

Safer Events - A Framework for Action

Managing the risk of COVID-19 in organised meetings and events

Supported by Hire Space

Version 1.1

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Background

The UK meeting and events industry provides 700,000 jobs to people in the UK and contributes £70bn to the UK economy. While the threat of transmission of COVID-19 at organised meetings and events remains high, they have been rightly banned in the UK.

As this threat level subsides, it will become possible to hold organised meetings and events while prioritising the safety of event attendees and the people they may come into contact with.

However, there is a threat to these 700,000 jobs as the supply chain struggles to support itself through the ban on organised meetings and events. These jobs are threatened by the absence of a framework for venues and event organisers to plan events in the medium term, while the threat of COVID-19 remains present, but low. This is driven by an understandable lack of confidence and consensus in the measures from delegates and planners alike.

This threat to jobs is manageable and can be addressed.

Objectives

This project is intended to provide a consensus on the measures required to effectively manage the risk of COVID-19 in organised meetings and events. This is expected to allow the re-opening of the meeting and events industry to help protect jobs, while putting public safety first.

We seek to effectively communicate these measures to all stakeholders, including venues, event organisers and delegates, to create trust between all parties and ensure that meetings can be carried out safely. Our strategy to do this is through two independently assessed accreditations, one for venues and for event organisers.

All these independent assessments will be conducted by a fully qualified Chartered Member of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, member of the International Institute of Risk and Safety Management, and certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register.

Further than just being a set of guidelines, the objectives of this project are more far reaching and attempt to provide venues and event organisers with the tools to host organised meetings and events. This will include equipment, such as PPE and cleaning products, training and materials to communicate these measures to delegates and other stakeholders.

This project covers a broad range and scale of organised meetings and events, from small business meetings of under ten people, up to medium/large events of 500 people in the UK. These organised meetings and events are all envisaged to be invitation only or private events held by an organisation who can take responsibility for the environment and conduct of delegates within the event.

Because a core part of this product involves the communication of specific measures, it is only practical to do this within one jurisdiction and does not seek to provide guidance for events outside of the UK. It also doesn't seek to consider events of over 500 people, as these events may require different measures and are generally considered to be less likely to be initially allowed by government guidelines at first, as evidenced by current absolute limits on events in countries such as Sweden and Germany. If you are looking for guidelines for non-UK or events over 500 people then UFI have been leading industry consensus on this. Their working document can be found [here](#).

This project has been supported by Hire Space, who are supporting the objective of this project by providing the operational resources to undertake safety assessments and helping to provide publicity through their position in the meeting and events industry.

Research and Data

This project has been produced through a collaboration with venues, event organisers, delegates, health & safety professionals and government guidelines. Information studied can be found in Appendix A.

Further, this project has conducted its own primary research through a survey of 203 delegates. This survey was designed to better understand delegates' attitudes towards different measures so that they are likely to be able to be implemented with high compliance. Further, it helped us to understand the appetite of delegates to attend organised meetings and events with safety measures in place.

The survey asked a series of questions about attending events later this year as public health guidelines allow. The key results can be found in Appendix B.

Consultation Group

The measures that this project advises are all contextual and as the COVID-19 pandemic develops they will be continually updated to meet the requirements of the time. To make sure that they stay relevant not only to the scientific advice, but also to the broader context of the meeting and events industry, a Consultation Group of senior event organisers and venues to help inform the project has been formed.

Current members include senior meeting and events professionals from Hearst UK, Reuters, Morningstar, NAVEX Global, Clearview Financial Media and Kennedy's Law LLP.

The Consultation Group may attend a fortnightly Zoom call at 4pm on Wednesdays (next call 27 May) and can engage in ongoing real-time discourse through a private group.

For more information, or to request to join the consultation group, please contact ed@hirespace.com or call 07786 013 995.

Measures

The following measures have been created in collaboration with health and safety bodies, venues and event organisers and both national and international public health bodies.

They are intended to standardise our industry approach to managing the risk of COVID-19 transmission at organised meetings and events, such that they can be independently verified and communicated in a coherent way to delegates and other stakeholders.

