

Teaching Guidance 2021-22

Introduction

The teaching guidance 2021-22 is designed to support academics to teach on campus from September 2021. It is written in line with the [HE COVID-19 Operational Guidance](#) first published on 19 July and then updated on 17 August and the Government [Contingency framework: education and childcare settings](#) published 19 August 2021 and supports the University's Teaching Risk Assessment.

The return to campus for face-to-face teaching is possible due to the significant successes of the national vaccination programme, the asymptomatic and symptomatic testing and the NHS tracing system all of which underpin our delivery model.

The Government's overarching objective is to maximise the number of children and young people able to attend face-to-face education in a way that manages the risk, highlighting the need to use all measures and to restrict attendance only "as a last resort".

This document outlines the COVID-19 safety guidance to academic staff in all teaching spaces and provides more detail than the pithy 'Teaching Protocols for Academic Year 21/22', which have been developed in close working with academic, health & safety and TU colleagues.

The document also highlights key elements of the University's steps to make our campuses safe for the delivery of in person teaching, as well as offering guidance as to how academics should proceed when teaching on campus.

For those teaching in NHS buildings and for health students, different arrangements may apply and you are advised to follow the protocols of the host institution, however the personal COVID precautions are still recommended.

Minimising COVID-19 Risks

Reducing the transmission risk as far as we reasonably can makes the working environment as safe as possible for all our staff and students and reduces the risk of COVID transmission in our teaching spaces.

The University has prepared information and guidance to ensure that all staff feel safe, supported, and connected. The following measures are in place to minimise the COVID-19 risks in teaching spaces:

- All workplaces, common areas, study spaces, research facilities and teaching spaces have been risk assessed using an approved holistic approach to managing the risks in these areas
- Staff are advised to familiarise themselves with on-campus working and to take advantage of local induction sessions to ensure they are familiar with any safety mitigations provided in the areas they will be working in as well as any new ways of working that may be required.
- The University strongly encourages everyone to wear face coverings inside University buildings and there will be numerous face covering stations across campus to ensure that all staff and students have access to one.
- The University is hosting NHS pop-up vaccination sites frequently through term 1 to enable the whole community to have two vaccinations
- The University is continuing to support the national asymptomatic testing programme (through assisted testing on site and via Home Test Kits collection sites) and has in house symptomatic testing ability

- Hand sanitiser is in place at building entrances and high touch point areas including equipment such as self-serve printers.
- There are cleaning materials in all teaching spaces.
- Rigorous cleaning programmes are in place.
- There is a 2m teaching zone in all classrooms for academics.
- The Community Charter has been updated and all members of the University community are asked to abide by the protocols therein.
- The 'Here to Help' team remains in place to support students and staff across our campuses at the start of term to promote, support and model the optimum COVID behaviour across all aspects of teaching and campus life.

Teaching on Campus - Sickness

Teaching for academic year 2021/22 is expected to be on campus in line with the Government's HE COVID Guidance.

Student sickness. Students unable to attend timetabled sessions for any sickness, including for COVID-19 will report sickness as normal through the iExeter app, this will enable Module Leads to see the information as normal via LISA.

Academic Staff Self-Isolation. Academic staff required to self-isolate as either a positive COVID case or as a non-exempt close contact should follow the guidance for staff to be found on the HR webpages and contact their line manager. They should follow the normal protocols for changing a scheduled timetable session, by contacting their timetabling contact and asking them to update the information given to students. In some instances it may be possible to move the in-person session to a Teams live session in other instances the session will be postponed in line with normal sickness procedures.

On Campus Support

The 'Here to Help' team will be available on campus to support students and staff to minimise COVID-19 risks for the first few weeks of term however it will not be possible for all spaces to have a designated H2H member.

How to deliver teaching sessions in on-campus teaching spaces

Before a session

- If you are teaching a session with a practical element, ensure your activity risk assessment is up to date, taking in to account any controls needed to minimise risk during the session.
- Provide handouts electronically in advance, where possible.

Additional Considerations:

- Engage with students to set the scene, encourage timely arrival and to remind them of expectations.
- Group study is now allowed as there are no social distancing requirements
- Furniture in teaching spaces may be moved but do not encroach on the 2m teaching zone and you must reset the space prior to finishing the session.

