



Guidance for British Dressage Judges

COVID-19: returning to restricted activity safely

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Guidelines for a safe return to restricted activity

These guidelines currently apply to judges, organisers/venue owners and members residing in England and Wales. At present, competition activity is not permitted in Scotland. This guidance has been produced in line with government guidance on public areas, outdoor activities and exercise published on 1 June 2020 with subsequent updates, which are available on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk) and on the [gov.wales website](https://www.gov.wales).

These procedures are correct at the time of printing; however, they need to be reviewed regularly in accordance with the latest advice provided by government. Operating procedures are based on Public Health England (PHE) guidance, please note that other guidance may apply in [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#). You should refer to the relevant websites for the devolved governments for guidance relating to any other country other than England.

BD Community COVID-19 Charter

The following general principles apply to all of our stakeholder groups:

- The health and safety of all of British Dressage members, and those connected with our sport in any way, must remain paramount at all times.
- Government guidelines should be adhered to by all participants, whether you are a competitor, organiser, judge, steward, groom, trainer, owner or other support personnel.
- All training and competition activity will be COVID-19 risk assessed in advance to manage risks and provide a safe, controlled and regulated environment for all involved.
- Regular handwashing, cleaning and hygiene procedures are essential for all activities.
- Social distancing of two metres should be maintained where possible; if this is not possible, individuals are advised to remain at least one metre apart, plus other mitigating measures.
- Flexibility, understanding and support are key to the successful resumption of training and competition activity, therefore compliance with these requirements is essential.
- Good communication is required between all participants to maintain awareness, vigilance and help to control the virus.

Introduction

When operating during the Covid-19 pandemic, judges and coaches need to ensure that they are protecting themselves and minimising the risk of spreading the infection. This may mean they have to alter the way they manage training activity, including travel to and from venues for coaching, planning visits in advance, reviewing how to judge and provide feedback on site, food and drink provision and any additional facilities that they may require. Members should adhere to the government's social distancing guidelines, staying two metres apart on the ground, three horse lengths while mounted, and follow public advice for hygiene. If closer contact is unavoidable, individuals should still keep a minimum of one metre away at all times and wear appropriate PPE, while avoiding face to face contact where possible.

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Venue protocol for judges

- ➔ Judges should be booked directly, as per the normal process, to confirm their availability and willingness to officiate under current restrictions and guidelines.
- ➔ Venues may have reserve judges in case any booked official falls ill at short notice or has come into contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus.
- ➔ The judging procedure and operating procedures should be discussed fully with the venue at the time of booking and agreed in writing by both parties prior to the competition. This includes determining whether they will be judging alone, with a member from the same household or support bubble acting as writer, or if they are judging with an external writer under the one metre plus guidance.
- ➔ Catering facilities are now beginning to reopen however refreshment and catering provision should also be agreed with the judge at the time of booking to ensure both parties are happy.
- ➔ Discuss the venue facilities, including any changes to normal arrangements, and supply a map in advance to ensure that judges are familiar with the layout, particularly if new to the venue.
- ➔ Judges should be provided with the contact details for the secretary's office, on-site first aider and the designated COVID-19 Compliance Officer.
- ➔ Judges should arrive in plenty of time and notify the venue by phone when they are on site. The venue can then instruct the judge on how to proceed from this point.
- ➔ The venue should advise of any potential issues that may have arisen while the judge has been in transit and direct them to their judging location, as required.
- ➔ The judges' box or car should be thoroughly cleaned before any new judges enter. Where possible, the judge's own car should be used as the judging box to avoid cross-contamination.
- ➔ Judges should provide their own pens and clipboards if at all possible. Any shared equipment should be thoroughly cleaned in advance of use.
- ➔ Disposable gloves should be worn by all parties whilst handling scoresheets and shared equipment, and changed regularly.
- ➔ Hand sanitiser and / or disinfectant wipes should be made available for use within the box or car.

- Venues to leave scoresheets in an agreed location for collection by the judge on arrival, prepared the day before and sealed in a paper envelope. No sheet collecting will be permitted during the class.
- During the restricted period, to comply with social distancing, judges will be permitted to write for themselves by scoring for movement and collectives, adding any comments at the end of the test.
- Where judges are judging alone, an additional three minutes will be added to the [overall test time](#) to allow extra space between competitors and provide adequate time for judges to complete comments and their summary section.
- Judges are also permitted to have a writer who is a member of their own household or support bubble, providing that they travel to the venue together and avoid interacting with other individuals while on site.
- If the writer is not from the same household or support bubble, judges must confirm they are happy to judge under the one metre plus protocols.
- Where indoor arenas are permissible (England only as of 19.07.20), judges can officiate with a writer seated on a table in the indoor, they must ensure they observe social distancing and hygiene practices.
- Judges to use own car or remain in the box after they have finished judging to review test sheets for verification purposes to check for mistakes / missing marks.
- Judges to return sheets and any venue owned equipment to the secretary's office at the end of the class or left in an agreed secure location if it is not possible to maintain social distancing.
- Where the venue operates a take away service for catering, judges should only consume food or drink in their box or car, using disposable cups, plates and utensils.
- With no scoreboards in operation, digital copies of results should be sent to judges for sign off and approval before results are provided to competitors. Results should be shared in PDF format and password protected.
- Venues should scan or photograph completed test sheets and email results to competitors after the competition, rather than providing physical paper copies.
- Alternatively, the venue may distribute score sheets on the day of competition, providing this is done in a controlled manner avoiding interaction, social distancing can be maintained at all times and the process is fully documented on the venue's risk assessment.

