

# COVID-19 and my team: Personal Risk Assessment

Guidance for manager's on supporting colleagues with  
COVID-19 Age Individual Vulnerability Risk Assessment

# COVID-19 and my team: Managers guidance

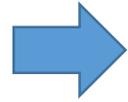
Employees have been asked to raise any concerns they have about returning to campus working with their managers.

Employees may have a number of different challenges such as new or changed childcare arrangements, caring requirements, new or existing mental ill-health or a personal medical condition.

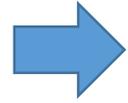
Managers will need to provide essential support to colleagues to discuss their concerns, understand their situation and discuss any possible options.

# COVID-19 : Providing support for colleagues

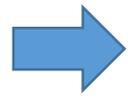
## My COVID-19 support requirements



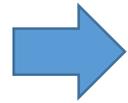
I have an underlying health condition



I have a personal protected characteristic which is disproportionately impacted by COVID-19



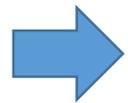
I am worried / anxious about coming back to on-campus working, but I don't have any underlying health issues



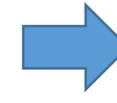
My mental wellbeing needs to be taken into account as part of my return to on-campus working



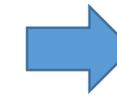
I have caring responsibilities that means I need support to find a work pattern that will work for me and my role as I come back to on-campus working



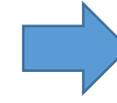
I am low/medium risk but I live with someone who is highly vulnerable to COVID-19 and has been shielding



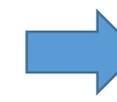
All colleagues should complete the Covid-age individual vulnerability risk assessment and let their manager know their covid-age. You do not need to share the reasons for your Covid-age



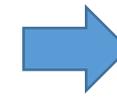
Discuss with your line manager who can help by working with you to identify the issues and support you. See further guidance at <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/coronavirus/campusworking/>



Discuss with your line manager who can help by working with you to identify the issues and support you. For further guidance please see <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/coronavirus/wellbeing/>



You should discuss your concerns with your line manager



Further information can be found under "Other personal concerns regarding returning to on-campus work" <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/employment/coronavirus/campusworking/>

# COVID-19 Age Individual Vulnerability Risk Assessment

This guidance focuses on advice for managers on how to support individuals with the **COVID-19 age individual vulnerability risk assessment**.

**All staff should be asked to complete the COVID-19 age individual vulnerability risk assessment in preparation for on campus working.**

Some colleagues are at a higher risk from COVID-19 infection. This may be because of medical conditions, vulnerability because of ethnicity, age, or pregnancy or other personal circumstances.

It is important **not to make assumptions** about any members of your team or their circumstances. If concerns are raised with you, then you should, in line with the University's [dignity and respect policy](#), have a discussion with your employee and agree with them any additional support that may be required.

This may include:

- Discussing outcomes of the COVID age individual vulnerability risk assessment
- Discussing the safety measures in place on campus and within their specific building/work area
- Working through any concerns they have
- Option for alternative face coverings such as a face visor rather than a face covering if needed
- Suggesting alternatives to working patterns such as staggering start and finish times
- Agreeing any possible homeworking
- Signposting to the [Wellbeing](#) webpages and [HR COVID-19](#) pages for information on counselling, childcare, and mental health support
- Referral to Occupational Health for more in-depth consideration

# COVID-19 and my team: COVID-19 Age Individual Vulnerability Assessment

Is there a business requirement for this person to be working on campus?

No

- **Remain working at home**
- **Individual has discussed personal difficulties with working from home** - discuss the use of the working space on campus
- **Individual has discussed IT/DSE difficulties with working from home** - discuss whether any additional support can be given to continue to working from home. If this is not possible discuss the use of the Personal working space on campus

Yes

- **Low Personal Risk Assessment** - Return to campus working when building is confirmed as being COVID secure
- **Moderate Personal Risk Assessment** – if in a front facing role with contact with different people consider options to reduce the impact of face to face risks
- **High Personal Risk Assessment** – if working closely with others i.e.: teaching, sharing a vehicle, or using public transport then consider providing controls e.g. screens, PPE to manage the risk
- **Very High Personal Risk Assessment** – need to ensure that workplace risks/ tasks are controlled and there is limited contact with others. If this is not possible then the individual should remain working from home
- **Individual is low/moderate risk but is living with a dependent who is high risk** – consider the possibility of staggered working times (so not starting work at peak times) or limiting contact with others
- **Individual is experiencing difficulties with caring responsibilities** – discuss reducing FTE or taking leave to assist with this. Discuss the possibility of a change in working hours or alternative caring options

# COVID-19 and my team: Preparation

- As this is a developing pandemic and research is ongoing evidence is still evolving and therefore this guidance will be updated as this develops.
- This tool has been developed in the UK and is promoted by BMA. It is subject to updates and the scores may go up or down for particular categories based on the growing research on COVID health impacts. **Therefore, you should encourage your team to regularly complete the tool. This is especially important for those on the borderline of a higher risk category.**
- You need to be prepared to have sensitive conversations with staff where they are identified as at risk and anxieties exist.
- Seek support from the EDI team if you are unsure about supporting someone from a particular characteristic group.
- It is **important not to make assumptions** about any members of your team or their circumstances.
- You should gather the relevant information as outlined above, through one to-one conversations with your team. You should listen carefully to concerns and provide support and consider adjustments.
- You will need to remember that if the local COVID-19 situation change and local restrictions are put into place, you may need to have further individual conversations with staff who feel at risk.
- [Pro-counselling](#) can support you by helping you prepare for sensitive conversations with your staff if needed.

# COVID-19 and my team: Training

Additional training is available for managers which will predominately focus on the skills and behaviours required for having supportive conversations with staff about their working arrangements, which could include a return to campus or a continuation of home working.