Starting a session – Remember the 'Teaching Protocols'

- Use hand sanitiser stations before entering the room.

- Wipe down your lectern/and any other touchpoints you will use (this includes shared pens/board rubbers/handheld microphones (fix a new disposable microphone cover to handheld microphone if using) (Note: no lapel mics available).
- Follow the window guidance in each teaching room to support ventilation
- Use the 2m teaching zone to keep a distance between you and the students
- If there is sufficient space in the room, ask students to spread out as much as possible (more than 2 metres if viable) to maximise social distancing opportunities while inside.
- Remind students to clean their space before sitting using the cleaning materials provided.
- All staff and students are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings while inside University buildings.
- Remind all students to use the NHS QR codes to assist with NHS Track and Trace.

During a session

- Academic teaching staff are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings when not inside the 2m teaching zone.
- Where teaching activities require closer contact to help with a task, it is recommended that teaching staff go no closer than is necessary and minimise the time spent in proximity with others.
- If a student flags a concern about their personal vulnerability to COVID, remind them to contact the Accessibility Team.
- Furniture can be moved and group work is allowed but furniture should be reset furniture prior to finishing the session.

Emergencies

- If a student reports COVID symptoms during a session, instruct them to collect their belongings and request they return immediately to their accommodation. They should be advised contact the Rapid Response Hub and follow government guidance.

Exeter – rapidresponsehub@exeter.ac.uk, call [0300 3034847](tel:03003034847)

Cornwall – rapidresponse@fxplus.ac.uk or call [01326 370402](tel:01326370402)

- Please then contact the Here to Help team via email heretohelp@exeter.ac.uk to let them know that a person has reported to be unwell and has left the session, so that they can coordinate the necessary cleaning activities and so that timetabled sessions for the rest of the day can be adjusted in that room, then place a “Please do not sit here” sign on the desk where the student was sitting.
- Emergency arrangements have not changed.
 - First aiders have been provided with additional equipment to reduce the risk if close-proximity first aid is required.
 - Fire evacuation is to take place as normal.
- At any time, if you feel there is a safety concern you can call the session to a close and advise your DoE.

Finishing a session

- Reset furniture to the original configuration
- Release your class early enough to allow for the next session to minimise congestion in the corridors.

Additional considerations for STEM workshops and Science and Technology Laboratories

- Face coverings are strongly encouraged except where PPE facemasks are required through risk assessment.
- Sinks for hand washing or hand sanitiser stations to be utilised
- Timetabling will allow a buffer space between practical classes in labs to allow the technical teams to clean equipment and reset the space.
- Where equipment must be shared, use alcohol or disinfectant wipes to wipe over the equipment between each person's uses.
- If possible, increase the number of pieces of equipment available.
- Use a clean lab coat provided and laundered through Technical Services.

Additional considerations for Performance Spaces

- Allow 15 minutes between classes to reset the space.
- Wipe down floor areas where students have been working in bare feet.
- Use individual named scripts/documents or electronic versions to avoid sharing.
- Theatrical masks and all musical wind (wood and brass) instruments must be sanitised between users and quarantined for 72 hours before being used by anyone else.
- Other musical instruments must be sanitised between users.
- Avoid sharing costumes.

Additional considerations for Computer Labs

- Sanitise hands before and after use. Wipe down keyboard and mouse with provided cleaning materials.
- Bring own headphones if required.
- Do not shut down computers at the end of sessions to minimise touch points and allow remote access.

Additional considerations for shared equipment

- Consider booking systems for specialised equipment and computers.
- Where sharing cannot be avoided wipe equipment before and after use.
- Follow occupancy limits in spaces with shared equipment where they remain in place.
- Moved shared equipment away from high footfall areas where possible.
- Consider recording and sharing demonstrations of the use of equipment.

Teaching Protocols

The key elements of our teaching guidance will be on distilled onto a slide for AV screens in our teaching spaces as a prompt for staff and students:

- Follow our Community Charter
- Wipe down before you sit down
- Log your location
- Be mindful of the teaching zone
- Face coverings are strongly encouraged
- Follow the window guidance
- Fill up from the back, spread out to use the space

