaters over the age of 70 years, or those with underlying health conditions to ensure best practice is followed risk assessments should be carried out, to ensure that the individuals understand that, although all precautions possible are taken, they will be participating in these sessions at their own risk.

**5. Social distance models for various drills and skills**

There are a series of accurate CAD schematics, available on the BIS website, within the document 'A framework for UK Synchronized Skating return to ice'. These diagrams show various configurations and mapping of directions of skating that coaches may use on the ice surface to ensure safe social distancing, in line with BIS guidelines of 3 square metres per skater. The diagrams clearly identify each skater's personal exclusion zone or “bubble”.

These are by no means an exhaustive list of specific exercises, simply models of typical patterns that are used in training drills and skills for Synchronized skaters to aid Coaches and Clubs in safe return to the ice under social distancing measures.

The maps show ways in which skaters can perform side-by-side, follow-the-leader, serpentine and circular pattern exercises and how it is possible to space/queue skaters whilst they wait for their turn to repeat perform the exercises.

**The Covid-19 Officer (or appointed qualified representative) and Coaches must ensure skaters are not exposed to an accumulation of heightened risk exceeding 15 minutes in any one training session.**

**For all skills and elements requiring skaters to be in hold, refer to Appendix A threshold flow chart and the Syncho Skills risk table Appendix B, and ensure skaters are risk assessed for their cumulative time and proximity during each training session.**

**Off Ice Activities**

• Coaches are only able to run classes they are qualified to teach.

• All government guidelines need to be followed and the venue/environment needs to have a suitable risk assessment and covid prevention measures.

• Groups are limited to 15 people per activity and if the activity takes place in a sports hall or other venue, their guidelines must be adhered to.

• Social distancing guidelines must be followed.

• If the activity takes place in a studio or sports hall there will be a minimum of a 10-minute window in between classes (30 minutes in Northern Ireland), so no ‘waiting around’ in groups

• Equipment (including mats etc) must be cleaned in between use. This can either be done by the customer or staff member using spray and cloths provided.

• No equipment will be shared during the classes.

• If possible, markings will be made on the floor to show the area for individuals

• Maximum gym capacity will be based on 100sqft per person.

**6. Risk Assessments**

Appendix C contains an example of Covid-19 specific items to be risk assessed by Clubs during the anticipated period of "social distancing" and should be used in conjunction with any existing Club and Venue risk assessments and protocols. This is a guideline, and provides a template which can be adapted to suit the needs of the individual Club and the different venues around the UK.

This is not a legally binding document and should not be copied verbatim. It is hoped that this will provide a basis for all Synchro Clubs and Coaches to work from, in order to cover the major areas of concern at this time and ensure that all Synchro skaters understand the expectations prior to attending their training sessions. The Covid-19 Officer and Coaches should ensure that all skaters are clear that they are opting to participate and are aware of

the increase in transmission risks of participating therein. For standard procedures, refer to the risk assessments provided by the individual venues and further general guidance from BIS.

· It is recommended that there should be at least 2 DBS checked and first aid trained chaperones present at training sessions. Only dedicated chaperones are included in the staffing ratios.

· Participants under the age of 18 should not be included in the staffing ratios, even if they have a coaching qualification.

· Risk assessment of the activity, government states that there should be 1 supervising adult for every 6 children under 8 years of age.

· BIS recommendations are that there should be 1 qualified coach for every 10 skaters, over the age of 8 years during the current period of increased risk.

· BIS recommends a maximum of one guardian per skater under the age of 18, or with special assistance requirements, to accompany them at their training session. In line with Government guidelines, guardians should gather in groups of no more than six and following social distancing restrictions.

· Club volunteers will be kept up-to-date with all expectations.

· Clubs should communicate to their skaters and their families any new expectations.

**The opening up of the economy following the Covid-19 outbreak is being supported by NHS Test and Trace. The Covid-19 Officer or appointed qualified representative, should assist this service by keeping a temporary record of participants and chaperones at each training session, for 21 days, adhering to GDPR guidelines (www.gov.uk/coronavirus). This information should be made available to NHS Test and Trace, if requested.**

Appendix A

**Threshold Flow Chart**

This flow chart enables a Coach to accurately plan each training session in order to minimise skater proximity interactions to a maximum of 15 minutes so as to keep the accumulative threshold in line with Government guidelines.

Appendix B Synchro Skills Risk Table

SYNCHRO SKILLS RISK TABLE

This table should be used in conjunction with the Threshold Flow Chart, enabling an accurate session plan which ensures the maximum proximity interactions does not exceed

15 minutes in any one training session.

SKILLS/ELEMENTS PROXIMITY RISK LEVEL Duration (mins/secs)

All socially distanced exercises (See A framework for UK Synchronized Skating Return to ice during social distancing, June

2020)

Minimum 2 metre spacing between all skaters.

Low Unlimited

No Hold Element including step sequence

Block\*

Pivoting Block\* Artistic Block\*

Circle/Wheel\*

Traveling Circle/Wheel\* Artistic Circle/Wheel\*

Line\*

Artistic Line\*

> 1m Low Unlimited

1-0m Medium

1-0m Medium

1-0m Medium

Moves Elements\* 1-0m Medium

Intersections\* 1-0m Medium

Synchronized Spin\* Twizzle Element\*

Rotational (increased risk of droplet spread)

Medium

Transitions\* 1-0m Medium

Group Lifts Creative Element\* Vaults

Potential face to face

>3 seconds non-

fleeting

Increased Risk

Pair Elements Potential face to face

>3 seconds non- fleeting

Pi on Intersections\* Rotational (increased risk of droplet spread)

Increased Risk

Increased Risk

**Cumulative proximity interaction TOTAL:**

**All elements marked \* can be reduced to low risk status by ensuring they are performed solo or at a distance of at least 2 metres.**

Appendix C Risk Assessment

Risk assessment for additional measures during Covid-19

This document to be used in conjunction with all existing BIS, Venue and Club risk assessments and training guidelines already in place.

