

Reading Scottish Pipe Band

Updated guidance to practice format – 7th April 2021

References:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts> (Published: 11 May 2020; Updated: 31 March 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do> (Published: 29 March 2021, undated 6 April 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021#roadmap> (Published: 22 February 2021)

The Government has updated the guidance for people working in performing arts with new guidance applying to non-professional performers from March 29th 2021. The new guidance permits non-professional performing arts activity outdoors in groups of up to 6 people, or as a group of 2 households. Indoor non-professional performing arts is not currently permitted unless an exemption exists, such as a performance as part of an act of worship. All other guidance, ‘hands/face/space’, risk assessments, social distancing, practice protocols, and local restrictions remain in place and the guidance on this is also contained in **Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19), Performing arts**.

The **COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021**, published **22nd February 2021** sets out the roadmap out of the current lockdown restrictions for England with the update including changes to restrictions that come into force on 29th March. This is summarised in the table.

MONTH	DATE	STEP	MEASURES
MARCH	MONDAY, MAR 8	STEP 1A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All schools and college students back in class.Mandatory facemasksSome university students returnCare home residents allowed one visitorTwo people from different households allowed outdoors
	MONDAY, MAR 29	STEP 1B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Outdoor gatherings allowed under the 'rule of six'Stay at Home replaced by Stay LocalOutdoor sports facilities like tennis courts and golf courses
APRIL	MONDAY, APR 12	STEP 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Non-essential retailers, hairdressers and close-contact services reopen.Pubs and restaurants can reopen for outdoor, seated serviceWider social distancing rules remain in placeLibraries and outdoor attractions such as zoos and theme parks can reopenDomestic holidays with family in self-contained premisesFunerals with up to 30 people, weddings with up to 15
MAY	MONDAY, MAY 17	STEP 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Rule of six scrapped outdoorsIndoor hospitality reopens, cinemas, soft play areas, rest of accommodation sectorSmaller outdoor sports venues allowed 4,000 fans or half capacity (whichever is lower) Up to 10,000 people - or a quarter of capacity - allowed at stadiums holding 16,000 people or more (whichever is lower)Possible return of international travel
JUNE	MONDAY, JUN 21	STEP 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Last remaining legal restrictions liftedRemaining hospitality re-opensNightclubs can reopenLarge events and performances can restart with full crowdsRestrictions for weddings may still be in effect

From the Guidance – **(COVID-19) Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do**, in the section, **Meeting friends and family outdoors (rule of 6)**, you can meet with others in a group of 6 from any number of households or a group of any size from a maximum of two households. (Note 1).

Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19), Performing arts in the section **Who this guidance is for** advises us that it covers both professional and non-professional performing arts activity and, though it contains key measures for non-professional activity, the broader guidance is relevant for both professional and non-professional performing arts. The broader guidance remains us that we are we are operating under stages 1 and 2 of the Performing arts roadmap which allows us to rehearse without audiences. (Note 2) with **Priority actions to take** giving a list of actions that must be taken where appropriate (Note 3). However, venues are not currently permitted to open for non-professional activity (Note 4).

Section **2.4 Non-professional performing arts** in the guidance, permits non-professional performing arts activity outdoors, within the legal gathering limits from 29 March 2021. As mentioned above, the legal gathering limits are “groups of up to 6 people, or as a group of 2 households.”. It also notes that “Social distancing should be maintained between people who do not live together or share a bubble” and that “Indoor non-professional performing arts activity is not currently permitted.” (Note 5). Although the wording implies that multiple groups of six may practice at the same time, the guidance does not clarify, as it did prior to the latest lockdown, whether this is permitted.

Under **What you should do (when non-professional activity is permitted)** in section **2.4 Non-professional performing arts**, the guidance lists the key considerations for organisers and performers involved in non-professional performing arts. Amongst the common, hands/face/space considerations, the guidance stresses limiting the time and numbers for any performing arts activity. This further lends weight to practicing only as a group of up to six band members (Note 6).

It is proposed that band members who wish to attend practice need to attend as a group of up to six members and follow the guidance and published band risk assessment. Whilst playing, members will maintain at least 2 meters from each other. Junior members are subject to the rules of education settings and are following practice protocols specific to the Junior Band.

