



the national governing body for group exercise

EMD UK

Group Ex

Support Pack

Since 17 March, EMD UK has been helping group exercise instructors deal with the challenges of Covid19. We are now collating that help, with new advice, into the EMD UK Group Ex Support Pack. This will be a series of blogs, checklists, guidance notes, webinars, and videos, drawing on the insight of experienced group ex professionals and other industry experts. Wherever possible, we will align our guidance with that of government, ukactive, CIMSPA, Sport England and other industry bodies. The aim is to give instructors some basis on which to plan. However, instructors should always follow official advice when it is published and at that point should cease any practices based on EMD UK's indicative guidance.

All content in the pack will be practical and can be implemented straight away. Given the fast-moving nature of events around Covid19, we will be updating the content on a regular basis.

Structure of the EMD UK Group Ex Support Pack

We have split the pack into two parts, based on likely scenarios:

1. Venues remain closed

We have assumed that venues will remain closed for the foreseeable future, although at the time of writing, no dates have been published. Our guidance for these options looks at delivering online classes, running your business, bringing in income, retaining your clients and preparing for re-opening.

2. Venues open

At some point in the future, venues will start to re-open. Our indicative guidance for this period looks at the social distancing of participants, hygiene and cleaning, equipment, use of changing rooms, converting online customers into face-to-face customers, running a blend of in-person and online classes and more.



Plan for venues that remain closed

Insurance

[Check your insurance](#) is valid and covers you to deliver online in whichever format you are delivering: 1-way, where participants can see you but you cannot see them, 2-way, you can see each other, or, recorded sessions for participants to watch without you being present.

Qualifications

[Ensure you are qualified](#) to deliver the classes you are hosting and check that your first aid is up to date. For advice and support on these aspects, please contact EMD UK on 01403 266000 or training@emduk.org

Review your current offering

- **Online classes:** What have you learnt from converting your classes to online so far? What can you do to enhance your current offering? Are there alternative class formats that would work well with your clients? With perhaps more downtime than normal, [look at qualifying in a different style](#).
- **Class content:** Plan new content for classes to keep participants engaged and choreography that is suitable for your new target audience. Check that you are planning appropriate choreography to perhaps limit movement around the room. Read *First Class Teaching* document in your pack.
- **Equipment:** Look at the possibility of running equipment-free workouts, but if clients are wanting to purchase equipment to add more variety.
- **Cueing:** Polish up your skills on cueing. With delivery going online, it is important that the class attendees can be safely cued, which involves using basic skills to convey your teaching points. Film yourself teaching a class and then review your own performance. For more useful tips on polishing up your skills, check out *Cueing Tips for Online Delivery* in the resource pack.
- **Know your worth:** Are there more profitable ways to host your classes/ know your worth? Giving away your classes for free is very charitable but can devalue your worth in the long run. An alternative is to ask for a donation for your classes. Look at what other instructors are offering to get ideas, but in the long run please remember, you have to run a business and long term, online classes will remain. Build your profile now, people who value your teaching are willing to pay. Read our *Know Your Worth* article in the resource pack.
- **Quality of video content:** ([both sound and visual aspects](#)). Find some great advice from Richard Playfair of Sweatlife Films on how to create excellent online class experiences [here](#).

- **Keeping up to date with the Fitness Community:** join relevant Facebook pages and discussion groups e.g. [zoom and fitness instructors UK](#), [PT Coronavirus Strategy Group](#) etc. This can be a great way to pick up on useful tips as well as share your own experiences and connect with other instructors in similar situations.
- **Are you trained in mental health?** Can you offer any advice or advice from other trainers who have different skillsets to you? Rather than trying to do this alone, link into a network of other trainers, NLP or mental health coaches and start conversations with them to share content.

Marketing

- **Communication:** How are you remaining in contact with your class participants that are not joining you online? Drop them a simple text message or set up a Facebook/WhatsApp group for all your clients so they can keep up to date with what you are offering (and each other).
- **Webinars:** Have you thought about delivering webinars, blogs or podcasts?
- **Social media:** Keep promoting your business or start to on social media and engage with a wider audience. Investigate ways you can do this going forward more efficiently. There are several free online courses available via LinkedIn to help you get started as well as profiles on Instagram and Facebook that can help you grow your reach. You can even follow key influencers in the industry to reshare content and get ideas. Make sure all your classes are [listed](#) on as many platforms as possible to widen your reach and promotion.

