

Restarting Dance after the Lockdown

Information via the EFDSS

What is a Risk Assessment?

Risk management refers to the process of making decisions that will help to avoid and reduce the impact of unexpected undesired outcomes. Practitioners need to be fully aware of what can go wrong and know how to implement strategies as preventative measures. Decisions and actions taken to recognise - and minimise risk - need to be applied consistently in the delivery of all aspects of your work.

You should be able to demonstrate that you have undertaken a risk assessment in relation to all factors that could present a hazard to health and potentially cause injury or death. In the event of an insurance claim, your risk assessment records may be requested by the insurer.

There are five stages in undertaking a Risk Assessment:

1. Identify potential hazards
2. Establish who might be at risk/harmed and how
3. Assess the risks, decide whether existing precautions/procedures are adequate or whether more steps are required
4. Record your findings
5. Regularly review your assessment and revise if necessary.

All risk assessments need to be tailored to each individuals' practice, context and the population you are teaching.

If you are a member of People Dancing, you can complete an online learning programme about Risk Assessment free of charge. Email info@communitydance.org.uk to request access to the programme.

The following information is for guidance only and is intended as an educational support resource and not as definitive or medically informed guidance.

Use of face coverings

It is important that Covid-19 guidance continues to be adhered to whilst restrictions are still in place. This may include wearing a face covering in crowded areas, however, participants and leaders should not be required to wear face covering while taking part in sport and physical

activity. All forms of face coverings may restrict breathing efficiency and should not be used during exercise except on specific advice from a physician.

Risk Assessment considerations for community and participatory dance & COVID-19

Planning and communication

- If you are using third party space – e.g. a community centre or hall – speak to them about the policies and systems they have put in place. Ask to see a copy of the management’s risk assessment. In either of these contexts, are there specific rules you are expected to follow within the building? Will your risk assessment be in harmony with this for the activity taking place there?
- If undertaking contracted or commissioned work in a given location on a self-employed basis – e.g. a school, care setting, arts venue – you are entitled to see the risk assessment undertaken by the contracting organisation and should be involved in the creation of a risk assessment for the specific activity
- If undertaking work in any context as an employee, you should liaise with your employer about the organisation’s risk assessments and contribute to these accordingly
- Communicate with the people and groups you work with, parents/guardians and care-givers: what are their concerns and views about comfort and risk levels about returning to in-person dance activity? Have you given people you work with the opportunity to flag risks to them that you might not have been aware of? Do they wish to e.g. use face masks in sessions, and how might this impact your practice and your risk assessment?
- What are your systems for record keeping – such as contact details? Would you be able to adequately cooperate with the NHS contact tracing if required
- If you are working in partnership with other artists or teachers, is everyone fully aware of and engaged with the risk assessment process?
- Is your session admin as paperless as it can be, to avoid people e.g. sharing pens to sign into a register? Are you able to put in place e.g virtual sign-ups and registers, online payment systems etc?
- If you are working in more than one location in a day (which is very common) how are you managing the transmission risk that you may yourself pose as you move between locations? If you are travelling, are you able to avoid using public transport? What

hygiene procedures do you have in place? Will you use a change of clothes and footwear in each location?

- Depending on specific requirements in your location or venue, the type of activity and groups you are working with, do you need to consider the use of appropriate PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) for yourself such as a face mask or visor. If in doubt, ask the venue management or contracting/host organisation (if appropriate)
- Are your planned procedures and working practices inclusive of peoples' access needs? And if not, what further adjustments could be made?
- How are you informing the people and groups you work with about your risk assessments, and how they might be affected? Are you making them available e.g. on your website or social media page? Do you plan to display COVID-secure signs in your dance spaces? Do people know how to flag a concern with you?

People and groups

- Symptom checking - what procedures can you have in place to check that people are not **displaying symptoms** of COVID-19? Do you know what to advise if symptoms are reported? Do you understand the rules for self-isolation in respect of potential exposure to someone with COVID-19? What about checking if people have travelled abroad and recently returned? You might do this alongside any usual approach to checking for pre-existing medical conditions amongst your participants
- Social distancing (the physical distance between individuals) and social mixing (in groups, beyond households) – are you aware of the rules in your area? Do you need to review your risk assessment if these have recently changed?
- Is it possible to organise group work in 'bubbles'? Can social mixing be minimised? E.g. if you are splitting a large group into smaller groups, can these groups remain consistent?
- Is it possible for participants to avoid using public transport? If not, then a facemask whilst in transit and handwashing is essential
- Working barefoot or in footwear both have risks: if barefoot, what hygiene procedure needs to be in place? Are there adequate facilities for this? If in footwear, are these cleaned before use in the dance space? Do you have arrangements for outside footwear to be removed? Is there a designated space for participants to store their belongings separately?
- Encourage people to bring their own filled water bottles; discourage people from bringing food into the space

