

## Scottish Gymnastics Coach Contact Framework

### Guidance for Gymnasts, Parents and Carers

The Scottish Gymnastics Coach Contact Framework was recently approved by **sportscotland** and Scottish Government. The framework has been developed to support clubs and coaches in their return to contact coaching in an effective, safe and progressive manner.

### What is Return to Coach Contact?

Gymnastics skills are complex movements which often require the participant to manipulate and coordinate a variety of limbs at different times, at speed, whilst rotating around various axes. Adding to this complexity is the inherent risk that arises from gymnastics, performing skills at height and against gravity on or with apparatus.

Due to this complexity, safe development is at the heart of gymnastics coaching and forms a significant part of coach education. Some skill development work requires close-proximity interaction between a coach and a gymnast. Coach contact is critical to ensure the participant understands the requirements of the skill and can safely attempt it.

Manual support of these progressions is often required (depending on the complexity of the skill), when the participant is attempting them for the first time. The coach has a duty of care to ensure the participant understands the requirements of the progression/activity and can safely attempt it, therefore manual support in the initial attempts is critical.

Coach contact includes the following between coaches and gymnasts:

- the manual supporting of gymnasts
- face-to-face contact
- contact within one metre
- being less than two metres away
- prolonged contact for three+ seconds throughout a session

Gymnastics providers wishing to resume coach contact and manual support within the planned activities must:

- already meet the requirements as set out by Scottish Gymnastics and have been operational for a minimum of three weeks maintaining the appropriate controls.
- follow all further transmission mitigating control measures required within the Scottish Gymnastics Coach Contact Framework Action Plan.
- educate staff and gymnasts in the required practices and controls as indicated within the Scottish Gymnastics Coach Contact Framework Action Plan and associated risk assessments completed by the club/provider. Appropriate records for NHS Test and Protect must be kept.
- ensure all gymnasts (and their parents/carers) and coaches who wish to resume coach contact understand the risks, their responsibilities and abide by all control measures as outlined within the Scottish Gymnastics Coach Contact Framework Action Plan.
- ensure there are an appropriate number of hand sanitisation stations available throughout the venue in close proximity to the apparatus or activity station where manual support is planned to take place.

Coaches will be using a phased return to manual support activities as shown in the table below - note that the club/gymnastic provider should already be operating as per guidance set out within the Step Forward Plan and therefore, gymnasts and coaches will already be working independently of each other with social distancing in place during phase 1. This is mandatory for a minimum of three weeks before progressing through the phases.

Protection levels	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Level 0
Coach contact	<p><b>Phase 1</b> No coach contact for three weeks from club reopening</p> <p>This is a mandatory phase for all clubs</p>	<p><b>Phase 2</b> Rescue spotting is permitted to prevent serious injury</p> <p>Clubs can enter this phase <b>three weeks</b> after reopening (even if the local authority has stayed in the same Covid-19 level)</p>	<p><b>Phase 3</b> Coach contact for multiple groups for a maximum of 15 minutes per group per day. Rescue spotting also permitted to prevent injury</p> <p>Clubs can enter this phase <b>six weeks</b> after reopening OR once local authority area enters level 1, whichever is earlier</p>	<p><b>Phase 4</b> Coach contact can resume for all pre-planned activity. It is the responsibility of the club and coach to review the programme, understand the increased risk, and ensure manual support activities are kept to a minimum</p> <p>Clubs can enter this phase <b>nine weeks</b> after reopening OR once local authority area enters level 0, whichever is earlier</p>
Gymnast contact	<p><b>Under 18s:</b> contact between gymnasts allowed</p> <p><b>Over 18s:</b> individual exercise only No group activity</p>	<p><b>Under 18s:</b> contact between gymnasts allowed</p> <p><b>Over 18s:</b> exercise allowed in groups No contact between gymnasts allowed</p>	<p><b>Under 18s:</b> contact between gymnasts allowed</p> <p><b>Over 18s:</b> exercise allowed in groups No contact between gymnasts allowed</p>	<p><b>All ages:</b> contact between gymnasts allowed</p>
Return to Training	Assess and Bridge (weeks 1-4)	Build (weeks 4 – 8)	Progress (weeks 8+)	

Group sizes will not exceed those within [gymnast to coach ratios policy](#) and will align to the [Scottish Gymnastics Code of Practice for Coaches and Officials](#) whereby two appropriately qualified coaches must be present at all times.

