

Running Courses during Covid 19 – 23/3/2021

Running courses during the Covid 19 pandemic clearly requires a reorganisation of the way we deliver the course material and the measures we take to avoid transmitting the virus. The following guidance, whilst not specific to any particular situation, is meant as a checklist of things to consider before and during a course at this time. Whilst every effort has been made to include as many factors as possible, course organisers should look at the type of course being considered, the environment and the candidates taking part when assessing the risk and producing a plan for the safe running of the event.

We must also be aware that the standards of the course must still be met in full and that no relaxation of these standards is permissible when tailoring the delivery to the current situation. Trainers may find they have to go the “extra mile” to keep the course safe and consistent. Whilst it may seem like a good idea to run everything remotely, most training requires interaction and assessment carrying out the role before it is clear that a candidate is competent. However, it may be that some elements of the course can be done remotely whilst maintaining the standards and pre-course reading and evaluation may be able to replace contact time. If you are considering these options contact NSRA for guidance.

Venue Risk Assessment

All venues will have already completed a risk assessment to cover normal activities during Covid. These risk assessments and the steps to be taken to mitigate any risks must be followed and communicated to all participants. Be aware that if this is not your normal club or venue they may be quite different to what you are used to. Also, candidates that are not from that environment will need to know what is expected of them in advance.

Course Risk Assessment

It is necessary to go through an assessment of the risks related specifically to the course. This is because the operating environment during a course is significantly different to standard procedures for normal activity at the venue. Again, the risk assessment and the steps to be taken to mitigate any risk must be communicated to all participants.

Most courses are a combination of classroom and range activity which can be theory and/or practical, group or individual. These may need special consideration.

General considerations

- Is the training permissible – considering the local or National regulations that are in place? Where is the venue and where the candidates are coming from? Do these need special arrangements to be made?
- Is the venue big enough? You may need to use much larger venues or run course with smaller numbers to give adequate spacing. Remember, 2m spacing may look OK when people are seated but is there room to move around? Reduced numbers may adversely affect the viability of a course at a particular venue.
- Is the venue well ventilated? Open doors and windows if possible to improve ventilation. Try to carry out activity outdoors if possible.
- Where possible training groups should not mix with other site users.
- Designated area for refreshments/washrooms/training/range related to the course separate from other activity.
- All people attending courses or in training should have their own face covering, plus any other PPE that are required in alignment with Government and NSRA guidance.
- Trainers should have their own face covering (mask and visor), plus any other PPE that are required in alignment with Government and NSRA guidance. However, it is also useful to have disposable masks available at the venue for people to use if necessary.
- Suitable hand gel, disposable paper towels/rolls, antibacterial spray and wipes to be available throughout the course along with soap and water hand washing facilities.
- Handling and distribution of targets and other consumables need to be considered. Sanitise hands before and after and limit access and handling of consumables.
- Put equipment out in advance and sanitise it. Avoid employing candidates in the set-up of rooms, ranges etc.

Classroom situations

It is recommended that all participants wear face covering if they are within 2 metres of each other or take other steps to limit transmission

- Candidates should ideally be seated at least 2 metres apart from each other, this will allow them to remove their face covering if necessary.
- In group working try to maintain 2m spacing but, if not possible, enforce the use of face coverings.
- Keep candidates in the same groups or syndicates. If groups have travelled together or are from the same club keep them together where possible.
- Keep any groups to less than 6 people.
- Use the same chairs tables, and other equipment as much as possible for each person/group.
- Before practical sessions (where equipment is used) trainer and candidates should wash/sanitise their hands.
- If communal equipment is used it must be sanitised before transfer to another candidate. It is often preferable for candidates to bring as much of their own equipment as possible and not share it with others e.g. firearms, scoring gauges
- Candidates must use their own shooting clothing – gloves, jackets etc. This also includes ear defenders and safety glasses.
- Provide enough hand-outs, manuals and other literature to avoid sharing.
- Trainers need to be aware of their own need to maintain social distancing and to wear the appropriate PPE.
- Tables and chairs will need to be sanitised before use and at the end of each session.
- Guns will need to be sanitised before use and during sessions if transferred to others. At the end of each session it is recommended to wipe down the gun with sanitiser, dry and oil it before storage. This should be done wearing a mask and with clean hands that have been washed/sanitised.
- Participants working together less than 2 metres apart need to wear face covering.
- Range surfaces and furniture used on the range needs to be sanitised between users.

Trainers

Trainers should try to stay 2m away from candidates whenever possible. This also applies to candidates doing practical coaching sessions where they may have to work closely with others. However, if you need/or may need to step closer:

- If you need to step inside the 2m distance wear a mask. Closer than 1m wear a mask **and** visor.
- If the discipline you are coaching requires the use of safety glasses either use them as well as a visor or use a visor which has the same impact resistance.
- Hands should be washed/sanitised before handling equipment – this is particularly important if taking control of a gun that is being held by another person. Hands should be washed/sanitised before working with the next shooter.
- Try to have demonstration equipment that is only used by the trainer. If this is not possible it must be sanitised properly before another person uses it.

Track and Trace

This is an important aspect of the course to prevent onward transmission. Please ensure:

- All candidates are registered and their details retained for track and trace.
- If the venue has a QR code, encourage people to scan it.
- Ensure candidates know that they must not attend the course that is displaying symptoms or has had a positive test.