In order to comply with current guidance, 'Performing Arts' updated 31st March 2021, band practices, from the date of this document, will:

- Adhere to the hands/face/space general guidance
- Adhere to the 'rule of six' where a group of up to a maximum of six band members may meet outdoors to practice.
- Whilst meeting, band members should space themselves 2 meters apart.
- Adhere to the processes published by the Pipe Major at all times.
- Comply with advice from the London and South of England Branch RSPBA

Richard Smith
Treasurer
Reading Scottish Pipe Band

Notes

(Note 1) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do#meeting-family-and-friends-indoors>

"You can meet up outdoors with friends and family you do not live with, either:

- *in a group of up to 6 from any number of households (children of all ages count towards the limit of 6)*
- *in a group of any size from up to two households (each household can include an existing support bubble, if eligible)"*

(Note 2) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts#sec-00-3> – Performing arts roadmap:

"This guidance is part of a five-stage roadmap to bringing the performing arts back safely.

- **Stage 1: Rehearsal and training only (no audience).**
- **Stage 2: Performances permitted for broadcast and recording purposes (no audience).**
- **Stage 3: Performances permitted outdoors with an audience, pilots for indoor performances with a limited audience. Outdoor performances preferable, where possible.**
- **Stage 4: Performances permitted indoors and outdoors, with limits on audience numbers indoors. Outdoor performances preferable, where possible.**
- **Stage 1: Rehearsal and training only (no audience).**
- **Stage 2: Performances permitted for broadcast and recording purposes (no audience).**
- **Stage 3: Performances permitted outdoors with an audience, pilots for indoor performances with a limited audience. Outdoor performances preferable, where possible.**
- **Stage 4: Performances permitted indoors and outdoors, with limits on audience numbers indoors. Outdoor performances preferable, where possible.**
- **Stage 5: Performances permitted indoors and outdoors, with larger indoor audiences. Outdoor performances preferable, where possible.**
- *During the current national restrictions, performing arts venues can only continue to operate under **stages 1 and 2** of the performing arts roadmap.*
- *preferable, where possible.*
- **Stage 5: Performances permitted indoors and outdoors, with larger indoor audiences. Outdoor performances preferable, where possible.**

*During the current national restrictions, performing arts venues can only continue to operate under **stages 1 and 2** of the performing arts roadmap."*

(Note 3) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts#priority> – Priority actions to take: *"When it is possible for your venue to open, you should follow all the steps set out in this document in order for your workplace to be COVID-*

secure. The following key steps are a summary of the priority actions you should take to protect yourself, your staff and your customers.

1. **Complete a COVID-19 risk assessment.** Share it with all your staff. You can find more information in the [section on how to do a COVID-19 risk assessment](#).
2. **Clean more often.** Increase how often you clean surfaces, especially those that are being touched a lot. Ask your staff and your customers to use hand sanitiser and wash their hands frequently. You can find more information in the [section on keeping the site clean](#).
3. **Ask your customers to wear face coverings where required to do so by law, and in any indoor space.** This is especially important if your customers are likely to be around people they do not normally meet. You can find more information on face covering requirements in the [section on face coverings and PPE](#). You can find more detail on face coverings and exemptions in the [government guidance on face coverings](#).
4. **Make sure everyone is social distancing.** Make it easy for everyone to do so by putting up signs or introducing a one-way system that your customers can follow. You can find more information in the [section on working with the public](#).
5. **Increase ventilation** by keeping doors and windows open where possible and running fresh air ventilation systems at all times. You can find more information in the [section on managing your facility](#).
6. **Support NHS Test and Trace** by displaying an official NHS QR code poster, and keeping records of staff and visitors for 21 days. You can find more information on the requirements for visitor economy settings in the [section on NHS Test and Trace](#), and more detail on how to keep records in the [NHS Test and Trace guidance](#).
7. **Turn people with coronavirus symptoms away.** If a staff member (or someone in their household) or a customer has a persistent cough, a high temperature or has lost their sense of taste or smell, they should self-isolate and get a test. You can find more information in the [section on people who need to self-isolate](#).
8. **Design your production processes to minimise risk.** Reduce the number of people involved in processes like auditions. Use teams, groups or partnering to reduce the number of people individuals have contact with, particularly where social distancing may be impractical. You can find more information in the [section on managing your workforce](#). Although audiences are not currently permitted, the following priority actions will help you plan for the return of audiences in the future:
9. **Take proactive steps to encourage audiences to support the safety of the event.** Discourage activities which could increase aerosol transmission (such as shouting, chanting and singing along), clearly communicate that individuals who should be isolating should not attend, and provide information on how the event will run.
10. **Limit audience numbers and manage capacity to allow for social distancing.** Limit the number of guests in line with your capacity limit, and further where needed to allow for social distancing. Ensure customers are aware of the legal limits on group sizes. Seat individuals rather than allowing them to stand, and arrange seating in line with social distancing guidance. You can find more information in the [section on queuing, capacity and avoiding crowds](#)."

