

The official return to indoor activities 'BEST PRACTICE' NGB guidelines

Duty of Care and Risk Assessment - INDOORS

DUTY OF CARE IS A LEGAL AS WELL AS MORAL REQUIREMENT WHEN 'RETURNING TO INDOOR ACTIVITIES'.

The TCQUGB works to improve and promote Tai Chi & Qigong in the UK. This includes, as a body, having a duty of care for, and responsibility to its members (and the public) on different levels.

The pandemic, however, has brought into sharp focus the need for each and every one of us to keep ourselves, and all others, safe. Undoubtedly, this need will be with us for some time. There are, of course, many practical things we can do but it seems a watershed moment, with restrictions being lifted and mitigations being relaxed, to create a framework of general advice and guidance (around our duty of care and risk assessment process) to support instructors and, in turn, their students/participants in maintaining their overall health and wellbeing in a safe class/workshop environment - as we learn to live with COVID amongst us.

The following is not a definitive list. Its aim is to give you guidance on how to manage your classes and workshops safely, whilst reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19. We need, depending on the virus status at any given time, to be able to adopt a flexible, common sense approach which will also include: vaccines; treatments; sensible public health behaviours and adaptations.

Of course, the TCQUGB (in line with EMD UK) will continue to advise that all instructors also use their own judgement in relation to participant safety measures.

N.B. Whilst this guidance focuses, generally, on COVID-19 and associated mitigations, your completed risk assessment should take into account other potential risks and safety measures.

Your risk assessment should be a 'living' document and it is recommended that you review it every 3 months, or as required to meet changing circumstances.

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To ensure that all reasonable steps are being taken and its duty of care is being discharged, and to the required standard of care, sports and physical activity providers should still consider all of the following as part of their risk assessment process:

- The session leader must have full and up to date insurance and, where appropriate, current DBS confirmation. It is recommended that the leader also has an up-to date/recognised First Aid certificate.
- CPD - maintain/improve competency and skills/knowledge to help keep participants safe.
- Physical Activity Readiness - Questionnaires (PAR-Q and PAR-Q COVID) to be completed by participants and kept in accordance with data protection law (GDPR Compliance). These should be updated as per TCQUGB guidance.
- It is good practice for session leaders to continue to maintain class lists and contact details, and be prepared to meet any re-introduction of Contact Tracing requirements.
- It is also good practice (and in line with EMD guidance) to continue to communicate to participants - on a regular basis - the need for:

i) Self-assessment

i.e. before attending any classes, all participants, instructors and spectators should self assess for COVID-19 symptoms (high temperature; a new continuous cough; loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste). If they have one or more of these symptoms (even if they are mild), the advice should be that they do not attend (and follow any current guidance).

ii) Informed decisions

advice to participants about the need to consider their own health and circumstances (e.g. if they are not fully vaccinated, or live with someone who has a higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19) so they can make an informed choice about whether they wish to participate, or not. With the help of your completed risk assessment, you will be able to explain the safety measures/mitigations you have put in place.

iii) Self-isolation

Clear communication to participants that they should not attend if they need to self-isolate, or if they are displaying any COVID-19 symptoms, however mild.

- If you are symptomatic or living in a household with someone else who has a possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection you/participants should not attend.
- If you are classified as extremely vulnerable on health grounds, you need to consider shielding to keep yourself safe by staying at home and avoiding gatherings.
- Be aware of, and comply with, changing Government and regional guidelines re e.g. numbers of participants, social distancing, face coverings, taking tests/self isolation etc., particularly if there is a surge and/or a new variant.

Even if you are vaccinated, you can still be infected with COVID-19 and pass it on to others. If you are identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 but you are not required to self-isolate, you can help protect others by following the guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread. In addition to any current testing requirements, you may also consider:

- Limiting close contact with other people outside your household, especially in enclosed spaces.
- Wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces and where you are unable to maintain a safe and comfortable distance for all.
- Limiting contact with anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable
- Whilst testing is purely voluntary, we would strongly encourage instructors and participants to take regular Lateral Flow Tests (preferably before class) for as long as they are available and/or consider taking temperature. This will help us to ensure that all who participate have a safe practice environment.
- Ensure that your indoor activity space is large enough for participants to follow any current social distancing guidelines.

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Consider the following in relation to changing circumstances:

- Clear instructions that instructors and/or participants should NOT attend classes if they have any of the following symptoms:
 - a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
 - a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
 - a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
 - do not attend classes if you are feeling in any way unwell
- A one way, socially distanced system when entering or leaving an indoor (or outdoor) activity space, where applicable.
- Participants must wear face coverings and use hand sanitiser when entering and leaving premises and in the event of possible 'pinch points' or contact with hard surfaces.
- Physical distancing and good hand and respiratory hygiene/etiquette are the most important and effective measures we can all adopt to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Therefore wearing a facial covering must not be seen as an alternative to any of these other precautions.
- Participants must bring their own water bottles.
- Thorough disinfection and cleaning after/between sessions of all contact surfaces, where applicable.
- Sharing of equipment should be prohibited, in particular ensuring that water bottles and cups are not shared.
- Consider safe utilisation of closed containers for all disposable and reusable hygiene materials (e.g. tissue, towels, etc.).
- Caution that, although measures are taken to minimise the risk of infection, all participants join the session at their own risk, particularly anyone with underlying health conditions

Premises used - instructors must make themselves fully aware of, and adhere to, owner's/manager's current rules/guidance in relation to usage. Instructors should also consider any requirement for further mitigation measures once they have completed a risk assessment. Key rules/guidance/mitigations should cover, for example:

- Entering and leaving premises
- Number of participants - without face coverings, ideally 2m apart as a precautionary measure
- Ensure provision of adequate ventilation within your classes
- Social distancing - as required
- Close contact activities e.g. Martial/Push Hands/correction - use of face coverings, double vaccination, no COVID symptoms and a negative LFT within 48 hours? of session and stick with one partner in the session.
- Ideally, maintaining 1m distance with a face covering when moving around
- Use of swords/fans etc. - cleaning equipment protocol
- Use of hand sanitiser
- Toilet facilities (use, cleaning and sanitisation)
- Cleaning protocol (before and after use of space)
- Procedure for notification of a positive test result (instructor & owner/manager)

REMEMBER: It is important to observe regional social distancing regulations (should they be re-introduced) during breaks, before and after activity.

Generally, it is good practice to encourage all participants to avoid social clusters, and maintain a safe and comfortable distance for all.