

COVID STATEMENT 17th May 2021

This statement details the position in the four devolved nations at the time of writing. There are different rules operating at different times within and between nations and it is important that you keep up to date with the position for the geographical area in which you are living and teaching/practicing.

The situation is changing and evolving and the staged plans that will enable a return to yoga practice as it was pre-pandemic, are dependent upon the success of the preceding stages. At this time nothing is guaranteed.

Whilst restrictions remain it is crucial that the relevant regulations are observed to ensure that teachers continue to provide a duty of care to students, and so that students can be confident that best practice is being followed.

In line with the shift in insurance policies regarding communicable diseases, BWY insurance does not provide cover for students/teachers contracting covid in teaching scenarios, due to the difficulty in establishing where and how covid has been contracted. Bearing in mind that causation is an almost insurmountable obstacle, even in a clear-cut case of establishing causation, teachers will not attract liability unless negligence is proved. Therefore, the information contained within this document is in relation to best practice, and we continue to underline the importance of following best practice because this will refute negligence.

The order of priority for adhering to covid regulations is:

1. Follow the Government Guidelines of the nation in which you are teaching/practicing.
2. Follow the Sport Governing Body advice for the nation in which you are teaching/practicing.
3. Adhere to BWY Best practice Guidelines in all nations.
4. Adhere to any specific rules or provisions for the venue where you are teaching/practicing.

Here is a current step by step guide for each nation:

ENGLAND

1. UK Government guidance

The UK Government updated its guidance on 17th May 2021, which can be found here ([COVID-19 Coronavirus restrictions: what you can and cannot do - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#))

A roadmap for exiting lockdown and social restrictions has been previously outlined. A summary to that roadmap can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary>

The different stages of the roadmap are dependent upon achieving incremental targets. The UK government have confirmed that the restrictions across the UK are easing and as of 17th May 2021 England has moved to “Step 3” of the roadmap. The guidance in this document relates to Step 3 (guidance for the previous step can be found here <https://www.bwy.org.uk/covid-19-updates-page/>)

The remaining steps may be subject to change.

Step 3

Formally organised sport

Formally organised sport, which has been organised by a qualified instructor, club, national governing body, business or charity, can now take place both indoors and outdoors with no limits on group size. This applies to yoga classes which have been organised by a qualified coach or instructor.

The organiser (which will be the qualified instructor, club, national governing body, business or charity) must take the required precautions. For BWY teachers this includes:

- Following BWY best Practice Guidelines, which can be found here [Microsoft Word - Best Practice covid 10.01.21.docx \(bwy.org.uk\)](#)
- Completion of a risk assessment, which can be found here <https://www.bwy.org.uk/covid-19-updates-page/>
- For indoor sport, capacity requirements, including allowing a minimum of 100sqft per person, should be followed. Please also see BWY mat spacing document for further guidance, which can be found here [1599142711mats social distancing.jpg \(1456x2000\) \(bwy.org.uk\)](#)
- Social distancing measures should continue to be followed.
- Adhering to any specific rules or provisions for the venue in which you are teaching.

Informal exercise

Rules for informal exercise, must only take place in line with the rules on social distancing, however this is not relevant to BWY teachers as activity organised by BWY teachers will come under the category of formally organised sport. Therefore, the guidance below is for reference only:

- Indoor – the class must not exceed a group of 6 (from any number of households) or a larger group of any size from up to 2 households (and their support bubbles, if eligible).
- Outdoor – the class size must not exceed a group of 30.

There remains a small number of permitted exemptions which can be viewed here [Microsoft Word - Regulatory Exemptions during Covid.docx \(bwy.org.uk\)](#)

Training

BWY vocational training can continue face to face, whilst it is not mandatory, we recommend that participants and teachers undergo twice weekly testing in line with the government guidance on education.

2. Sport England

Sport England recognises BWY as the national governing body for yoga and their statement endorses the UK government guidance. The latest guidance from Sport England can be found here: <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/coronavirus/return-play#thecurrentrules-13035e>:

3. Follow BWY Best Practice Guidelines

All guidance documents can be found here <https://www.bwy.org.uk/covid-19-updates-page/>

4. Follow specific rules relating to your venue

WALES

1. Welsh Government Guidance

The Welsh Government has updated it's guidance on 17th May 2021. Wales has now moved to alert level 2. The latest guidance can be found here <https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

Leisure and fitness facilities, including gyms, may now re-open.

Indoor activity

Formally organised indoor sport can now take place, in groups of up to 30, which applies to anyone aged 11 and over.

An organised activity must be organised by a business, public body, charitable, benevolent, educational or philanthropic institution, a club, a political organisation or the national governing body of a sport or other activity. This will include activities organised by BWY teachers.

It must not take place in a private home. The organiser must take all reasonable measures, to minimise the risk of expose, and must carry out a risk assessment. This duty applies to both the person responsible for the activity and the personal responsible for the premises.

Further guidance on this can be found here [Taking all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus in workplaces and premises open to the public | GOV.WALES](#)

There is currently no definition of 'reasonable measures' so BWY Best Practice guidelines should also be followed, which can be found here <https://www.bwy.org.uk/covid-19-updates-page/>

Informal indoor sport can only take place with members of your own household, in line with current social distancing rules. This point is for reference only as BWY teachers will come under the category of organised sport.

