



Scottish
Swimming

Aquatic Participation Swimming Lessons

Back to the Water COVID-19 Guidance

Phase 3

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1.0 Introduction

The following guidance has been developed in co-operation with industry partners. This document aims to support Learn to Swim (LTS) providers in returning to swimming lessons following the period of closure due to COVID-19 and provides guidance on reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission within the swimming pool environment.

It will highlight the continued requirements for safe physical distancing and enhanced hygiene regimes, along with guidance on how this will impact on the teaching environment. It has been designed to support LTS providers when considering the factors that are likely to influence swimming lessons while physical distancing measures remain in place.

Quality LTS environments focus on fun, inclusive and progressive lessons, however as always safety needs to be put first particularly as we return to water during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Scottish Swimming recommends providers consider this guidance as they plan to re-introduce and build up their LTS programmes, they will need to consider the impact of any changes made on the overall programme, aquatic pathway, workforce, parents / guardians and most importantly, the children. The six key components identified as critical to the delivery of quality LTS environments remain and we will look to support providers to continue this direction through our National LTS Framework for Scotland.






This should be read alongside the [Scottish Swimming Pool Operators Back to the Water COVID-19 Guidance](#) and the guiding principles for Swimming Lessons outlined below. LTS Providers should complete a risk assessment for returning to swimming lessons while considering this guidance. Scottish Swimming appreciate each programme and facility is unique and providers will need to decide what will work best for their programme, staff and customers on a site specific basis. Further detail and support follows to allow LTS providers to plan and implement changes to safely re-start their swimming lesson programmes following the closure due to COVID-19.



2.0 Guidance and Considerations for Providers Operating Swimming Lessons

For Lifeguarding and safe supervision, please ensure you are also following [RLSS UK guidance](#) or your provider's guidance at all times.



Guidance	Considerations
<p>Allocate a designated officer for the management of swimming lessons post COVID-19.</p> 	<p>This will give a consistent approach across your swimming lesson programme and support in creating a safe environment.</p> <p>The Designated officer should be aware of the Scottish Government, Scottish Swimming and other relevant guidance that will impact the facility operational procedures.</p> <p>Individuals may require additional support to fulfil this duty.</p> <p>Designated officer(s) to consider alternative ways of briefing and debriefing workforce; can this be achieved through conference calling systems and team manager software instead of face-to-face.</p>
Guidance	Considerations
<p>Prior to programmes recommencing have a check list to ensure the workforce is ready to deliver and adapt to changes in a post COVID-19 environment.</p> 	<p>Provide swimming teachers with updated Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOP) which should include Risk Assessments, Normal Operating Procedures (NOP) and Emergency Action Plans (EAP).</p> <p>Read and apply where applicable RLSS UK guidance (or your provider) for swimming teachers providing safety cover for swimming lessons.</p> <p>Swimming teachers should familiarise themselves with relevant guidance so they are ready to deliver, such as the guidance document from sportscotland and Children 1st relating to children returning to sport which can be found here</p> <p>Teachers should be provided with support and access to information to help prepare them to return to lessons.</p> <p>Teachers will need to consider the most effective method(s) of communication when teaching from poolside and will depend on the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size of the pool or area of the pool being used • The size of the group • The age and ability of the group • The type of activities being performed • The best position for you to be able to oversee and supervise the whole group



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best position so that all the participants can see and hear you <p>Consider how your teachers can continue to motivate and praise the learners without physical contact, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual resources • Non-verbal cues; air high fives, ok's & thumbs up • Diagrams for learners • Technology / Programme Management Software <p>Implement procedures for swimming teachers starting their shift, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting registers / tablets • Setting up equipment • Entering and exiting the building • Hand washing • PPE where appropriate / applicable • Team briefing and updates
<p>Guidance</p> <p>Guidance for teachers, swimmers and parents of the importance of pool safety in a post COVID-19 environment.</p> 	<p>Considerations</p> <p>Children returning to the pool will need to recap the areas of water safety as a priority area of learning. This should include both swimming pool safety rules and water safety information.</p> <p>Re-assess swimmers' ability against relevant outcomes to establish their current level of performance and where you need to prioritise your lesson.</p> <p>Consider how you will educate & inform your swimmers and parents/guardians that teachers maybe delivering differently.</p> <p>For example by using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • Customer emails • Posters • Parents' Q&A
	<p>Considerations</p>