They are intended to act as a gold standard for safety and exceed the government guidelines at any given time. While the project is independent and there is no requirement for a given event organiser or venue to follow these guidelines, they are all compulsory for event organisers or venues who wish to become accredited for Safer Events.

This is a working draft and is subject to change as driven by government guidelines and public appetite for interaction at the time. They have been divided into six areas to aid communication

1. Delegate and Staff Screening	
Specific Measure	Responsibility
Health verification must be performed on all staff and delegates on entry to the building. Screening can be conducted in one of two ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On site contactless thermometer check• Declaration of health to be signed on the day of the event	Event Organiser

Delegates are be required to agree to adhere to safety measures and social distancing while on site	Event Organiser
There must be a sufficient stock of contactless thermometers such that delegates can be checked on entrance without unnecessary queues	Venue
Delegates or staff who fail on-site testing, or show symptoms during the event, should be rejected from the venue and proceed directly to their primary residence where they should isolate for 14 days	Event Organiser
All queues for any on-site screening must be outside the venue and clearly marked with 2m distances	Venue
Attendance must be recorded and a list of all attendees, with contact details, must be maintained by event organisers for 14 days after the event	Event Organiser
All delegates must be invited or pre-ticketed, walk-ins shall not be admitted	Event Organiser
Full safety guidelines must be communicated to all delegates at least 24hrs before the start of the event	Event Organiser
Reasonable efforts shall be taken to minimise delegate travel	Event Organiser
Records of delegates who have come into close contact with each other should be maintained for 14 days after the event. Close contact means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● having face-to-face contact with someone (less than 1m away) ● spending more than 15 minutes within 2 metres of someone 	Event Organiser

2. Staff Training and Policy	
Specific Measure	Responsibility
There shall be no disincentivization to revealing symptoms for fear of missing out on work or pay. Fully paid sick leave should be provided for all staff so that there is no incentive to work with symptoms. This must apply to both employees and casual workers.	Venue / Event Organiser
Any member of venue staff who has been required to self-isolate will be allowed to return to work immediately following any isolation period, with any replacement staff hired only on a temporary basis.	Venue / Event Organiser
Venue staff must complete core coronavirus training and records for all staff must be maintained by the venue, or the agency responsible for any casual workers	Venue

One member of venue staff must be allocated for every 100 attendees to monitor social distancing measures being observed. If alcohol is served then one member of staff must be allocated for every 50 attendees to monitor social distancing.	Venue
Social distancing floor markings present in all staff areas	Venue
All venue staff must wash hands with soap and water, or hand sanitiser, a minimum of once every hour.	Venue
All on-site Event Organisers must wash hands with soap and water, or hand sanitiser, a minimum of once every hour.	Event Organiser
Venues must maintain a list of all on-site staff, with contact details, for 14 days after the event	Venue
At least one accredited Event Organiser must be on-site to take responsibility for Event Organiser measures	Event Organiser

3. Social Distancing	
Specific Measure	Responsibility
Maximum capacity set at four square metres per person, including staff and delegates (net available area)	Venue
No fixed seats within 2m of another fixed seat, unless physical barriers are set between seats (e.g. perspex barrier) or seats are specifically reserved for groups from the same household	Venue
Delegates to keep a distance of 2m apart at all times where possible to be monitored by a member of staff at all times	Venue
Social distancing reminders, including floor markers, should be present in all areas accessible to delegates	Venue
Contactless payment available for any purchases	Venue
Maximum of two people in a lift at any time	Venue
Start and end times should not be scheduled during rush hours 8:00-9:30am and 17:00-18:30pm	Venue & Event Organiser
Setup schedules and delivery times should be discussed between Event Organiser and Venue to ensure no clash that will cause overcrowding of loading bays, lifts and key access routes	Venue & Event Organiser