Business Housekeeping

- **Self Employed Income Support Scheme:** Do you know if you are eligible for the governments Self Employed Income Support Scheme.? Do you have unanswered questions? [Click here to watch our webinar](#) with Andrew Crawford answering our group ex instructors questions.
- **PPLPRS:** PPL have agreed that any unused credits can be carried forward to the next year. Make sure you are keeping a note on file of the unused PPL credits as you must report to them on renewal. Got questions? [Contact them here.](#)
- **Keep on top of your accounts and submit your tax return:** If you are looking for guidance on accounts, then please contact your accountant direct or follow our [independent advisor support group](#).

Planning ahead - What is your business going to look like post lockdown?

There is likely to be a staged approach into coming back to what we considered normal before lockdown. Now is the ideal time to plan for re-opening of your venues.

Venue: Call your facilities to check that they are keeping your spots open. Do they have any guidelines for you for post lockdown?

There is a high likelihood that changing rooms will not be allowed to open immediately and therefore social distancing measures will be required for use of toilets. Link to posters [here](#)

■ **Planning classes:** When the government remove lockdown restrictions there is the possibility that there will be reduced occupancy of indoor classes and a limit to equipment being used, to reduce contact points. Make the use of your time now to plan for alternative workouts such as, bodyweight, band workouts.

■ **Outdoor classes:** are more likely to be allowed to start prior to venues opening. If you are looking to take your classes outside when allowed you will need to check you have authority from landowners to teach on their land. Have you thought which of your classes could you take outside (if any) and what do you need to plan for? Social Distancing: sound equipment, microphone, kit? Read our supporting 'Guidelines for taking your classes outside' document in your KIT.

■ **Social distancing in classes:** When the government states it is safe to start up again there will be social distancing in place. Current guidelines from ukactive state:

- Social distancing guidelines must be followed (2m apart).
- There will be a minimum of a 10-minute window in between classes, so no 'waiting around' in groups.
- Equipment (including mats etc) will be cleaned in between use. It can either be done by the customer or staff member using spray and cloths provided.
- If possible, markings will be made on the floor to show the area for individuals. Think carefully about the possibility of administering first aid whilst social distancing measures are in place. St Johns Ambulance have put together [guidelines for first aid here](#) and [guidelines for CPR here](#).

. Keep up to date with announcements via our [COVID-19 info here](#).

■ **Safety equipment:** It is advisable due to demand, that you order any additional safety equipment such as [windbreakers](#), alcohol spray and wipes, facemasks and batteries in advance.

■ **Kit:** Get attendees to purchase their own kit, if possible, for use when classes can return, e.g.: mats, bands.

- **Booking Systems:** Review your current booking terms and conditions, and ensure you know how to reduce your booking spaces for when classes return with social distancing.
- **Venue Risk Assessment:** Look to review your venue Risk Assessment, to take into consideration social distancing and safety guidelines. Consideration must be made to how you would administer first aid in the event of an incident within your class and taking into account social distancing measures. Read our [social distancing risk assessment](#) and [outdoor exercise risk assessment](#) in your pack.
- **Online offering beyond lockdown:** What classes will you still offer online for those who are self-isolating or who do not want to come back to classes yet? Online classes will be an integral part of reaching those who are cautious about attending classes. This could be a profitable revenue stream for you in the coming months or even your future. Ask your class attendees what they would like to see still delivered online and at what times.
- **Timetables:** What are your timetables going to look like, coming out of lockdown?
- **Guidelines to class attendees:** Communication is key for your class attendees, [set](#) their expectations of what may happen, with regard to the above outlines, class numbers, social distancing, online classes, booking systems. Inform them of outstanding class credits and if they can continue to use them going forward.
- **Prepare notices for within class for when you head back into your venue:** Social Distancing, Anti-bacterial gel, could they bring their own kit?
- **Review subscription / membership offerings and pricing:** classes for those that may wish to continue just with online classes, face to face or a mix of both



Venues Open

This transition to venues open is likely to be in stages, from outdoor facilities and varying occupancy levels and social distancing requirements. These guidelines have been pulled together using ukactive and EuropeActive guidelines and those countries that have already started or stated a staged opening policy.

Insurance

- Check your insurance is valid and covers you for type of classes your delivering and including social distancing measures and administering first aid.

Equipment and Safety

- **Head Mic:** Instructors to bring own windbreakers for head mic and provide antibacterial sanitiser and alcohol wipes, where not supplied by the venue.
- **Social Distancing and Safety:** no handshaking or hugging of class participants or welcoming them to the class. Instructor to ensure good verbal cueing, especially for correcting technique rather than manual adjustments. Prepare for the possibility that everyone may need to wear a mask and how that may affect the intensity the class can be delivered at, as well as any pre-existing medical conditions or recovery from Covid-19.
- **Risk Assessments:** this should have already been prepared in the lead up to Venues open, special consideration to [first aid administration](#) in the event of an incident happening.

