

12th July 2021 Elite Athlete Participation Recommendation

Para Dance UK have made the following recommendation having first considered all published guidance on return to sport (during the continued COVID-19 pandemic) by the Department of Culture and Sport (DCMS), in collaboration with other expert partners.

As government guidance regarding international travel continues to be updated, Para Dance UK continue to follow the “phased-return to sport” guidance published by DCMS, who, as of July 7th 2021, support the progression from Phase 3 to Phase 4 of the 5-step framework for safe return to elite sport competition.

Stage 4 essentially demands certain criteria be achieved on the part of international competition or event organisers, but also sets out guidance for travelling athletes and team. International competition organisers are required to communicate effectively and proactively with travelling athletes prior to competition, to ensure that guidelines are clearly communicated to individual athletes. They must also demonstrate that elite athletes fully understand the potential risks associated with attending the competition (in advance of travelling), their own responsibilities and the mitigation measures which have been put in place by the Competition Delivery Partners.

DCMS clearly set-out the responsibilities of prospective travelling athletes, transcribed below:

- 1. Foreign and Commonwealth and Development Office advice on [Foreign Travel](#) should be followed, and periodically reviewed prior to travel to ensure that the latest COVID-19 related information is appropriately incorporated into travel plans.*
- 2. Plans prior to travel should take account of all relevant laws and guidance on return to the UK, such as a required period of isolation or self-isolation.*
- 3. The COVID-19 Officer and COVID-19 Medical Officer responsible for the Elite Sports Organisation or Individual(s) should liaise with the organisers of any competition to be held outside the UK in a sufficiently timely manner in order to comply with the entry requirements of the country, including any quarantine / isolation laws or guidance*.*
- 4. The travelling athletes and support staff will be expected to abide by the laws and guidelines of the host country and organisation for the duration of their stay in the host country.*
- 5. Plans should be in place, should any travelling athlete develop symptoms and/or test positively for COVID-19, to keep that individual isolated, to maintain relevant test and trace procedures, and to plan their appropriate return to the UK (when it is safe to do so in line with wider travel and public health guidelines - both in the UK and in the country in which they are competing)*.*
- 6. On return, travelling athletes and support staff should return to following protocols as agreed within their sport as per the Stages One to Three Guidance. They are required to self-isolate for 10 days on their return (this can be reduced under ‘Test to Release’), apart from when competing in or training for an elite sports event; providing essential support to a domestic elite sportsperson in their competition or training; or providing essential operational support to the running of an elite sports event*.*

* The appointed COVID-19 Medical Officer at Para Dance UK will not routinely correspond directly with international competition organisers or direct travel and isolation requirements unless such a situation should arise between athlete and competition/public health body that requires medical advice. Should an athlete require assistance, the protocol should be to flag the issue to the Head of Para Dance Sport, at which point, the COVID-19 Medical Officer can be consulted. Should an athlete be required to self-isolate upon return from international competition, they must follow government guidance.

Elite athletes and support staff are encouraged to use their own judgement and risk assessment, and take into consideration their own circumstances in making the decision to attend international sanctioned and non-sanctioned events. This decision will be entirely personal and individuals will not be penalised for non-attendance during the period of the pandemic'

*- Dr Amal Hassan, COVID Medical Officer and Head of Classification, Para Dance UK
- Emma Millward, COVID Officer and Head of Para Dance Sport, Para Dance UK*