Policy · SPM-POL-002 · Version 1.0 · Approved by the ASF Expert Committee

Supports: 20.2

At a glance

- Return to sport follows a staged plan, with defined criteria met at each stage.
- Each stage is recorded on SPM-FRM-002, with the criteria met.
- A decision to return to full competition is made by a clinician, on the record.
- No athlete returns to full competition after a single test.
- Stop and get help straight away if: an athlete is back in full competition after a single test.

1. Purpose

To make sure return to sport is staged, and each decision is recorded with its basis (20.2).

2. Scope

Applies to	Clinical and support staff in the hospital
Locations	All wards, clinics and departments of the facility
When	Whenever the activity described is carried out
Does not apply to	Activities covered by another document listed in section 15

3. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Clinical lead	The doctor or nurse in charge of the area at the time

4. Background

Returning to sport too early is a common cause of re-injury. A staged plan with clear criteria at each stage, and a record of the decision, protects the athlete and the clinician who signs it off.

5. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility	Competence
Lead sports physician	Owns the staged plan and the decision rule	Clinician
Treating clinician	Applies the plan and records each stage	Clinician

6. Materials and equipment

Item	Requirement	Condition
Records and forms named in this document	Current version	Checked before use

7. Safety

- Stop and call for help if a patient is at immediate risk. Do not delay urgent care to complete paperwork.

8. Before you start

- Confirm the forms and equipment named in this document are available and current.

9. Procedure

Step 1. Set the stages.

- Set the stages and the criteria for each, on SPM-FRM-002.

Key point: Stages set.

Step 2. Check each stage.

- Confirm the criteria at each stage before the next.

Key point: Criteria met.

Step 3. Record the decision.

- Record the decision to return and its basis.

Key point: Decision recorded.

10. Decision points

- No decision points in this procedure.

11. Special situations

Situation	Action
Out of hours	Follow the same steps. Use the on-call contact on the wall of the area.

12. Escalation

- Any serious problem goes to the duty clinical lead at once and to the clinical director the same day.

13. Monitoring

Measure	Target	Frequency	Owner	If not met
Return-to-sport decisions on a staged plan with the basis recorded	100%	Monthly	Lead sports physician	Escalate to medical director

14. Records

Record	Kept in	Retention
Record named in this document	Patient record or the area file	the period set by the facility’s records policy years

15. Training

- Staff are trained in this document at induction and refreshed each year, with a recorded competency check.

16. Related documents

ID	Title	Use
SPM-FRM-002	Return-to-sport decision record	Record

17. Evidence

Reference	Note
E-009	Based on the BJSM consensus on return to sport (2016) and the McCrory consensus statement on concussion in sport (2023).
E-006	ASF Policy Framework v1.2. Adapted.
E-009	ASF Expert Committee consensus.

18. Change history

Version	Date	What changed	Approval
1.0	the date of approval	First version	set Expert Committee approval

E-learning for this document

No e-learning course is linked to this document yet.

Planned course: Return to sport: staged decisions. New course planned.

References

- Accréditation Sans Frontières (2026). ASF Policy Framework v1.2. (E-006)
- Accréditation Sans Frontières (2026). ASF Expert Committee consensus on Standard 1. (E-009)

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