YOUR GUIDE TO RETURNING TO
THE COVID 19 SECURE ENVIRONMENT
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INTRODUCTION

Introduction and forward by Mike Shore-Nye and Professor Janice Kay

As you will know from the weekly bulletins, we are continuing to monitor and follow Government advice and are working to ensure our campuses and buildings are COVID-secure so we can restart our operations in a safe and managed way.

This document provides details and clear guidance on the measures being put in place to give colleagues an insight into how the campuses have been prepared for on-campus working.

The University is required to produce and present a COVID-19 risk assessment and this document describes the steps that are being taken to control and manage any risks.

It has been co-created by teams from across the University using government advice and by taking best practice from around the world. The Government has set out the stages of the outbreak at levels 1-5 (shown to the right) and at the time of writing this document, nationally, we are now at Level 3.

We must be mindful that the national outbreak stages could easily change and therefore the way we use our campuses and how we interact with each other may also need to change. We will therefore ensure this document is continually updated to reflect any of these changes and shared with you all.

These are truly exceptional times and we fully appreciate the profound effect COVID-19 has had on each and every one of us - it has been a challenging time. However we are immensely proud to be part of a University team that has embraced these challenges and worked tirelessly to create as safe an environment as possible for all our communities to return to.

Thank you for taking the time to read this important document.

INTRODUCTION

Stage of outbreak

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of outbreak</th>
<th>Measures in place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk of healthcare services being overwhelmed</td>
<td>5 Lockdown begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission is high or rising exponentially</td>
<td>4 Social distancing continues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virus is in general circulation</td>
<td>3 Gradual relaxation of restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases and transmission is low</td>
<td>2 Minimal social distancing, enhanced tracing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19 no longer present in UK</td>
<td>1 Routine international monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES FOR RETURNING TO CAMPUS

1 Safety, health and wellbeing of all people on campus is our primary objective.

2 Colleagues who are shielding or at greater risk from COVID-19 will continue to be supported in working from home. Guidance for colleagues who may have concerns regarding returning to on-campus working is available here: exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/coronavirus/campusworking/.

3 There must be a clear justification for all on-campus working. Where possible, employees must continue to work from home until any national changes are implemented and after appropriate discussion with your line manager.

4 The overall number of people on the campus at any one time must be minimised, so as to achieve a safe distance between people.

5 When making decisions on work arrangements, managers will work with employees to ensure that the particular circumstances of all employees, including protected characteristics, are fully considered.

*The guidance for colleagues who may have concerns regarding returning to on-campus working is available here*
OUR COVID-19 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRINCIPLES

In making COVID-19 secure workplace adjustments we will:

• Understand and take into account the particular circumstances of all workers including their protected characteristics;

• Involve and communicate appropriately with workers whose protected characteristics might either expose them to a different degree of risk, or might make any measures being considered inappropriate or challenging for them;

• Consider any particular measures or adjustments needed to take account of duties under equalities legislation;

• Make reasonable adjustments to avoid workers with disabilities being put at a disadvantage;

• Assess the health and safety risks for new or expectant mothers;

• Make sure that the steps taken do not have an unjustifiable negative impact on some groups compared to others, for example, those with caring responsibilities or those with religious commitments;

• Ensure managers have conversations to provide support, guidance and reassurance where staff have concerns about returning to campus working due to mental health, caring responsibilities or any other reason.

