



Guidance for British Dressage competitors and their connections

COVID-19: returning to restricted competition activity safely

Updated 30 November 2020 v.6

First published 24 June 2020

Guidelines for a safe return to competition activity

British Dressage competitions are now back underway again in England, Scotland and Wales, subject to any local restrictions. This guidance, for use in England, will help you understand what to expect when you compete at venues and ensure that we have a safe return to restricted activity. Scotland and Wales have separate guidance available in the member [COVID-19 toolkits](#). We all have a part to play in making sure that competitions are run under the safest conditions possible and minimise the risk of spreading COVID-19.

The safety of all participants is our over-riding priority and we all need to work within the government guidelines in order to safeguard the health and well-being of competitors, officials and venue staff. We've consulted closely with our organisers, judges and stewards to put protocols in place that will provide a controlled and regulated environment, enabling competitions to return safely while reducing the risks associated with coronavirus.

Organisers and venues have been encouraged to conduct their own thorough risk assessments prior to the resumption of activity. This document is intended to provide guidance and recommendations only, not provide a prescriptive list as each venue will have different requirements depending on their circumstances. Nevertheless, the general principles that underpin our Standard Operating Procedures should still be in place at all venues when competitions restart to ensure that venues are COVID Secure.

The member FAQ document on the [BD COVID-19 hub](#) on our website may offer further help with any questions you may have. 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 also refer to the relevant websites for the devolved governments for specific 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 take other mitigating measures.
- ➔ It is recommended that face coverings are worn in indoor spaces, such as on-site cafeterias or shops, where close contact cannot be avoided and it is not possible to maintain safe social distancing.
- ➔ 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.

What will your competition journey look like?

The following measures will help to keep everyone safe by minimising the risk of spreading the virus:

- ➔ Do not attempt to travel to venues if you or anyone in your household is feeling unwell or is displaying symptoms associated with the virus.
- ➔ Keep your hands and face clean – wash your hands and/or use hand sanitiser regularly.
- ➔ Avoid touching your face, mouth and eyes if at all possible when in a public environment.
- ➔ Take hygiene precautions, including using a tissue when sneezing, disposing it safely, and cough into the crook of your elbow, not your hand.
- ➔ Limit the number of contacts you have with other people outside of your household.
- ➔ Keep your distance – at least two metres on the ground, three horse lengths while mounted.
- ➔ If closer contact is unavoidable, you should still keep a minimum of one metre apart at all times, plus take other mitigating measures, avoiding face to face contact where possible.
- ➔ Wear face coverings in situations where social distancing may be compromised, particularly in indoor areas such as cafeterias, take-away outlets and shops on site.
- ➔ Do not share tack or equipment and thoroughly clean all items, including clothes, when returning home after competition.

General competition procedures

- ➔ Under current restrictions, the number of people permitted on site will be limited through the day, so entry numbers may be restricted to manage this effectively.
- ➔ In addition to the rider, only one other person is permitted to attend per horse. This could be an owner, trainer or groom, but the limit is one extra person per combination.
- ➔ An additional person is also permitted as the nominated parent, guardian or carer for all Under 18s and Para riders (see Para specific guidance below).
- ➔ No spectators are permitted on site; other than competitors access will be limited to venue staff, officials and pre-accredited media and photographers only.
- ➔ The secretary's office at the venue will be closed to the public to minimise unnecessary contact, but assistance will still be available on site and contact numbers will be provided.
- ➔ Provision will be made by the venue for a first aider with appropriate PPE and knowledge of procedures under COVID-19 provisions.
- ➔ Competitions will be run in a way that avoids unnecessary contact. This includes the removal of scoreboards and no prize giving presentations, while results will be posted online.
- ➔ Venues are recommended to scan or photograph completed test sheets and either email results or post sheets out to competitors after the competition.
- ➔ 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.
- ➔ Soft face coverings that cover the mouth and nose may be worn while riding, although these remain optional for competitors. No face shields are permitted and nothing should attach to the riding hat.
- ➔ Toilet facilities will be open and cleaned regularly. Venues are advised to regularly clean all facilities, particularly common touch points, such as door and gate handles.