<p>All equipment should be cleaned before and after each activity.</p> 	<p>Equipment should be cleaned in-between use. Submerging equipment in adequately disinfected swimming pool water will reduce the risk of transmission of enveloped viruses.</p> <p>Ensure equipment usage is controlled within a lesson environment and ensure each teacher is responsible for their lesson equipment and cleaning procedure.</p> <p>Ensure you have an adequate cleaning rota in place for all lesson equipment; before, during & after is suggested.</p> <p>Equipment that cannot be cleaned in the pool should be appropriately cleaned between activities. This should include surfaces in high traffic areas such as handrails.</p> <p>Consider allocating one set of equipment per teacher for the entire shift. Teachers can use a box or kit bag to keep the same equipment together and ready to be cleaned after each lesson and at the end of the full shift before being stored.</p> <p>Each swimming teacher to have access to a bucket or scoop to rinse teacher area as appropriate.</p> <p>Stop the use of loaning personal equipment like goggles, hats and encourage children to manage these themselves and practice putting on at home.</p> <p>Consider selling basic equipment to learners where appropriate to bring to their lesson.</p> <p>Consider games that require equipment and how these could be adapted to reduce the contact and overlap of equipment usage.</p>
<p>Considerations</p>	
<p>Providers should consider how to programme lessons to minimise clustering of groups at pinch points; pick-up / drop off points, showers, changing rooms and viewing areas.</p> 	<p>Allow time in-between activities for cleaning and changeover of participants.</p> <p>To avoid clustering consider different entry / exit and drop off / pick up points for all swimmers where possible.</p> <p>Teachers should prioritise delivering the climb out over the side exit rather than using the steps where possible. This will reduce the amount of contact to equipment.</p> <p>Share pool user guidance with advice for participants on what to bring and time frame for when to arrive.</p> <p>Prepare guidance/interactive video on the customer journey to and through the changing rooms on to poolside, so participants know what to expect.</p> <p>Allow for suitable changing time and the overlap of lessons</p>

	<p>Review pool programme to avoid multiple user groups entering the facility at the same time if possible.</p> <p>Consider alternative weeks for swimming lessons to give all swimmers the opportunity to learn due to reduced capacities.</p>
Considerations	
<p>Viewing area will need to be reviewed and reconfigured to ensure physical distancing is adhered to.</p> 	<p>Encourage one parent/ guardian to escort the swimmer if required to all activities.</p> <p>Parents encouraged to only turn up for their child's lesson time.</p> <p>Clear communication of the physical distancing measures put in place for parents/guardians.</p> <p>Providers should ensure parents/guardians wear face coverings while in the venue.</p> <p>Display temporary signage and use directional arrows to demonstrate the changes to parents/guardians.</p> <p>Consider closing spectator areas where appropriate including if the environment becomes too challenging to monitor.</p> <p>Where physical distancing is near impossible in the spectator area consider alternative ways to manage the viewing of lessons, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider priority viewing for lower stages or for learners requiring additional support • Consider a rota system on a week by week basis • Consider an alert system for those parents who may have to wait outside of the facility <p>Consider your site specific admissions policy regarding parents/guardians required to stay within the facility.</p>
Considerations	
<p>When delivering swimming lessons teachers should adhere to government guidance on physical distancing and deliver from the poolside.</p> 	<p>Teachers should adhere to government guidance on physical distancing.</p> <p>Teachers should be aware of the number of personnel on poolside to allow for physical distancing.</p> <p>Consider the overall pool layout and where each swimming teacher delivers and consider delivering from alternate sides of the pool if appropriate. Avoid overlap of patrolling on poolside whilst delivering.</p> <p>Consider creating two or more where appropriate bubbles/groups of teaching staff to safeguard the delivery team. For example split your team's down into</p>