To support the risk assessment, the University’s EDI team has produced a COVID-19 Equality Impact Assessment tool which is included in the risk assessment tools being used to restart buildings and workplaces.
# OUR VALUES AND WHAT THIS MEANS FOR US ALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUR VALUES</th>
<th>WHAT THIS MEANS FOR US ALL</th>
<th>WHAT WE NEED YOU TO DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ambition</strong></td>
<td>In this context, our ambition is to remain a healthy and safe place to be</td>
<td>Understand the requirements for your work area and take all opportunities to be safe and as well as possible. This may include monitoring your health to check for your own symptoms before coming onto campus, if you can, use a face covering, or walking or cycling to campus rather than taking the bus. Look after yourself and others around you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenge</strong></td>
<td>It’s an unprecedented time, no one has been through this before and it is a challenge we are all taking together</td>
<td>Speak up – if something can be done in a different or smarter way, tell your line manager.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration</strong></td>
<td>Working in collaboration without boundaries is enabling us to work at pace, across sectors, maintaining our relationships</td>
<td>Work together. Some people in your team may not be able to attend campus due to their health risks – keeping the most vulnerable safe is a key priority for us all. Equally some colleagues may have childcare needs – we are all doing as much as we can to ensure our University can restart our work as soon as possible in the new normal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>We are all in this together - never have we needed to pull together more to protect ourselves and the community in which we live and work</td>
<td>Encourage everyone you work with and interact with to follow the safety advice (e.g. safe distancing, handwashing etc). As a community we all need to take personal responsibility for these safe principles and support others to do the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact</strong></td>
<td>Measurable impact is everything – we need to work together to avoid spreading infection</td>
<td>We want the work we do to always have a positive impact on people at work and in our community – by following the campus rules, you will ensure you maximise the safety of yourself and others on campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rigour</strong></td>
<td>Don’t leave anything to chance. Being meticulous in our approach to safety – keeping safe, keeping well.</td>
<td>Consider your health and wellbeing - take your temperature before coming onto campus, keep 2m apart, wash your hands regularly, use your face covering. Don’t put others at risk – <strong>STAY AT HOME IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS, HOWEVER MILD.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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06 | University of Exeter
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The University’s Health and Safety Policy sets out the health and safety roles and responsibilities of all persons across the organisation. Managers remain responsible for ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of those they are responsible for and this is explained in more detail later in this document.

The University has put in place a governance structure that has ensured that all aspects of campus life have been reviewed to provide a COVID-19 secure restart for all.

Gold Restart

Silver Restart

Safe and Healthy Workplace
Buildings and Infrastructure
Residences, Commercial and Partnership
Research
Teaching and Learning
Test and Trace

Trade Unions, Students Guild, Students Union and FXPlus are each engaged with the Restart programme
All employees have responsibility for their own health and safety, and those of their colleagues and others who may be affected by their actions. It is essential that everyone commits to the measures outlined within this document, any specific local rules set by managers for the work tasks and any specific rules in the buildings.

If you have concerns for your own safety or others, please speak to your line manager.

All employees with permission to return to on-campus working are asked to:

1. **Stay at home and self-isolate** if you or anyone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms, or if NHS Test and Trace has requested you to do so.

2. If you have COVID-19 symptoms do not come to campus - request a COVID-19 test (visit NHS webpages).

3. Consider **your health and wellbeing status before** coming onto the campus. **Personal digital thermometers** are available to all staff to enable you to take your temperature at home. The presence of a high temperature (37.8 or above) could be a symptom of COVID-19.

4. Take steps to reduce risks arising from travelling to work (**e.g. avoid public transport**) where possible and if you are able to, follow government requirements on using a face covering.

5. **Gel your hands** before entering the building and regularly **wash your hands** for 20 seconds throughout the day. If you cough or sneeze you should cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or sleeve of your clothing.

6. If you can, wear a **face covering** when inside the building.

7. Keep a **safe distance** (currently 2m) from other people at all times and remain alert – always consider other campus users. **Outside spaces** can be used should you wish; maintain a safe distance from other people and always dispose of rubbish / tissues carefully.

8. Stringently **follow the rules** set out in the building, your work areas and across the campus to keep yourself and others safe.

9. We recommend you log into **SafeZone** to ensure your location on campus is known in case there is an emergency (more information on Safezone on page 14).

**Action required by those who are working on campus:**

- Complete mandatory online COVID-19 training which will set out how to safely use the campus before returning;
- Receive a local induction from your manager or their appointed deputy, setting out how to use your workplace safely and how to complete tasks safely;
- Report issues or concerns regarding the buildings or spaces to the Estates Helpdesk / FXPlus.
YOUR PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Whilst the University is working hard to meet the COVID-19 Secure requirements and ensure that all staff feel safe, supported and connected, we do understand that although some staff may be looking forward to returning to on-campus working, there may be others who are anxious about returning.

If you are experiencing anxiety about returning to on-campus working then you should discuss this with your line manager. They will be able to listen to any concerns you have, provide support, offer flexibility of work times (if helpful), possibly look at alternative working arrangements and reassure you about the procedures that have been put in place to ensure your safety. You can also get further advice from the Occupational Health Service and the University Counselling Service, Pro-Counselling.

