

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

25 March 2020

Dear Chancellor,

Thank you for your rapid work to combat the Covid-19 pandemic and reduce the impact it will have on the British people and our economy. While we find ourselves in unprecedented times due to the spread of this virus, we appreciate you prioritising the current and future wellbeing of the population.

While we acknowledge the extensive support already offered to businesses and employees, we urge you not to overlook the 60,000 people in the UK's physical activity sector who are self-employed and freelance workers.

At a time when gyms, leisure centres, parks and other recreational facilities are rightly closed, it is more important than ever for people to find ways to remain physically active. As many studies have shown, this is essential for mental, as well as physical, health.

Our workforce is made up of qualified, experienced and dedicated professionals, many of whom have, through no fault of their own, seen a near-total collapse in their earnings as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. A survey of the UK sport and physical activity workforce, undertaken in the past few days, highlights the scale of the problem we are facing:

- 65% of respondents are self-employed
- 95% have already experienced financial losses averaging £7,800
- 63% have no personal financial reserves to fall back on
- 75% stated that their insurance does not cover for loss of earnings

While digital platforms provide a possible solution for some to earn an income (and many of our members are actively exploring the options for providing online services to their customers), this is not realistically going to fill the income gap created by the closure of all of the physical activity facilities they usually teach or instruct from.

Many of these workers are also parents, carers or partners of other key workers, and they are a vital part of our broader healthcare ecosystem. It is essential that we support them in the same way as employees, so that they are in a position to keep the country fit and healthy during this crisis and beyond.

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We would urge you to show parity with employed staff through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme by considering the following measure:

For the government to support self-employed or freelance workers in the physical activity sector by contributing 80% of average monthly earnings, based on the past three months, or up to £2,500 per month (whichever figure is the lower).

We stand ready to work with you and your team to ensure that this vital section of the UK workforce is supported at this exceptionally challenging time.

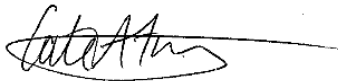
Yours sincerely,



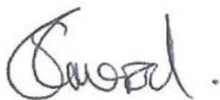
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