**RISK ASSESSMENT FOR:**

(Club & Location)

**Assessment completed by:** Either of Covid-19 Officer/ Coach/Safeguarding officer/Welfare Officer

**Date:**

**Coach Signature:**

**Covid-19 Officer Signature:**

**Safeguarding Officer**

**Signature:**

**Area of Risk Control Measures**

 **Planning and Organisation prior to training**

 **DO NOT ATTEND TRAINING IF YOU OR ANY MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY SHOW SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19.**

**FOLLOW GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES.**

 **ALL PARTICIPANTS, OFFICIALS AN PARENTS/GUARDIANS MUST BE MADE AWARE THAT ALTHOUGH THE RISK HAS BEEN MINIMISED, IT CANNOT BE COMPLETELY ELIMINATED. THEY ATTEND AT THEIR OWN RISK.**

 Skaters and parents/guardians are informed of risk assessment and expectations.

 Training schedule should be produced prior to attendance by the coach and/or appointed club official.

 Skaters should ensure that they have correct kit with no additional baggage

 Skaters and parents/guardians should make themselves aware of the guidelines issued by the venue and the club.

 Appropriately trained, experienced, qualified chaperones and coaches are competent to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

 Coaches and chaperones should brief skaters regarding hazards.

 Parents will be informed of arrangements prior to sessions.

 Skaters should be briefed on actions required should one of those present develop Covid-19 symptoms based on the BIS guidelines.

 Social distancing must be maintained during of- ice and on- ice training in line with Government and BIS guidelines.

 Where team contact is required, coaches and/or appointed club officials should ensure accurate planning to minimise exposure (See appendix A, threshold flow chart)

 Team contact must follow the Government guidelines and details outlined in the Threshold Flow Chart and the Synchro Skills Risk Table.

 Time schedule slots should be communicated well in advance and skaters should not attempt to access the venues outside of their allocated training times.

 **Off-ice warm-up** Wherever possible, warm-ups should be outside the venue.

 Social distancing measures must be maintained at all times. A Chaperone should be present to ensure safe transit from

the warm-up area to the venue from the outside warm-up

area

 **Entering/Exiting the Venue** Follow venue guidelines and social distancing measures in place.

 Enter and exit the building via the designated doorways allocated by the venue.

 Wherever possible skaters should already be wearing their kit and skates before entering the building. If this is not possible, follow venue guidelines for changing procedures.

 Participants should make use of the hand sanitizers made available to them on entry to the building either from the venue or from the Covid-19 officer (or allocated chaperone)

 **Training sessions** Covid-19 Officer to liaise with the venue to ensure adequate and directional signage. If not provided, the Covid-19 officer should ensure adequate hand sanitizer points, access to hand washing facilities and toilets during sessions.

 It is highly recommended that skaters and, especially coaches, wear a face covering, in order to minimise droplet transmission.

 Coaches should deliver sessions from the rink side whenever possible and ensure social distancing is maintained whilst addressing the skaters.

 Coaches should ensure the music equipment is sanitized

prior to use and it is recommended to use wireless equipment

if possible.

 Covid-19 officer or allocated/qualified chaperone will ensure adequate first aid supplies.

 Coach and Chaperone ratios are sufficient to deal with emergencies.

 Skaters should, wherever possible, enter the ice from multiple entry gates staggering entry to the ice surface to ensure adequate social distancing.

 Personal items such as a clearly labelled drink bottle, personal hand sanitizer, facial tissues and personal

medication (such as asthma inhaler), should ideally be placed in an individually named container. There must be no transference of personal belongings between participants. These containers should be in an easily accessible, allocated area.

 Once used, tissues should be disposed of in a lined waste bin and hands washed immediately or sanitized if this is not possible.

 Coaches to mark up the ice with either cones or other means such as marker pens to ensure social distancing.

 Physical contact between skaters during training must follow the Government guidelines as set out in the Threshold Flow Chart.

 If there is a first aid requirement or a safety issue, the appointed first aider present, should follow venue guidelines.

 When teams are addressed by the coach for instruction, it is recommended that they stand socially distanced and with their hands behind their backs in order to minimise hand to mouth transmission.

 Drinks breaks should be taken in small groups and ensuring social distancing. Skaters must only touch their own drink bottles and kit and minimise contact with barriers and other surfaces wherever possible. Breaks should be followed by either washing of hands or using hand sanitizer.

 Spectators should follow BIS and venue guidelines.

 It is recommended that there should be at least 2 DBS checked and first aid trained chaperones present at training sessions. Only dedicated chaperones are included in the staffing ratios.

 Participants under the age of 18 should not be included in the staffing ratios, even if they have a coaching qualification.

 When working with groups of children under the age of 8, Government guidelines states that there should be 1 supervising adult for every 6 children.

 BIS recommendations for groups of skaters over the age of 8 are that there should be 1 qualified coach for every 10 skaters during the current period of increased risk.