The University document “guidance for colleagues with concerns regarding returning to on-campus working” is available here:

Travel to work

- Staff returning to campus should follow Government advice on safer travel during the coronavirus outbreak.
- In general, anyone who needs to travel to work is advised to avoid using public transport where possible and try instead to walk, cycle, or drive.
- Where possible, look at the times, routes and ways you travel, to take the pressure off the transport system.
- On arrival at campus, staff should wash or sanitise their hands at the first opportunity and follow local guidance, signage etc on social distancing.
- Changing facilities will have additional cleaning carried out, but staff are requested to keep these as sanitary as possible by removing clothing/towels each day and rinsing shower cubicles out after use. Please follow instructions on the signage that will be in place.
- If you need to use public transport, please consider what you will do in the event you develop symptoms; plan your journey home to reduce risk to others.

ALL EMPLOYEES WHO ARE WORKING ON CAMPUS (AND THOSE CARRYING OUT APPROVED FIELDWORK) CAN OBTAIN FACE COVERINGS (3 PER PERSON) AND A PERSONAL DIGITAL THERMOMETER
STAFF SAFETY AND YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

The University is committed to ensuring that we do everything we can to protect our whole community and we recognise our duty of care to all colleagues and students. Risk assessments and Health and Safety guidance are in place for on-campus working. It is also important that staff act together to ensure that we are all supporting each other to meet the guidance in place and keep each other safe.

We continue to follow Public Health England’s guidance on self-isolation and enhanced hygiene, and we have processes in place to ensure that these are followed when working and studying on campus. The current University guidance can be found here [exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/safety/](http://exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/safety/).

Any breach to the University COVID-19 guidelines will be discussed with the staff member concerned in the first instance and the relevant guidance will be highlighted and discussed to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the procedures in place. Persistent failure to follow these guidelines may result in potential disciplinary action against the employee for failure to follow a reasonable management instruction. Persistent breaches will be referred to the HR Casework team for potential investigation and ultimately a disciplinary hearing.

Examples of a breach would include continually breaking the safe social distancing rules, returning to campus without permission or refusing to adhere to hygiene guidance.

Where a staff member ignores safe working practices and puts others at risk leading to a more serious breach then the disciplinary process will be followed immediately. An example of this would be a staff member coming onto campus or a University building with a confirmed case of COVID-19 whilst in the self-isolation period.
OUR APPROACH TO GETTING THE WORKPLACE READY

- Every building will be assessed as COVID-19 secure before reopening
- Every workplace / task will be assessed as COVID-19 secure before reopening
- The external grounds and pathways have been assessed
- Buildings and workplaces will be certified as COVID-19 secure before employees can work on campus - this will take time but this meticulous effort will ensure we keep people safe
- Achieving Green initiatives have been a principle of our restart planning. Beyond Restart, we will also be adopting some new ways of working to achieve Green initiatives which meet our Environment and Climate Emergency commitment.

If you are returning to shared buildings or premises that are owned by another employer your manager will let you know what the requirements are in addition to any specific University requirements. We might need to change things as time goes on to incorporate any new or updated Government guidance and we will keep you up to date via the regular communication bulletins, Registrar emails or via the nominated building coordinator.
What to expect in a COVID-19 secure building:

- Hand sanitiser will be available at the approved entrances / exits and handwashing facilities with information on how to wash and care for your hands will be freely available.
- A cleaning plan will be in place for every building detailing the increased cleaning arrangements.
- COVID-19 information signage will be displayed at the entrance setting out how to use the building safely and who to contact for fire safety or fire aid requirements.
- Directional and instructional signage will be displayed throughout the building, as required.
- Safe distancing instructions including safe distancing in washrooms, kitchens and other shared spaces will be displayed.
- Due to air and ventilation requirements, some windows may need to remain safely open.
- A certificate will be displayed indicating that COVID-19 secure considerations have been met.
What will it be like to work in a COVID-19 secure environment?

There will be less people around

There will be less people around as in most cases, applying the current social distancing requirements means we will have 25-30% occupancy to begin with. Due to this reduction in the number of people around, we are strongly recommending that all staff log onto the SafeZone system. This will ensure your location on campus is registered and if you have an emergency or there is a campus emergency, you can be located. To find out more about this, click here safezoneapp.com/how-it-works

There are new rules on how to safely use shared kitchens

We need to be aware of using shared spaces and need to use shared kitchens carefully to ensure the space remains safe for everyone. The specific arrangements for using shared kitchens will be made clear in your COVID-19 induction training.
Visual triggers to help you find your way with the spacing rules

You will find a variety of posters and signage in the building to let you know how to use the space, including the arrangements in place for smaller spaces such as bathrooms and WC’s. Please note, in the event of an emergency you do not need to apply the 2m safe distancing rule and the directional signage reminds building users of this.