	<p>specific staffing rotas, this could coincide with other operational teams.</p> <p>Consider having a consistent way of moving around poolside to reduce cross over staff and promote physical distancing practice, for example learners and teacher to all move in a clockwise route.</p> <p>Scottish Swimming recommend all teachers are to deliver from poolside to support current physical distancing guidance. However, if there is a specific need for a teacher to deliver from within the water, it is both the teacher's personal and operator's professional responsibility to thoroughly risk assess this and ensure that correct safety measures are followed.</p> <p>Teaching from poolside might mean adaptations will need to be made to ensure effective delivery.</p> <p>Complete a new risk assessment for any post COVID-19 changes to delivery of swimming lessons.</p> <p>Read and apply where applicable RLSS UK guidance (or your provider) for swimming teachers providing safety cover for swimming lessons.</p> <p>Assistant teachers to also support from the poolside but must maintain physical distancing from other teachers.</p> <p>Assistant teacher can support with delivery of demonstrations, activities, class organisations and communication to ensure the lessons run efficiently.</p> <p>When adapting to teaching in deep water a risk assessment should be completed alongside the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of all stages in alternative depths to the usual delivery areas • Equipment needed due to increased depth range • Confidence & safety introduction to changing depth of lesson station • Educate parents in the safe delivery methods being applied by the swimming teacher team for deep water lessons
Considerations	
<p>Pool Layout & Organisational methods will need to be amended to support the delivery of swimming lesson and adhering to physical distancing guidelines.</p>	<p>Children aged 11 years and younger are not required to physically distance, as set out in Scottish Government guidance.</p> <p>Therefore, considering this with the guidance set out above, any programmed session in the pool for children of this age group should be supervised at all times and</p>

 <p>Programme Management</p>	<p>measures should be introduced to minimise contact between children, but where possible staff should continue to follow physical distancing guidelines.</p> <p>Revise pool layout and pool set up requirements.</p> <p>Review and risk assess maximum bather loads & teacher to swimmer ratios.</p> <p>Implement teaching positions that follow suitable Scottish Government guidance for physical distancing.</p> <p>There are a variety of methods you may use to organise your swimming lessons, which will be determined by different factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The needs, ages and ability of your participants • The teaching method you are using • The pool space you have available • Safety considerations
Considerations	
<p>Implement a phased return to swimming lessons.</p>  <p>Programme Management</p>	<p>As swimming pools begin to reopen you may consider your lessons restarting with a phased return. This will allow for a flexible return to meet your business needs and ensure you are COVID-19 compliant.</p> <p>Consider the phased return to lessons, starting with the higher ability swimmers who wouldn't require the same amount of support.</p> <p>Consider your swimmers return on a bi-weekly basis and over time move back to a weekly basis to help manage reduced capacity and allow more swimmers to access lessons</p> <p>Consider how you can utilise vacant pool time for your lessons as you re-build your programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • off peak time slots • replacement of sessions that cannot run • external pool hire slots that haven't returned <p>Consider merging two stages of a similar ability to overcome low attendance numbers.</p> <p>Ensure that a risk assessment and appropriate measures are taken.</p>
Guidance	
<p>Parent / guardian to support child (in water support), applicable for any stage that requires additional support through lessons post COVID-19.</p>	<p>Considerations</p> <p>A parent/guardian competent in water may be beneficial in supporting a swimmer in the water through the duration of their lesson. This would be under the guidance and delivery of a SSTQ Swimming Teacher (or equivalent) and where pool space allows</p> <p>Ratios & risk assessments must be reviewed.</p>