Judging at competitions

- There are various options for safe judging that comply with social distancing restrictions, depending on the individual circumstances at each venue.
 - Judges can officiate under normal conditions, with a member from the same household or their support bubble acting as writer.
 - Judges can officiate on their own, writing the scores for the test and adding comments at the end. An additional three minutes should be added to the test time to facilitate this.
 - Judges can officiate with an external writer, providing a minimum distance of one metre apart can be maintained and COVID Secure measures have been put in place.
 - Judges can officiate with a writer from outside their household or support bubble inside an indoor arena, if the writer can be located on a table which allows social distancing to be adhered to.

Judging with own writer (from their own household or support bubble)

- Judges should continue to follow the normal process, as outlined in the venue protocol for judges.

Judges on their own

- Judges will get an additional three minutes added to the [overall test time](#) to provide adequate time to complete the comments and summary at the end of the test.
- Firstly, you should judge the test by filling in the marks only – underlining where necessary, as a reminder.
- At the end of the test go back and add as many comments as you can to the marks below 7 while the test is still fresh in your memory.
- At the end of this process complete the collective marks and write your summary. Where possible, go back through the test and insert any additional comments.
- As you get used to this new way of judging the process can be adapted to suit the individual. The most important point to remember is that judges still need to explain to the competitor why they have received low marks.
- There are a number of tests available on public platforms such as YouTube and it is advisable to have a couple of practice runs through, to become more familiar with this way of judging.
- Taking part in test riding clinics and training shows during June / July and this would provide an ideal opportunity to become familiar with judging alone.

Judging with an external writer

- The organiser should discuss all options with the judge and writer to agree an approach that all parties are comfortable with. Judges are reminded they should only officiate when they are happy to do so and are comfortable with the COVID Secure provisions agreed in advance with the organiser.
- Judges and writers must be positioned a minimum of one metre apart at all times, plus take other mitigating measures to avoid any face to face contact.
- If using boxes, a Perspex screen should be installed as a divider between the judge and writer to ensure that a separate space is provided for both parties.
- It is recommended that judges and writers use face masks while sharing the same space, providing clear communication can still be maintained.
- Good ventilation is essential and it is recommended that fully enclosed units, such as boxes with closed doors and windows, should not be used at this time.
- If using cars, the judge and writer should be situated in separate vehicles, parked at least one metre apart.
- Adequate supplies of hand sanitiser and surface wipes must be made available to judges and writers to maintain hygiene standards.
- The judge and writer must avoid face to face contact and ensure that hand sanitiser is used when passing sheets between themselves.

Judging with technology

- Venues choosing to use technology to facilitate communication between the judge and writer must ensure this is agreed in writing with all parties prior to the competition.
- Any technology employed should be robust, reliable and fully tested in advance of competition, making sure that there is sufficient infrastructure in place required to support its use, such as Wi-Fi networks, adequate bandwidth and non-conflicting radio frequencies.
- A clear contingency plan be in place should there be any equipment malfunction.

- Competitors must not be disadvantaged if there is a failure in the equipment used.
- Judges must still sign off all test sheets before the final results are published.

Judging music classes

- Judges will need the support of a writer while judging music classes; in order to facilitate this organisers should select one of the judging options from above that can safely permit this.

Test riding activity

- All judging and test riding should comply with the [government guidance](#) regarding health, travel, social distancing and hygiene at all times.
- Judges must consider safety first, in particular to minimise the risk of transmission and infection to and from others.
- A thorough risk assessment should be undertaken, in conjunction with standard risk assessment practice, and the appropriate measures implemented to ensure that participants, judges and volunteers are protected. It is advisable that you liaise with the venue when doing this.
- A risk assessment template and detailed standard operating procedures to assist with this process are available in the [Judges' Toolkit](#).
- Guidelines will be updated in line with developments in the government guidance. We recommend that you remain up to date with latest [BD coronavirus updates](#).
- Any measures implemented to allow the return to restricted activity for coaches, officials and riders must be capable of being changed quickly and remain flexible in the case of tighter restrictions / social distancing measures being reintroduced in future.
- Judges or riders with confirmed or suspected cases of Covid-19, those who reside with a person with a confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19, or who are identified as being vulnerable or at risk, should adhere to the government guidance on social isolation / shielding and should not partake in any activity until it is safe to do so.
- If delivering online coaching or test riding clinics you should observe safe working practices, taking into account additional safeguarding considerations, risk assessments and GDPR compliance.