- Participant clothing – ask them to arrive dressed in their dancing clothes to avoid time in changing rooms. If using public transport, can participants be asked to change clothing?
- Can the arrival and departure times of larger groups be staggered to avoid any pinch points? Is it possible to have an outdoor but safe (e.g. well-lit and not concealed) collection point to avoid people congregating inside? If working with under-18s, how will you inform parents/guardians about the procedures for young people should arriving and leaving?

Space and buildings

- What measures do the management have in place already? What specifically are the arrangements and responsibilities for cleaning your working space before and after use? Is the cleaning edge-to-edge, and not just the dance floor? What about the use of chairs or mats – have these been cleaned too? Based on what you find out, do you need to put in place additional cleaning measures?
- Access to handwashing materials is absolutely crucial. Develop cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures, and display posters and instructions; ensure there is access to soap, water, paper towels, paper tissues and hand sanitiser. Are there adequate bins?
- Access to common areas – toilets, changing rooms and foyers. What are the cleaning regimes in these spaces? Can use of these spaces be minimised or stopped altogether? If you must use changing rooms have clear guidance in place for their use. What about frequently touched surfaces – bannisters, door handles, barres?
- What is the handwashing/sanitising procedure when leaving one space for another e.g. can you ask people to use hand sanitiser when re-entering the dance space? Consider whether hygiene or cleaning products may cause issues for participants with allergies
- Can you undertake a visual inspection of spaces before your groups arrive? What is the procedure post-activity? Do you know who to contact if there is a significant cleaning issue within the space? Do you have your own cleaning supplies to deal with minor issues (e.g. disinfectant wipes and paper towels, and a bag for safe disposal)?
- Does the space have 2m floor markings? For high traffic areas, such as entrances and exits, is a one-way system possible? Or ask groups to wait to be called in and out?
- Within the dance space, is it possible to mark standing spots on the floor? What are the limitations on the number of people allowable in the space? The building will already have procedures – check with them. The guidance appears to recommend 100ft sq. per person in terms of ‘total workable space’ (which is the total space available in the dance room, the foyer, the changing rooms etc) – this is equivalent to approximately 9.3m sq. per person

- What is the ventilation like in the space? Is there good fresh air ventilation, with windows that open? How can this be managed in colder months?
- If air conditioning is used, it should ideally be set to draw fresh air in. Has it been checked for legionella (as it may not have been used for some time)? In all cases, the use of air conditioning is something to check with the building management.

Activity

- How will you adjust your dance practice or teaching to ensure social distancing is met, and the risk of transmission minimised if it cannot be met? Can you build in greater social distancing, such as not following in lines, leaving larger gaps between people when travelling across the floor etc.? (see also [Making a Move](#))
- Refrain from close contact or partner work and use activities that place people back-to-back or side-to-side – rather than face to face. Consider creative activities that promote increased awareness of social distancing and spatial awareness
- Is it possible to avoid unnecessary touching of surfaces, chairs etc. during the session? If you use mats, can you ask people to bring their own? (e.g. like a yoga mat)
- What about the use of props or other equipment? Is there a thorough cleaning regime in place for these, before and after use? Or are they rotated with 72 hours between usage? Can you do without props and equipment altogether?
- Can you work outside? If so, what additional risks might this pose (e.g. hard or wet floors, clothing, bad weather, sun exposure)?
- Ensure that only the dance artist/leader/teacher accesses the music system, to avoid the equipment being touched unnecessarily
- Noise levels – consider lowering the music volume to remove any need for shouting or raising your voice within sessions
- If you are working with live musicians, they should ideally be placed behind a screen or at least 2m away from participants
- Spectators / observers - discourage anyone other than participants being present in the space. Is there a risk of e.g. parents congregating outside the space? Can you provide a procedure for this?
- First aid, fire and emergency – in these situations it is not required to maintain social distancing, but attention should be given to hygiene immediately after any help is provided. Social distancing should be observed again as soon as possible.