- ➔ Cafes and restaurant facilities are permitted to remain open within Tiers 1 & 2, in accordance with the latest [public health guidance](#), providing social distancing can be maintained at all times. Table service is mandatory, if seated indoors, with no more than six people sat at one table. Face coverings must be worn when moving around the cafe or restaurant, but are not required while sat at a table.
- ➔ Cafes and restaurants in Tier 3 areas can only offer a takeaway service. However, we recommend that all venues offer a [take away service](#), with a one way system in place, unless you are able to operate safely within the government guidelines.
- ➔ Competitors are encouraged to consume food and drink in outdoor spaces wherever possible, to limit the use of shared indoor facilities.
- ➔ You may be required to wait between tests in your car / lorry so be prepared – take a book, laptop, tablet or something similar to occupy the time.
- ➔ On-site stabling is permitted, subject to adhering to social distancing and public health guidance.
- ➔ Multiple day shows are permitted in all tiers. However, competitors staying overnight in their lorries or camping areas must continue to adhere to [current guidelines](#) for the relevant tier, both from the area they are travelling from as well as the location of the venue.
- ➔ Members should avoid mixing with other households, adhere to the rule of six and remain within their social bubble at all times.
- ➔ Riders should ensure that high standards of hygiene are maintained in the stabling area at all times, washing hands or using hand sanitiser before and afterwards.
- ➔ Competitors must bring their own equipment, which should be stored in their own horseboxes or trailers when not in use, not left outside the stable.
- ➔ As per DEFRA requirements and BD rules, equine passports should accompany all horses during travel and be made available for inspection if requested.
- ➔ Horses must be vaccinated in accordance with BD rules.
- ➔ All safeguarding, horse welfare and anti-doping policies will be followed and monitored as normal.
- ➔ Commanders are allowed for tests, providing they adhere to social distancing at all times. They should be included in the people allocation permitted for additional rider support. If the venue is able to offer this service, they must use their own test sheets.
- ➔ Competitors and their connections should carefully consider the pictures they post on social media or their websites. Any images should conform to this guidance – clear social distancing, correct group numbers, face coverings where required, etc. We all must work to portray the safe conditions our sport is currently operating under.

Para riders

- ➔ Para riders are permitted to have an extra person in attendance to provide assistance where required, such as a family member, guardian or carer (i.e. two people in total, in addition to the rider).
- ➔ Organisers should consider the needs of any riders that may require additional support and allow adequate parking for horseboxes / trailers with adjacent parking for additional support vehicles.
- ➔ Para riders should liaise with the venue prior to attending to request any specific requirements or additional support they may require. This is particularly important if the rider is visiting the venue for the first time.
- ➔ In the warm up arena, para riders may receive assistance from one additional person, as required, but otherwise no spectators or grooms are allowed to access these areas.

- Para riders requiring overnight stabling should liaise with the venue prior to attending to ensure that clear access to the stabling / walkways is available.

Making an entry

- Please use the BD online portal for details on all competitions. We are continuing to work with organisers to keep the fixture schedules and show status up to date.
- All entries and payments will be made online, as per the details in each individual schedule.
- A condition of your entry will be that you agree to adhere to all government regulations and BD protocols relating to social distancing, public health and hygiene.
- If space permits, late entries will be permitted up until times are published.
- Normal withdrawal, ballot and refund conditions will apply.
- Entries will be accepted using class tickets.
- Once times have been published, no changes may be made to the class.
- If you're unable to compete, for whatever reason, please do let the venue know in good time. If it's before the times are published, your space may be able to be filled. This information is also required for track and trace sheets, as well as results, as all withdrawals must still be recorded.

