



PRINCIPLES FOR STAGING OBSTACLE COURSE RACING EVENTS DURING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

VERSION 1.0

1. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines specific guidance for events that classify themselves as obstacle course races (OCR). At this stage, [this guidance applies to English races only](#).

Events must obtain written confirmation from their insurance provider that they are able to put on their race. It should also be borne in mind that additional liaison with stakeholders such as Local Authorities and landowners could be required to gain approval for an event. Failure to obtain such confirmation will invalidate any guidance provided in this document. UKOSF provides this document for information purposes only and as our interpretation of the latest government guidance.

2. UK ATHLETICS EVENT GUIDANCE

OCR is not yet recognised as a sport in the UK, so this document is designed as a supplement to the more comprehensive guidance produced by UK Athletics/England Athletics and MSO (Mass Participation Sports Organisers) titled '**Principles for Staging Road and MT Running Events During Covid-19 Restrictions Version 1.0**'. This document covers key areas such as medical provisions, social distancing of the event, staff, volunteers, suppliers & contractors, promoting individual responsibility, hygiene, venue & facility considerations, spectators and elite travel from abroad.

Download <https://www.runbritain.com/covid-19-uk-road-race-guidance>

However, the fact remains that no specific guidance has been issued by the UK Government in respect of OCR. The extra information outlined provides guidance to OCR event organisers with regards to the unique nature of their events in comparison to more traditional running races.

3. OBSTACLE RISK ASSESSMENT

In addition to your standard obstacle risk assessment every obstacle must also be assessed with regards to the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

The assessment should consider:

1. If social distancing can be maintained, prior, during and after obstacle completion.
2. The risk of transmission from fomites, the parts of the obstacles that represent a risk of virus transmission.
3. The risk of transmission from water or mud-based obstacles. See section 5.

Based on this assessment the event should then adjust each obstacle accordingly. If obstacle cleaning is a required action of the risk assessment and it cannot be completed, or if hand sanitizer is not suitable, sufficient or viable prior to obstacle completion the obstacle should be removed.

For obstacles longer than 10 metres, and when relevant based on the individual obstacle risk assessment, cleaning consideration should be given to after the obstacle completion as well.

The results and actions of these assessments should be clearly communicated to participants prior to the day of the event.

4. OBSTACLE DEFINITION

For the purposes of this document an obstacle should be considered anything that impedes the normal movement of a participant. For example, climbing over a fallen tree. It does not need to be listed as an obstacle to be considered one with regards to the importance of a detailed risk assessment.

This said, obstacles may also be grouped and considered as one obstacle for the purposes of a risk assessment when they are within 10 metres of one another. This is to enable a free flow of participants and social distancing to be maintained. The completed risk assessment should still consider the individual obstacle risks of COVID-19 transmission and obstacles within these groups should still be removed or modified as applicable.

The maximum length of an obstacle grouping is 100 metres.

5. WATER & MUD OBSTACLES

Free flowing water (rivers, streams) or a large body of water such as a lake carry a low transmission risk. However, there has not been research to indicate whether stagnant water and/or mud represents a transmission risk. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to obstacles of this nature to avoid contact with the hands or face. Where unavoidable, hand and/or face cleaning should be provided.

Obstacles where full water submersion is likely should be removed unless it is into a river or lake.

6. OBSTACLE QUEUING

To maintain social distancing clear queue guidelines should be implemented so obstacle racers maintain the necessary distance from other participants while queuing.

7. START / WAVE SIZES

Wave sizes should be modelled to permit social distancing at the start line. There should either be a significant distance between the start and the first obstacle, or the wave should be released in smaller groups within each wave to avoid queuing.

Start line warmups and briefings should be reduced to essential information only. Video briefings are encouraged.

Please refer to UKA guidelines for further details.

8. HELP ON OBSTALCES

While social distancing is in place, any obstacles that can only be completed with assistance should be removed. For example, an obstacle that requires teamwork to complete or carrying of a participant.

There should be no obstacle assistance outside of individual household/bubble groups. Even within household or bubble groups this should be discouraged given it is not possible to tell who is and isn't in an individual household/bubble. This should be communicated to participants as part of the personal responsibility of taking part.

Staff and volunteers should also not help participants on obstacles.

Participants should be asked to move around the obstacle if they are unable to complete without assistance.

9. OVERTAKING

The ability to safely overtake a slower participant should be considered to ensure social distancing can be maintained. Where possible the course should be widened to support this, and participants should be made aware that they should only pass another participant when it is safe to do so, maintaining social distancing prior to passing.

The density of runners on the course should allow for socially distanced overtaking.

10. COMPETITION

Competitive OCR should only happen if social distancing and personal hygiene can be maintained (for example using hand sanitizer before an obstacle). If this is not possible, an OCR event should be made non-competitive with clear guidance to participants prior to the race start. An event should err on the side of caution with regards to competitive racing. Any pre-existing OCR European Championship qualifying races require UKOSF re-approval to be included.

11. TEST AND TRACE

If a race does not have participant timing, a clock should be made available at the finish to allow participant to track their finishing time for test and trace purposes. If a race is lap based, each lap should be recorded and noted.

12. INJURED PARTICIPANTS

If a participant is collected on course and returned to the event village then the following should be considered:

1. Staff/volunteer safety. Appropriate PPE should be worn.
2. Vehicle cleaning prior to reuse.

13. MULTI-DAY EVENTS

A full end of day obstacle cleaning process should be implemented for any multi-day events.