It is the responsibility of the club/gymnastics provider and coach to review the programme, understand the increased risk, and ensure manual support activities are kept to a minimum. Please note, that due to the nature of coach contact activities, there is a higher risk of a Covid-19 outbreak within the gymnastics venue.

## Before Resuming Coach Contact

Before returning to coach contact and manual support activities, you will need to have been contacted to outline the steps required to resume close-proximity activities. Steps will include:

- completing the opt-in agreement to resume coach contact and manual supporting activities and understand the risks involved. You can stop taking part at any time, please notify a coach or the Covid-19 Officer or representative.
- self-screening for symptoms prior to travelling to the training venue for every session. This must be done within 2 hours of your session starting. Do not go to training if you feel unwell or you or a member of your household are displaying any Covid-19 symptoms.
- ensure contact details are up to date with the club for NHS Test and Protect purposes.
- comply with government guidance outside of the training environment by maintaining social distancing in public settings and adhering to the relevant current guidance within households or social interactions, and self-isolation periods following travel abroad.
- being made aware of the increase in transmission risk associated with the return to manual support activities. Gymnasts and coaches must be made aware that they are opting into any activities related to the return to coach contact work and that they can withdraw at any time.

> Example of [opt-in agreement](#) your club will ask you to complete

> Example of [a self-screening survey](#) your club will ask you to complete before each coach contact session

## During sessions

- All gymnasts and coaches should be told by their club of the importance of staying with their groups for contact coaching and ONLY performing planned manual support activities.
- Contact is permitted between gymnasts under the age of 18 across all phases of the framework. Contact between gymnasts over the age of 18 is only permitted once the local authority reaches Level 0 as detailed in the [Scottish Government's Covid-19 Strategic Framework](#).
- Activities that can be conducted without close-proximity work will still be done with social distancing in place (for example warm-ups, conditioning, individual skill work, cool downs). Similarly, social distancing must still be maintained in communal areas of your training venue.
- Throughout all gymnastics activity, including those which require manual support, coaches must wear a face covering in line with government guidance (unless medically exempt).
- Gymnasts are not required to wear a face mask during gymnastics activity but may choose to do so. Gymnasts must wear a face mask when not taking part in gymnastics activity or when in communal areas (unless medically exempt or under the age of 5).
- Hand hygiene must be maintained with gymnasts and coaches being expected to wash or sanitise their hands regularly before and after working in close proximity on manual support activities, as well as throughout the session and venue. Coaches are also expected to sanitise their hands between supporting each gymnast.

### After sessions

- All items of clothing and leotards/unitards for the gymnast and coach/instructor must be washed after every session attended.
- If you develop any of the symptoms of Covid-19 or receives a positive Coronavirus test result, inform the club/gymnastics provider as soon as possible.

Please note, the approval of the Coach Contact Framework does not allow for social distancing to be fully removed from the gymnastics environment. The controls in place are specific to the planned coach contact and manual support activity.

Where these activities are not being performed social distancing must be adhered to (for example, during warm-ups, conditioning, and individual skill work). Coaches are still required to maintain social distancing with no permitted contact between coaches and gymnasts except for the planned manual support activities (with the exception of rescue spotting for safety).

### Reporting concerns

If you are concerned about any matters regarding Covid-19 at your child's gymnastics facility, in the first instance contact the designated Covid-19 officer.

To report safeguarding concerns, in the first instance contact your club safeguarding officer.

Further information regarding the safeguarding and protection of children can be found on [scottishgymnastics.org](https://www.scottishgymnastics.org)



**FACE COVERINGS**



**AVOID CROWDS**



**CLEAN HANDS**



**TWO METRES**



**SELF-ISOLATE**

Book a test if you have symptoms.

**Protecting all of us,  
takes all of us.**