Before you compete

- Communication with the venue is important, as they'll keep their website and listing on the BD online portal up to date with all the information you'll need on the day.
- Venues have been asked to post a map on their website a map, highlighting any changes to the site, including parking instructions and clearly marked toilet locations.
- Venues will also provide competitors with details of any additional requirements in place to help manage the COVID-19 risk. Please take time to read them in advance so you're fully prepared before travelling to the venue.
- Venues are being encouraged to operate a one-way system, if at all possible, so you should familiarise yourself, even if it's somewhere you go to compete regularly.
- If you have any special requirements, for example to assist with access, please consult with the organiser by telephone or email ahead of your arrival.
- If you have to stop for fuel on route to the competition venue, please wear protective gloves and either wash your hands thoroughly or use hand sanitiser.

Music Classes

- Venues wishing to run music competitions should ensure that clear guidance is relayed to the competitor regarding the transfer of music files, whether in physical or digital format.
- CDs, MP3 and USBs are all permitted; however, these must be sanitised before and after transfer between competitor and organiser.
- Online methods of music transfer are recommended if the venue has the facility to do so. We Transfer is a free online platform for transferring large file sizes.

Stabling

- Onsite stabling is permitted, although where possible a one-way system should be put in place to minimise contact and areas marked to ensure that social distancing is maintained.
- Social distancing signage, COVID-19 posters and PHE protocols must be displayed and clearly visible in all stabling areas.
- Venues should ensure that high standards of hygiene are maintained in the stabling area at all times and that stables are cleaned in between use.
- All shared surfaces or common touch points must also be thoroughly cleaned on a regular basis.
- Competitors must bring their own equipment, which should be stored in their own horseboxes or trailers when not in use, not left outside the stable.
- Competitors staying overnight in their lorries or camping areas must continue to adhere to [current guidelines](#) for the relevant tier, both from the area they are travelling from as well as the venue.
- Members should avoid mixing with other households, adhere to the rule of six and remain within their social bubble at all times.

On arrival

- Please park where directed by the venue. If there are marked bays, please use them to maintain social distancing. Vehicles should remain a three metre distance apart to avoid unnecessary contact.
- Horses should remain outside (whether tied up or held in hand) in the proximity of the horsebox / trailer for a limited period of time only and should not be left unaccompanied.
- There will be a number of posters/notices to help you with the requirements in place and how to contact organisers. Venues should have a nominated COVID-19 Compliance Officer in place and their contact details will be made available to visitors.
- There should also be notification of an emergency contact for the venue vet and farrier.

Warm up arenas

- Numbers permitted in indoor and outdoor arenas will be based on one horse per 200sqm, depending on the overall size.
- For example, a 60 x 20m arena = 1,200sqm space, which would allow six competitors at any one time, while a 70 x 40m arena = 2,800sqm, which would allow up to 14 competitors.
- Warm up time is limited to a maximum of 40-50 minutes prior to going down the centre line, depending on the judging arrangements and amount of time allocated per competitor in each class.
- Riders should maintain a distance of three horse lengths apart from other competitors while using the warm up area.
- The warm up area will be supervised by an official representing the venue to ensure that social distancing is maintained at all times, so competitors should comply with their instructions.
- No helpers/grooms/supporters are permitted in the warm-up, except for para riders.

Judging

- Where safe social distancing in line with government regulations cannot be maintained, judges will either bring a writer with them from their household / support bubble or judge on their own.
- Some venues are adapting judge boxes with screens between the judge and writer but the judge must formally agree to officiate under these conditions when they are engaged by the venue.
- Where judges are on their own, limited comments will be given with scores but three minutes of extra time has been given for each test so that they can give as much feedback as possible in the summary section. The amount of feedback may not be as comprehensive as normal.
- Judges have a full toolkit and have been provided with detailed guidance on their revised judging protocol and procedures to ensure that the safety of officials is protected at all times.

