



Preparations for re-opening when Covid restrictions are lifted

The UK and Devolved Governments have recently announced their intention to gradually reduce the restrictions imposed to help reduce the spread of Covid19. Over the next weeks and months licensed providers, many of which have been closed for a significant period of time, will be making plans to re-open safely, by adhering to the Covid secure guidelines for as long as they are required.

Guidance on Covid19 is widely available elsewhere. This aide-memoire highlights other risks to help you prepare to re-open safely. Each provider is different, so there may be things, particular to your business that are not listed, but this will help you begin your preparations to ensure you are compliant with the terms of your AALA licence; essential if you wish to continue to provide licensable activities.

People

- a) Many businesses employ free-lance or casual workers, and in some instances permanent workers may have been released because of financial pressures on the business. You should allow plenty of time to find the people you need, because some of the people you previously relied on may have found alternative employment and may be unwilling to return when you need them.
- b) Workers who have been idle, or who have been engaged in alternative employment may have experienced a decline in their ability or proficiency caused by a period of non-use. This is sometimes referred to as "skill fade". Anyone in this position will need additional time and support to get back to where they were pre-pandemic. It is important that anyone who provides instruction is competent. This is one of the standard conditions on your licence.
- c) As well as skill fade, people who have been inactive may have seen a decline in their fitness levels. In circumstances where this is important for their role, it is worth considering how workers can be supported to regain their pre-Covid fitness levels before they return to work.
- d) Young people have had a disrupted year with a significant amount of time spent indoors, away from educational settings and their peers. This may affect how they respond to instructors and the various situations they might face while taking part in adventure activities. It will be important to consider locations, operating methods, and levels of challenge while the attitudes, behaviours and abilities of participants are being understood.

Equipment

- a) Equipment stored, unused for long periods of time should be checked for damage or deterioration, particularly if it has been stored in a place where there is a possibility of water ingress or rodent infestation. Ensure this is done before you need to use it.

Places

- a) External locations that you regularly used prior to the pandemic might have changed, e.g. there could be changes due to rock falls, growth of vegetation etc. Prior to offering activities, you should re-visit the sites you use and determine whether your risk assessment or operating procedures need to change.

N. B The matters outlined above refer to duties under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004. You will have other duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 that could mean that other action is required in areas such as facilities, catering, transport etc. For example, if you provide showers for use by clients or your employees, and they have been unused for a long time, there is a risk that legionella bacteria could be present in the pipework or shower heads, you will find detailed information on this [here](#).

If you are unsure about any aspect of re-opening safely in terms of either the AALA legislation or Health and Safety requirements more generally, you should seek competent advice before re-opening to the public.