Increased Cleaning

There will be enhanced cleaning arrangements in place. In addition, you and your colleagues may be asked to clean down your own work spaces before use or during your working day. Cleaning equipment and information on the safe use of cleaning products will be provided to you.

Using shops and food service environments

All areas will have specific instructions on how to use the shops and food service environments safely.

Possible changes to working times / patterns

We need to consider different ways of working to ensure we can be as productive as possible while ensuring social distancing is maintained, as far as reasonably practicable. One way managers can achieve this is to split shifts or activities. While this may seem a long way from pre-COVID-19 ways of working, it could have benefits.

Your manager will discuss the options with you and you can discuss your requirements with them.
Keep your hands clean

Before entering the building please use the gel provided at the entrance. Throughout the day wash your hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry your hands. Please respect good hand hygiene, making a conscious effort to wash your hands regularly and effectively.

A potential consequence of washing hands more frequently is reducing the natural oils in the skin which could lead to dry or sore hands. Dermatitis is also a possible risk. Take care of your hands by using hand moisturiser. If you develop sore hands please let your manager know - work related dermatitis is RIDDOR reportable.

Driving vehicles

It will not always be possible to keep a safe distance inside vehicles. Many in-vehicle tasks need more than one person, for example heavy deliveries and changing vehicle configurations to create more space may not be practical. If you are required to drive a vehicle for work, your manager will let you know how to do this safely.

Face Coverings and personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE protects the user against health or safety risks at work. It can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, safety footwear and safety harnesses. It also includes respiratory protective equipment, such as face masks. If you are already using PPE at work to control hazards you should continue to do so.

We are recommending that all colleagues wear a face covering when inside University buildings. This is not mandatory, however choosing to wear a face covering may help to protect anyone you come into close contact with if you have the infection but have not yet developed symptoms. Some local risk assessments may also include the use of face coverings and if this is applicable to your work area, your manager will discuss this with you.

We understand that some people will not be able to wear a face covering due to disability, religious or other personal circumstances. Please be mindful of this and do not challenge people unnecessarily. If you are unable to wear a face covering for these reasons, you can discuss this with your manager. If you would like to consider an alternative, clear face visors are available on each campus and we are continuing to try and source other suitable products.

It is important to know that face coverings are not a replacement for the other ways of managing risk, including increased hand hygiene and safe distancing. These measures remain the best ways of managing risk in the workplace.

More information on how to wear a face covering can be found here

gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering
Meetings

All meetings should continue to take place online where possible especially where some team members are at home and some are on campus to avoid difficulties in communication. All employees should continue to meet online as the general rule.

1. Zoom / Teams will continue to be used to avoid in-person meetings.
2. Only absolutely necessary participants will physically attend meetings and should maintain safe distancing.
3. Wash your hands before a meeting and try and avoid touching your face and maintain good respiratory hygiene, if you are able, wear a face covering.
4. Avoiding transmission during meetings, for example avoiding sharing pens, documents and other objects.
5. Holding meetings outdoors or in well-ventilated rooms whenever possible.
WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THERE IS A SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE?

The University is working very closely with both Public Health England and the Local Health Protection Team. We are practicing plans that mean we will be able to respond quickly in the event of any suspected or confirmed cases on campus.

We need you to be prepared to stop working if there is a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus. We may ask that you remain at home at short notice or, we may warn you be alert to any symptoms. This will be managed on a case by case basis by working with your manager and with the input of the Local Health Protection Team.

The University will communicate any wider local outbreaks or lockdown requirements via the University-wide bulletin and Registrar emails.

Test and trace arrangements

You manager may ask you to record when you have been on campus. This is to ensure there are records in place in the event of a confirmed case on campus which will enable a quick process for alerting staff and providing more information on next steps.

What if someone gets symptoms?

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are a new, continuous cough or a high temperature and a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell. For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection.

Any member of staff who develops symptoms of COVID-19, however mild must follow the advice set out in this document exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/safety/ and we ask that you make yourself familiar with this guidance now, so that you know what to do and where to find the guidance should you need it.

If there is anything that needs to be communicated urgently we will use the text alert system. Please make sure your contact details are up to date on Trent.
IF YOU HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS, HOWEVER MILD, STAY AT HOME AND REQUEST A TEST

nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/
get-an-antigen-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/

For more info, please contact coronavirusenquiries@exeter.ac.uk