 <p>Partnerships</p>	<p>Larger pool spacing could be provided to support government guidance for physical distancing.</p> <p>Allowing parents to come into the water does not require them to have a PVG, however Scottish Swimming recommends all parents follow the instruction of the qualified SSTQ teacher (or equivalent). Parents should only have the responsibility of their own children and adhere physical distancing from other swimmers and parents.</p>
<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Considerations</p>
<p>Make suitable adjustments for swimmers with a disability in a COVID-19 compliant environment.</p>  <p>Pathways</p>	<p>Scottish Swimming continue to encourage an inclusive approach to teaching children with a disability where possible but recognises that additional support when returning to the pool post COVID-19 may be required</p> <p>Use the guidance above and the considerations below to make any reasonable adjustments to lesson delivery.</p> <p>Ratios & risk assessments must be reviewed.</p> <p>In water support provided by parent/guardian/carer competent in the water where applicable. Larger pool spacing may be required to support Scottish Government guidance for physical distancing.</p> <p>Consider a bookable time slots for swimmers and parents/carers to visit the pool ahead of lessons restarting. To allow for a supervised walk through of any procedure changes in regards to access to changing rooms and poolside. Consider a virtual walk through of your centre as an alternative option.</p> <p>Consider how your teachers can continue to motivate, communicate and praise the swimmers without physical contact, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimpix • Visual cards • Non-verbal cues; air high fives, OK's & thumbs up
<p>Guidance</p>	<p>Considerations</p>
<p>Adaptations may be required for Early Years Lessons.</p>	<p>Adaptations for Early Years swimming lessons may need to be applied due to the nature of delivery dependant on site specific set up.</p> <p>Review and risk assess maximum bather loads & teacher to swimmer ratios.</p>

 <p>Pathways</p>	<p>Consider encouraging parents to change babies on poolside to minimise time spent in changing rooms.</p> <p>Consider reducing the use of equipment with baby & toddlers. This will encourage the reduction of cross contamination of equipment being put in their mouths.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage parents/guardians to bring a suitable sensory bath toy to use throughout lesson activities for personal use. <p>Consider the pool depth, whether these lessons can be delivered in standing or a deeper area of the pool.</p>
Considerations	
<p>Make suitable adaptations to swimming lessons delivering the aquatic disciplines.</p>  <p>Pathways</p>	<p>Using the guidance above and the considerations below make any reasonable adjustments to the lesson deliver of: Club Ready Polo; Club Ready Diving; Club Ready Synchro also need to consider these skills while delivering them through the Learn to Swim Programme.</p> <p>Ratios & risk assessments must be reviewed.</p> <p>Read and understand how the Scottish Swimming Club Training Back to the Water Guidance relates to the delivery of Club Ready stage of the pathway across all the disciplines.</p>
Guidance	
<p>Adaptations may be required for adult swimming lesson delivery.</p>  <p>Pathways</p>	<p>Using the guidance above and the considerations below make any reasonable adjustments to the lesson delivery for any adult swimmers and additional needs they may have.</p> <p>Review ratios and risk assessment for any changes to pool spaces.</p> <p>For Skills & Drills and Powerswim sessions refer to the Scottish Swimming Club Training Back to the Water Guidance.</p> <p>Consider the opportunity to open more adult lessons to a wider customer base as a bookable session.</p> <p>Consider own equipment being purchased and brought along to lessons.</p> <p>For nervous adult swimmers or those who may require manual support consider allowing them to bring a competent family member or a friend to support in the water.</p>

3.0 School Swimming Lesson Guidance

If you own your own school pool venue the guidance above should be followed, however if you hire pool time from an external pool operator use the guidance and the following additional considerations:

We know that unlike older children and adults, early years and primary aged children cannot be expected to maintain physical distancing from each other and staff. Schools should, therefore work through the hierarchy of controls to reduce the risk of transmission – crucially minimising contact and mixing by keeping children and staff in small consistent groups and keeping groups away from each other.

School swimming providers should review ratios and risk assessment for any changes to pool spaces.

Operators should work in partnership with the schools to outline an agreement and suitable approach for the delivery of school swimming lessons. If you are a school delivering lessons from a school pool please read and apply the applicable operator guidance.