Facilities

ukactive have published the following guidelines to running classes in venues:

- Social distancing guidelines must be followed (2m apart).
- There will be a minimum of a 10-minute window in between classes, so no 'waiting around' in groups.
- Equipment (including mats etc) will be cleaned in between use. It can either be done by the customer or staff member using spray and cloths provided.
- If possible, markings will be made on the floor to show the area for individuals.

Additionally, we would recommend the following:

- Changing facilities and toilets; It would be recommended to suspend the option to change at the venue during the period of time when we are coming out of lockdown to help avoid high traffic areas.
- Toilet facilities will be needed but with the possibility of social distancing requirements and possibility of 1 in 1 out of the toilet area.
- Hand sanitiser stations on entrance of the studio and provided within the class area for using equipment.

Timetables

- Review the pre lockdown studio timetables to avoid large gatherings before and after the class. We suggest limiting class times to 30 – 45 mins with 10 mins blocks in between to allow safe social distancing entering and leaving the venue/studio and cleaning of the equipment.
- Avoid groups waiting outside classes, 2 metre distancing, marked out, where possible.
- Possible suspension of boxing, kickboxing, partner yoga, stretch classes to start with due to social distancing. Avoid using high traffic equipment during classes.

Marketing

- In accordance with government guidelines, ensure that you communicate with class participants, to keep them up to date on the status of classes, opening hours and social distancing guidelines and what is expected of them as class attendees. Review again, what they actually want in their classes during re-opening phase to find out what they want from their timetable and feel comfortable in attending.
- Keep promoting your business. Promote your current offering on your social media platforms and don't forget the hashtags; read our [Five Top Tips for Instagram](#) document from [New Momentum](#) in your pack. During lockdown you may have gained additional attendees. How are you going to keep them or convert them into attending classes? For example, special offers or block bookings. Remember, know your worth. Think about keeping an online presence teaching classes to support your business, and to plan for the possibility we could return to lockdown, if a second peak occurs.
- Posters and literature templates to support your venues if working in the community are available in our resource pack.

Business Housekeeping

- [Self Employed Income Support Scheme](#): If you have not heard from the HMRC by the deadline of June, you will need to get in contact with them unless directed otherwise in government announcements. EMD UK will be hosting another webinar in June to answer further questions. [Sign up here to be informed of webinars.](#)

Loss of venue employment

If you find yourself in the position of transitioning from being an employed group exercise instructor to becoming self-employed, we have pulled together some useful guidance to help you.

INSTRUCTOR CHECKLIST

VENUES CLOSED

- ☐ Insurance valid
- ☐ Qualified to teach each class

Review current class offering

- ☐ Online classes self-evaluation
- ☐ Planning new content
- ☐ Equipment
- ☐ Polishing up your cueing
- ☐ Know your worth
- ☐ Video set up
- ☐ Keeping connected with Fitness community

Marketing

- ☐ Keeping in contact with class participant including those not currently joining you online

Social media

- ☐ Delivering webinars
- ☐ Exploring other ways to promote (Classfinder)
- ☐ Getting the most out of social media
- ☐ Follow fellow fitpros and useful groups
- ☐ Webinars/podcasts

Business Housekeeping

- ☐ Self Employed Income Support Scheme and Government funding (is our webinar available online?)
- ☐ PRS and PPL
- ☐ Accounts
- ☐ Employed to self employed

Planning for post lockdown

Venues:

Preparing to teach in Outdoor and spaces and applying to teach in public places

- ☐ Call current venues
- ☐ Changing rooms and toilets considerations
- ☐ Planning classes: Indoor and outdoor
- ☐ Social distancing for classes
- ☐ Safety equipment
- ☐ Equipment
- ☐ Booking systems
- ☐ Venue Risk Assessment
- ☐ Continuing Online classes
- ☐ Timetables
- ☐ Communication with attendees prior to returning
- ☐ Notices required
- ☐ Price sets

INSTRUCTOR CHECKLIST

VENUES OPEN

- ☐ Insurance validity

Equipment and Safety

- ☐ Equipment: Head Mic, windbreakers
- ☐ Social Distancing and Safety: Exercise Intensity

Facilities

- ☐ uk active guidelines
- ☐ Changing facilities
- ☐ Cleaning procedures
- ☐ Hand hygiene

Timetables

- ☐ Review the pre lockdown studio timetables
- ☐ Avoid groups waiting outside classes, 2 metre distancing
- ☐ Reduction in equipment-based classes

Marketing

- ☐ Communication with class participants
- ☐ Promotion of new offering of classes both online and face to face
- ☐ Resource pack

Business Housekeeping

- ☐ Self-employed Scheme, what next?

Loss of venue employment

[Download a copy of our EMD UK Group Ex Support Pack Resources pack for access to all our accompanying documents here.](#)