After your test

- If possible, there will be a marshal to guide you from the warm up area to the competition arena to maintain social distancing.
- A separate warm down arena is recommended, which riders and horses may use for up to ten minutes after their test. However, please note that this may not be possible at all venues.
- Competitors should not return to the warm up area to stretch their horse after their test.
- Once you've completed your test and warmed down, you should return to your lorry to wash/down and untack.
- Horses should remain outside (whether tied up or held in hand) in the proximity of the horsebox / trailer for a limited period of time only and should not be left unaccompanied outside the box.
- If you have further tests, please wait in your car/lorry as there won't be any public facilities or spectator areas open for the time being.
- On returning home, it's advisable that you clean and disinfect all tack and equipment, including clothing worn during competition.

Results

- Score sheets will only be collected at the end of the class to minimise paper handling and will then be processed by the scorer/organiser.
- Results will be posted on the venue's website and venues should send them to BD for processing within 48 hours of the completion of competition.
- Venues are recommended to scan or photograph completed test sheets and either email results or post sheets out to competitors after the competition.
- 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.
- Prize money will be sent by BACS or electronic transfer where possible.
- Venues should use the standard BD results template and include withdrawals, no shows, HC runners, class ticket entries and eliminations.
- This information will double as a 'track and trace' record to help if any competitor/visitor is subsequently tested positive for COVID-19.
- Objections or complaints will be dealt with over the phone or via email after the completion of the competition. Payment will be taken on a credit/debit card, as per current rule 204, page 179.
- BD will process results and aim to have the final verified version live as soon as possible after receipt.

Local Restrictions

The government has announced details of the revised three tier alert system for England that will apply from [2 December onwards](#). Organised sport is permitted to continue in all tiers within these restrictions. Current national restrictions remain in place until 00.01 on Wednesday 2 December and should be followed until then.

With many areas of the UK subject to different and rapidly changing restrictions, it is the responsibility of individual members to ensure that they check the latest situation in the area they are living in, or travelling to, to ensure that they are complying with all requirements. Use the following [post code checker](#) to confirm the tier you are travelling to / from.

- Members, organisers and officials must abide by the restrictions that apply for that tier, both in terms of where they are travelling to and from. It is important to note that the highest tier restrictions will always take priority when travelling between different tiers.
- While travel restrictions are currently advisory rather than mandatory, it is recommended that members follow government guidance on avoiding unnecessary travel to / from Tier 3 areas.
- Organisers and venues have the right to refuse entry to members from Tier 3 areas; however, entry fees should be refunded in accordance with BD rules.
- Where BD organised competition and training activity is permitted to continue, all COVID guidance and protocols must be implemented fully and followed correctly.
- Venues are required to conduct thorough risk assessments to mitigate risks and take all necessary precautions to ensure that activity is run in a COVID secure environment.
- Any venue in an area with mandatory travel restrictions in place should not accept entries or bookings from members outside of that area, unless they have put additional mitigations in place and have received local authority approval.
- Organisers should not accept bookings for training or competition entries from members who live in areas with any mandatory travel restrictions.
- Members are advised to avoid travelling to / from areas with Tier 3 travel restrictions to take part in organised competition, training or test riding activity.
- Judges, stewards or officials who reside within an area with Tier 3 travel restrictions should visit venues or clients for work purposes only.
- Where activity takes place within an area under Tier 3 travel restrictions, coaches and judges are advised to only conduct training or test riding for members who reside within that area.
- Staff, contractors and suppliers should only travel to / from venues within Tier 3 areas if deemed essential for work purposes and they are unable to work from home.

Useful web links

- [UK Government guidance for the public on the phased return for sport and recreation](#)
- [Wales Government guidance for a phased return of sport, recreation and leisure](#)
- [Sport & Recreation Alliance facilities guidance](#)
- [UK Government general coronavirus advice](#)
- [UK Government guidance on social distancing](#)
- [UK Government guidance on face coverings](#)
- [UK Government FAQs: what you can and can't do](#)
- [BD Coronavirus hub](#)