4.0 Summary of Guidance for Delivering Swimming Lessons during COVID-19

The following guidance relates to swimming lessons for all ages, including school swimming:

- Providers should have a dedicated officer responsible for COVID-19 considerations, making sure that they are up to date with Scottish Government recommendations.
- When determining the capacity of classes, providers should consider the guidance on physical distancing and assessing risk in the pool from the [Scottish Swimming Pool Operators Back to the Water COVID-19 Guidance](#).
- Providers should review available pool space to allow for correct physical distancing, including entry and exit points.
- Providers should review lesson programmes to allow sufficient time for cleaning, minimise interactions and allow physical distancing at pinch points; pick-up / drop off points, showers, changing rooms and viewing areas
- Providers should consider limiting spectating to only one adult who is responsible for their child at a swimming lesson to maintain physical distancing.
- Providers should evaluate the number of personnel on poolside to allow physical distancing.
- Teachers should deliver from poolside and adhere to Scottish Government guidance on physical distancing
- All equipment should be sanitised before and after each activity. This can be achieved simply and effectively by rinsing equipment in the pool
- Equipment that cannot be sanitised in the pool should be appropriately cleaned between activities. Touch points of both fixed and free equipment, such as handrails and access stairs, should be cleaned after every session.

For further support and resources to help your LTS programme re-introduce swimming lessons please get in contact with the Scottish Swimming Development Team.

5.0 Scottish Swimming Staff Contacts

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6.0 Further Guidance

Further detailed guidance has been developed in line with our Scottish Swimming's Back to Water Route Map for each section and phase and will evolve as advice and guidance is made available from Scottish Government. For more information on specific guidance please see below.

Scottish Swimming:

[Scottish Swimming Club Management Back to the Water COVID-19 Guidance](#)

[Scottish Swimming Club Training Back to the Water COVID-19 Guidance](#)

[Scottish Swimming Aquatic Participation Swimming Lessons Back to the Water COVID-19 Guidance](#)

[Scottish Swimming Aquatic Participation Community Swimming and Instructor-Led Activity Back to the Water COVID-19 Guidance](#)

[Scottish Swimming Aquatic Educators Back to the Water COVID-19 Guidance](#)

External guidance:

[Scottish Government - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on sport and leisure facilities](#)

[Scottish Government - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): returning to work safely](#)

[NHS Inform](#)

[Health Protection Scotland: COVID-19 Non-Healthcare Settings guidance](#)

[sportscotland - Getting Your Facility Fit for Sport](#)

7.0 Disclaimer

When referring to any documents and associated attachments in this guidance, please note the following:

1. Reliance upon the guidance or use of the content of this website will constitute your acceptance of this disclaimer.
2. The term guidance should be taken to imply the standards and best practice solutions that are acceptable to Scottish Swimming.
3. The documents and any associated drawing material are intended for information only.
4. The content of this guidance is considered by Scottish Swimming to be correct at the time of publication. Amendments, alterations and updates of documents and

drawings may take place from time to time and Learn to Swim providers should review at the time of use to ensure the most up to-date versions are being referred to and satisfy themselves that there has been no change in position.

5. All downloadable drawings, images and photographs are intended solely to illustrate how elements of a facility can apply Scottish Swimming's suggestions and should be read in conjunction with any relevant design guidance, British and European Standards, Health and Safety Legislation and guidance, building regulations, planning and the principles of the Equality Act 2010.
6. The drawings are not 'site specific' and are outline proposals. They are not intended for, and should not be used in conjunction with, the procurement of building work, construction, obtaining statutory approvals, or any other services in connection with building works.
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8. The views expressed are not intended to take away or diminish the responsibility of the user to comply with appropriate current or future legislation or standards and if there are any conflicts between the views expressed in any of sportscotland design guidance material and other appropriate current or future legislation, the latter shall take precedence.
9. The content of this guidance does not constitute specific advice to pool operators; this is a guide and the information should help Learn to Swim providers make their own decisions in due course. We recommend that you obtain professional specialist technical and legal advice before taking, or refraining from, any action on the basis of information contained in this note.
10. Learn to Swim providers should continue to check information published by the Scottish Government and sportscotland after reading this guidance.

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