4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Specific Measure	Responsibility
Delegates will be required to wear face masks	Event Organiser
Staff who are <ul style="list-style-type: none">• in direct contact with delegates, or• working on catering for delegates will be required to wear a fitted respirator mask and surgical gloves	Venue
Other staff will be required to wear face masks	Venue
Delegates must be offered a mask free of charge on entry	Event Organiser
Delegates must be offered individually wrapped sterile wipes or small bottles of hand sanitizer free of charge on entry	Event Organiser
Delegates must be offered a brass key made from a sterile copper alloy to allow them to press lift-buttons and open doors without direct contact. These may be re-collected on exit	Event Organiser
Suitable disposal facilities for used PPE should be provided on exit	Venue

5. Sterilisation and Cleaning

Specific Measure	Responsibility
One contactless hand sanitizer station available for every 30 delegates	Venue
Tables and chairs sterilised twice daily	Venue
Door handles, railings and lift buttons sterilised every 2hrs	Venue
Deep clean every 28 days with lasting disinfectant	Venue
UV Light Sterilizer available for non-contact sterilization of items which are difficult to sterilised with a cleaning agent	Venue

6. Hybrid Event Provision

Specific Measure	Responsibility
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A live streaming option should be available to Event Organisers which can provide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4K 60fps camera on site ● Sterile lapel mics for speakers ● Live streaming via an RMTP web stream 	Venue
Internet upload speed of 10 Mbps	Venue
Virtual attendance option, which does not unnecessarily disadvantage virtual attendees, communicated to all delegates	Event Organiser
Virtual attendance as default for international delegates	Event Organiser

Accreditation Process

The accreditation process for venues and event organisers is now open. Each accreditation is independently assessed by a fully qualified Chartered Member of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, member of the International Institute of Risk and Safety Management, and certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register.

There are two processes, one for venues and one for event organisers, which are conducted as follows:

Accreditation Process for Venues

Stage	Description
1. Submit Interest	Venues can sign up to have their venue accredited at https://hirespace.com/c/safer-events/venues
2. Initial Questionnaire	Venues that submit interest will be asked to fill out an initial questionnaire on the safety measures they have in place. They will also be asked to accept payment terms upon submission of this questionnaire, although payment will not be due for 90 days.
3. Recommendations	An assessor will then respond with a set of recommendations which must be completed in order for the venue to be accredited.
4. Assessment	Venues can either perform a remote assessment where they upload photographic evidence of all the measures taken and then conduct a Zoom call with an assessor or venues can opt for an in-person assessment from an assessor.
5. Certification	When an assessor has verified that the venue has fulfilled all the requirements, the venue will be notified. At this point they will be

	<p>issued with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Framed certificate with unique assessment number and hologram ● Digital certificate with unique assessment number ● Safer Venue window decals ● £50 voucher to spend at the Safer Event Shop <p>Their name will also be added to the online record of accredited venues at https://hirespace.com/c/safer -events with their unique assessment number. The accreditation will also be shown on their Hire Space profile, if applicable.</p>
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Accreditation Process for Event Organisers

Stage	Description
1. Submit Brief	Event Organisers can submit an event brief to be accredited at https://hirespace.com/ask-an-expert by clearly mentioning Safer Events in the Specific Requirements section.
2. Initial Consultation	A member of the team will arrange a time for a call to discuss the event and help understand the measures that will need to be taken.
3. Recommendations	An assessor will then respond with a set of recommendations which must be completed in order for the event to be accredited. We may then ask the venue to complete their own assessment where appropriate.
4. Assessment	Event organisers will then be given a short form to complete where they can then provide evidence of the measures they are taking. They will then submit this for assessment including a £79 administration fee.
5. Certification	<p>When an assessor has verified that the event has fulfilled all the requirements, the venue will be notified. At this point they will be issued with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Print certificate with unique assessment number and hologram ● Digital certificate with unique assessment number ● Delegate communication pack ● £15 voucher to spend at the Safer Event Shop <p>Their name will also be added to the online record of accredited events at https://hirespace.com/c/safer -events with their unique assessment number.</p>

How to get involved

There are five ways to get involved with the Safer Events project

1. Join the Consultation Group

To request to join the Safer Events Consultation Group, please contact Edward Poland on ed@hirespace.com or call on 07786 013 995.