(Note 4) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts#sec-2-1> – Changes to operations, Businesses and venues **"You can also open your venue if necessary for a limited number of legally permitted reasons:**

- formal education (for example, hiring a space to a school or college)
- use in government pilots
- enabling access by the site owners or managers, or staff or people authorised by them (including volunteers) for maintenance where this is reasonably necessary
- work to ensure readiness to open, such as receiving deliveries of supplies
- providing essential voluntary or public services (including the provision of food banks or other support to the homeless or vulnerable, hosting blood donation sessions, or support in an emergency)
- making a film, television programme, audio programme or audio-visual advertisement
- voting or related activities

You cannot open your venue for other reasons. This includes non-professional activity (such as amateur choirs and music groups)."

(Note 5) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts#sec-2-4> - '2.4 How to take part in non-professional performing arts activity'

- "From 29 March, non-professional performing arts activity will be permitted outdoors, within the legal gathering limits.
- People can take part in non-professional performing arts activity outdoors in groups of up to 6 people, or as a group of 2 households. A group made up of 2 households can include more than 6 people, but only where all members of the group are from the same 2 households or an exemption applies (for example a support bubble). Social distancing should be maintained between people who do not live together or share a bubble.
- Indoor non-professional performing arts activity is not currently permitted. You should not take part in non-professional performing arts activity indoors, unless an exemption exists, such as performances which form part of an act of worship (see [guidance on Places of Worship](#)).

- *Before undertaking non-professional performing arts activity, you should consider the case for proceeding (or not) based on any restrictions in your area, the risk involved in the activity and location, and the number and health of participants, particularly if vulnerable individuals are involved.*

(Note 6) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts#sec-2-4> - 'What you should do (when non-professional activity is permitted):'

"The list below sets out the key considerations for organisers and performers involved in non-professional performing arts. In addition to these measures, you should also follow the other important steps outlined in this guidance, including preventing unwell people from attending, ensuring a distance of at least 2 metres between any performers, maintaining cleanliness and supporting contact tracing.

- **Ensure that your activity is permitted.** You must adhere to the legal gathering limits and any other restrictions, such as venue closures. Audiences are not permitted at this time. **At present you should only engage in activity outdoors.**
- **Ensure that anyone with COVID-19 symptoms (or who has been in contact with others who have symptoms, or who has been told to self-isolate) does not attend events or participate in singing** (even if they have no symptoms).
- **Ensure that social distancing is maintained at all times, including on arrival and departure.** This may involve redesigning your activity, for example by spacing singers at least 2 metres apart, ensuring that performers are not face-to-face, and having performers or audience members seated rather than standing (where possible). Direction can continue to take place during the activity i.e. between a conductor and a group or reflection between actors and directors, but other physical and social interaction is prohibited.
- **Limit the number of people involved.** The cumulative effect of aerosol transmission means that the more people who are involved, the higher the risk of transmission (to each other or an audience). It is therefore advisable to limit the total number of individuals involved in performing arts activity.
- **Limit the duration of activity as far as possible, including considering the need for breaks and intervals.**
- **Avoid raised voices and take the following steps to minimise risk:**
 - **Avoid face-to-face singing and ensure that social distancing is maintained** by spacing singers at least 2 metres apart in all directions. If you apply additional measures (such as wearing face coverings) this distance can be reduced, but there should always be at least 1m between people who do not live together (except where they are part of the same support bubble).
 - **Reduce the volume of singing and speaking, and use microphones** (if available) rather than breath for amplification.
 - You can find more information in the guidance on [safer singing](#).
- **Wear face coverings where possible.** You can find more information in the [section on face coverings and PPE](#) and the [guidance on safer singing](#).
- **Ensure that you follow any specific guidance relevant to your activity.** For example, the [guidance for places of worship](#) where singing is part of an act of worship. Even when in a COVID-secure venue such as a place of worship, individuals must observe guidance on meeting with others safely and the principles set out in the [guidance on safer singing](#)."