Maintaining social distancing

- Test riding should be limited to a maximum of groups of up to six individuals per session only – whether they are physical lessons attended in person or delivered remotely online.
- Riders should ensure they remain three horse lengths apart at all times when riding together in an arena or warm up area.
- Social distancing should be adhered to at all times, maintaining a two metre distance between the judge and participants. If closer contact is unavoidable, individuals should still keep a minimum of one metre plus away at all times, avoiding face to face contact where possible.
- Where it is essential a guardian is present for the purposes of safeguarding under 18s, they should also maintain social distancing measures.

Food, drink and travel

- Cafés and restaurant facilities are permitted to open from 4 July, in line with public health guidance. However, it is still recommended that judges and writers provide their own food and drink where possible.
- From the 24 July in England and Scotland, you must by law wear a [face covering](#) in all shops, take-away food outlets and supermarkets. It is recommended that face coverings are worn in other indoor spaces where close contact cannot be avoided and it is not possible to maintain social distancing.
- It is preferable that the judge/writer provides their own mug/flask/drinks bottle to refill if necessary.
- Disposable cups, crockery and utensils are also recommended as suitable alternatives.
- Travel to a venue should be alone or with member(s) of the same household and the vehicle should be thoroughly cleaned on a regular basis. Prior to leaving the vehicle, and on return to the vehicle, judges should follow the necessary hand washing or sanitisation protocol.
- Activity should be planned in order to minimise travel and allow sufficient time between clients.
- The number of clients/yards/venues visited per day should also be limited and minimised.
- When refuelling your vehicle, where possible use the same service station each time. Hygiene practices should be followed, including the use of gloves and wipes, disposed of appropriately.
- All visits should be recorded, including clients, yards and venues visited, to allow for tracking and tracing if this is necessary in future. A sample record sheet can be found in the [Judges' Toolkit](#).
- Where riders are travelling to venues with their horses, they should travel alone, or with members of their household and make no other stops on route.
- Adequate parking should be provided for cars, horseboxes and trailers to allow for social distancing to be observed, including additional space for the loading/unloading of horses.
- Anyone visiting a venue/yard should minimise unnecessary contact with other individuals, including considering access for other vehicles that may arrive during your visit.

Health, safety and hygiene

- Ensure that convenient access to first aid and all emergency equipment is maintained and first aid kits remain adequately stocked – including the addition of PPE where not already present.
- The primary responsibility of first aid is to preserve life and first aid should be administered, if required, until the emergency services attend. Guidance on the delivery of first aid during Covid-19 is available from the [Resuscitation Council UK](#) and [St John Ambulance](#).
- Where first aid is required, it would be preferable that this is administered by a parent/guardian or member of the rider's household, under guidance from a qualified professional, to allow social distancing to be maintained.
- Consideration should be given to the fact that there may be potential delays in emergency responses during the current pandemic.
- Facilities, surfaces and equipment should be regularly cleaned to reduce the risk of transmission. Where possible equipment (including pens, pencils and clipboards) should not be shared and, if necessary, they should be adequately cleaned prior to use. Guidance on the cleaning of surfaces and facilities is available from [Public Health England](#).
- The handling of paper test sheets should be kept to a minimum and feedback provided electronically where possible.

Judging children and safeguarding

- Guidance remains the same for test riding for children under 18; however, updated safeguarding guidance for the provision of online and face-to-face test riding is available in the [Judges' Toolkit](#).

- If judging test riding remotely online, it is recommended that judges utilise BD approved online providers using BD tests. If engaging in online competition or remote test riding judges must ensure that all of the necessary parent/guardian consent has been sought and the relevant safeguarding, GDPR and risk assessment protocols are adhered to.
- During test riding sessions the attendance of a non-participating parent or guardian with a rider should be limited to one, where possible – and social distancing should be observed whilst watching the session.

Bookings and payment

- All bookings should be taken online or by phone.
- Payments should be taken online electronically, such as using BACS, PayPal or by pre-paid bank transfer. Handling of cash should be avoided to minimise risk of contamination.
- Allowance should be made within the daily schedule for clients to arrive and leave the venue, avoiding any contact with other clients where possible.

Communication

- It is important that judges communicate regularly with riders to ensure that they follow an agreed approach to the safe facilitation of test riding sessions.
- Judges and coaches should liaise with the venue in order to agree a suitable approach to the return to restricted activity and to ensure that judges are adequately supported to deliver sessions safely.

Local Lockdown

In the event of any local restrictions being imposed by the government, the following protocols should apply:

- Any venue that falls within a restricted area will not be permitted to host BD affiliated competition and training activity while local restrictions remain in place.
- Organisers should not accept bookings for training or competition entries from members who live within the exclusion zone for the duration of any local lockdown.
- Members residing within the exclusion zone should adhere to government advice on non-essential travel, which includes not participating in any BD activity until restrictions are lifted.
- No judges, stewards or officials who reside within the exclusion zone should be employed or travel to venues for BD activity from while these restrictions remain in place.
- All travel in or out of any exclusion zone should be kept to a minimum and only where it is deemed essential; for example if coaches are unable to work from home.
- Where possible, staff, contractors and suppliers should not travel to venues from within the exclusion zone, unless this is deemed essential for work purposes.
- Coaches and judges should not conduct training or test riding activity for members who reside within the exclusion zone until local restrictions are lifted.