Outdoor sport

Formally organised outdoor sport can now take place, in groups of up to 50. This applies to any age. Organised outdoors sport must not take place in the gardens or grounds of private homes.

Informal outdoor sport can only take place with members of your own household or extended household, or a group of people, as long the total number of people is no more than 6 from 6 households (excluding carers or children under 11, from those households). Again, this point is for reference only as BWY teachers will come under the criteria of organised sport.

You should maintain social distancing from the people you are exercising with if they are not in your household or extended household.

Training

Schools and colleges remain open and so vocational training may continue.

The Welsh Government advocates following the advice of national governing bodies in relation to sports and accordingly gives a degree of discretion to NGBs.

2. Sport Wales

Sport Wales recognises BWY as the national governing body for yoga and their statement endorses the Welsh government guidance. The latest guidance from Sport Wales can be found here: <https://www.sport.wales/media-centre/latest-news/taking-part-in-sport-and-exercise-in-wales-the-guidance>

3. Follow BWY Best Practice Guidelines

All guidance documents can be found here <https://www.bwy.org.uk/covid-19-updates-page/>

4. Follow specific rules relating to your venue

SCOTLAND

1. The Scottish Government

The Scottish government updated it's guidance on 11th May 2021. Scotland has 5 levels of protection (0-4). The majority of mainland Scotland is now at level 2 (with the exception of Moray and Glasgow which remain at level 3), some islands have now moved to level 1. Guidance and local protection levels can be found here [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local protection levels - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

2. Sport Scotland

Coronavirus guidance was published and updated on 11th May 2021 (effective from 17th May 2021) and can be found here: <https://sportscotland.org.uk/covid-19/latest-sport-and-physical-activity-guidance> .

The guidance document on the return to Sport and Physical Activity was updated on 30th March and came in effect on 5th April 2021 be found here: <https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/6446/return-to-sport-and-physical-activity-guidance-120321-final.pdf>

Sport Scotland recognises Yoga Scotland as the national governing body for Yoga so their advice must be followed and that information can be found here: <https://yogascotland.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>.

3. BWY members and teachers resident in Scotland must then also follow BWY Best Practice Guidelines.

All guidance documents can be found here <https://www.bwy.org.uk/covid-19-updates-page/>

4. Follow specific rules relating to your venue.

NORTHERN IRELAND

1. The Northern Ireland Assembly

Current coronavirus regulations can be found here:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-work-business-hospitality-tourism-and-sport>

Indoor sport

Gyms and indoor leisure facilities may open for individual exercise and one to one training and coaching with social distancing.

Outdoor sport

Up to 15 people (including coaches) can take place in structured outdoor sports events, organised through clubs or individuals affiliated to recognised sports governing bodies or representative organisations for sport and physical activity, which will include BWY teachers.

Up to 10 people (including children of all ages), from a maximum of two households can take part in unstructured outdoor sport. This point is for reference only as BWY teachers will come under the category of 'structured' sport.

Training

Further and Higher Education Institutions are required to deliver remote teaching wherever possible. BWY vocational training must therefore be delivered remotely wherever possible.

Schools

Indoor and outdoor exercise, including yoga is permitted within schools

2. Sport Northern Ireland

The latest guidance on a return to sport was published on 14th May 2021 and can be found here:

<http://www.sportni.net/return-to-sport/>

On 25th March 2021 Guidance on the pathway out of restrictions was published and that can be found here: <http://www.sportni.net/pathway-out-of-restrictions-for-outdoor-sport/>

Frequently asked questions can be found here: <http://www.sportni.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Questions-and-responses-on-Phase-2.pdf>

Sport NI recognises The Yoga Fellowship of Northern Ireland (YFNI) as the Lead Body for yoga in Northern Ireland. The YFNI has not issued a covid statement but is an umbrella organisation and a member of BWY. The website can be found here: <https://yfni.co.uk>

3. Where there is no Governing Body or in the situation where there is no statement from the leading organisation then, subject to the government and Sport NI regulations, BWY members will be insured if they follow BWY guidance.

All guidance documents can be found here <https://www.bwy.org.uk/covid-19-updates-page/>

4. Follow specific rules relating to your venue.

Where exemptions apply, you should still follow the BWY best practice guidelines and also adhere to any provisions at the venue where you are teaching/practicing. Exemptions are not intended to flout the spirit of regulations, rather, they provide for continuance in certain circumstances. Full details of these can be found in our "Regulatory Exemptions for Teaching during Covid" guidance document.

Related BWY documents:

- Risk Assessment
- Best Practice for Teaching Face to Face during Covid
- Basic Health Questionnaire
- Remote Teaching Insurance Explained
- Best Practice Remote Teaching
- Student Disclaimers Explained
- First Aid Certificate Guidance
- Student Guidance for Remote Sessions
- Mat Layout Diagram for Social Distancing
- Regulatory Exemptions for Teaching during Covid
- Vocational Declaration for Foundation Courses