2. Get your venue accredited for Safer Events

To get your venue accredited, please visit <https://hirespace.com/c/safer-events/venues> and request a consultation.

3. Get your event accredited as a Safer Events

To get your next in-person event accredited, please submit an event brief to be accredited at <https://hirespace.com/ask-an-expert> by clearly mentioning Safer Events in the Specific Requirements section.

4. Help publicise the Safer Events project

If you are a media outlet interested in talking about Safer Events then we are happy to provide comment on Safer Events and the issues involved in this project. Please email media@hirespace.com or call 07786 013 995 to discuss further.

5. PPE and equipment is available from the Safer Events shop

Purchases can be made from <https://shop.hirespace.com/>. All efforts have been made to ensure the best available rates on the market. Further discounts are available for hospitality businesses, and a 10% donation to the NHS exists for all PPE purchases.

Appendix A

- BECTU (1 June 2020) “Health and safety and returning to workplaces” [Link](#)
- Convene (13 May 2020) ”Updated Operating Standards” [Link](#)
- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (11 May 2020) ”Working safely during coronavirus” [Link](#)
- Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (1 June 2020) “Guidance for food businesses on coronavirus (COVID-19)” [Link](#)
- Hilton (27 April 27 2020) “Hilton Working with RB/Lysol and Mayo Clinic to Elevate Hygiene Practices” [Link](#)
- HM Government (May 2020) “The UK Government’s COVID-19 recovery strategy” [Link](#)
- Hong Kong Wedding Show 2020 (22 May 2020) “Safety Precautions Measures” [Link](#)
- Mark Bannister (24 May 2020) "Covid Event Planning" [Link](#)
- Meetings Industry Association (1 May 2020) “Social Distancing Survey” [Link](#)
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (13 May 2020) “Closing certain businesses and venues in England“ [Link](#)
- UFI - The Global Associate of the Exhibition Industry (19 May 2020) “Global framework for reopening exhibitions and B2B trade events post the emergence from COVID-19” [Link](#)
- World Health Organisation (29 April 2020) “Coronavirus disease advice for the public” [Link](#)

Appendix B

Would you attend an in-person event with safety measures in place if invited?

Yes	54.3%
Don't know	24.7%
No	21.0%

Would you attend an in-person event with safety measures in place, if it was requested by your work?

Yes	94.0%
Don't know	4.6%
No	1.4%

“Would you attend this event if invited?” vs “How much would you enjoy the event?”

		How much would you enjoy the event?		
		Negative	Neutral	Positive
Would you attend this event if invited?	Yes	33.3%	88.6%	98.4%
	Don't know	34.4%	10.3%	0.0%
	No	32.3%	1.1%	1.6%

“Would you attend this event if invited?” vs “How safe would you feel at the event?”

		How safe would you feel at the event?		
		Negative	Neutral	Positive
Would you attend this event if invited?	Yes	24.4%	74.7%	90.8%
	Don't know	38.9%	16.6%	4.6%

No	36.7%	8.7%	4.6%
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“Would you attend this event if invited?” by gender

		Gender		
		Female	Male	Rather not say
Would you attend this event if invited?	Yes	52.9%	57.6%	62.5%
	Don't know	26.9%	19.6%	12.5%
	No	20.2%	22.8%	25.0%

“Would you attend this event if invited?” by age group

		Age Group				
		18-24 years old	25-34 years old	35-44 years old	45-54 years old	55-64 years old
Would you attend this event if invited?	Yes	85.7%	53.7%	59.3%	46.7%	42.9%
	Don't know	3.6%	26.0%	21.5%	30.0%	26.8%
	No	10.7%	20.3%	19.2%	23.3%	30.4%

“Would you attend this event if invited?” by seniority

		Seniority				
		Entry	Senior	Manager	Director	CXO / Partner / Owner
Would you attend this event if invited?	Yes	72.2%	41.7%	50.3%	51.0%	68.5%
	Don't know	16.7%	31.5%	28.8%	24.0%	13.0%
	No	11.1%	26.9%	20.8%	25.0%	18.5%

The original survey can be seen [here](#).