You will also learn where you can access further guidance, as well as the teams that can offer support in the process if required e.g. HR, Health & Safety, Occupational Health.

The training is [Manager's Guidance for COVID-19: Skills for Supportive Conversations](#)

# COVID-19 and my team: How does it work?

- Your COVID-19 age summarises an assessed vulnerability for a combination of risk factors including age, sex and ethnicity and various health issues.
- It works by “translating” the risk associated with each risk factor into years which are added to (or subtracted from) your actual age. This then gives a single overall measure of vulnerability.
- It can be used in people with no underlying medical conditions or multiple medical conditions. One measure combines all of an individual’s risk factors with their actual age.
- Someone's COVID-19 age does not provide an exact measure, so when it is used to calculate vulnerability from medical conditions, and particularly multiple medical conditions, advice should be requested by the individual's medical consultant or GP.

# COVID-19 and my team: Personal Risk Assessment ALAMA tool limitations

- The ALAMA tool covers 200+ medical conditions making it more likely to detect underlying health conditions which present a COVID-19 risk.
- The baseline for the tool is a healthy white male which is not what we consider suitable as a baseline but as of now this is the widely used method of risk-assessment for COVID-19 both at other Universities and RD&E – it is focussed on the occupational health uses.
- Whilst we would not normally ask, sex at birth is referred to as COVID-19 impacts negatively on the lungs. This may have significant consequences on risk assessment outcomes when measuring COVID-19 age.
- There is a national tool being developed.
- The University has sent feedback to the ALAMA creators for them to consider the EDI concerns we have noted.
- **Staff DO NOT need to share the content of the tool or the details of their scoring with their manager if they do not wish to. They only need to share their COVID-19 age or their vulnerability level.**

# COVID-19 and my team: Black and minority ethnic staff

Emerging evidence shows that black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities are disproportionately affected by COVID-19. The reasons for this are not yet fully understood, but the health inequalities presented for BAME communities have long been recognised.

- You are encouraged to have sensitive and comprehensive conversations with all your staff about any concerns they might have but be particularly aware that those from communities disproportionately affected may have specific concerns that need to be addressed.
- You should discuss any existing underlying health conditions that may increase the risks for them in undertaking their frontline roles, in any capacity. If they are not comfortable talking to you about this and concerns have been highlighted on their Personal Risk Assessment reporting form, then you should advise them to talk to Occupational Health.
- Conversations should also, on an ongoing basis, consider the feelings of BAME colleagues, particularly regarding both their physical safety, their psychological safety, and their mental health.

# COVID-19 and my team: Religion or belief

- The COVID-19 situation may coincide with specific religious events / dates – some of which may require staff to fast. This may have an impact on the ability of individual members of staff to perform their role fully, especially when wearing face coverings / Personal protective equipment.
- You should have a conversation with individual members of staff about how they will manage these circumstances and consider what adjustments could be made.

# COVID-19 and my team: Age and Gender

## **AGE**

- There is evidence that COVID-19 has a greater impact in older age groups. Therefore, older staff may be more at risk as a result of increased age and likelihood of long-term conditions. The Personal Vulnerability Risk Assessment takes this into account when calculating an individual's COVID-19 age.

## **GENDER**

- There is some emerging medical evidence to suggest that COVID-19 may impact more on men than women, so the Personal Vulnerability Risk Assessment takes this into account when calculating an individual's COVID-19 age.

# COVID-19 and my team: Disability

- In line with agreed policies and legal protections, disabled staff working across the University are likely to manage their disability through the application of reasonable adjustments. Some of these adjustments will be formally agreed and some informally adopted by staff to suit their own circumstances.
- It is possible that the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic could bring further challenges for some staff with disabilities in terms of amending / altering any reasonable adjustments – and this should be assessed and explored as part of the risk assessment process on returning to work on-campus.
- Some disabled staff members may have a weakened immune system, leaving them more vulnerable to getting an infection.
- There may be issues associated with the use of face coverings / visors / other personal protective equipment (PPE) and those with a mental health condition may feel increased levels of anxiety and stress.
- Government advice on vulnerable workers and shielding should be followed.
- Further advice is available at [Disability Support for Univeristy Employees](#) or by contacting [Occupational Health](#).

# COVID-19 and my team: BMI

- There is emerging evidence to suggest that one of the risk factors for becoming seriously unwell with coronavirus is being obese.
- If a staff member expresses concern about their BMI they can be signposted to their GP who can advise or to the [Self-care Staying Well](#) information on the Wellbeing website.
- The NHS has information available on [what BMI is](#) and the benefits of losing weight.

# COVID-19 Age Individual Vulnerability Risk Assessment: Process for completion

- All staff are to be asked to complete a COVID-19 Age Individual Vulnerability Risk Assessment.
- They do not need to share their completed form with you, just their COVID-19 age or their vulnerability level. The reasons for their COVID age outcome do not need to be disclosed to you.
- If their COVID-19 age is **high or very high** or they have **answered yes** to one of the five health questions at the end of the assessment, then they should complete the Personal Risk Assessment with your support.
- You should discuss any reasonable adjustments required.
- If you are not able to agree or they still have concerns then the individual should email their **Personal Risk Assessment** reporting form, completed with you, with their **COVID-19-age Individual Vulnerability Risk Assessment** to Occupational Health. Occupational Health will keep this confidential and information on the COVID-19 age Individual Vulnerability Risk Assessment will not be shared with you unless the individual is happy for this.
- The Occupational Health Team will be able to provide further advice or guidance to you and the individual.

# COVID-19 and my team: Low or Moderate risk

## **Low COVID-19 age up to 49 – Low risk of severe illness from coronavirus**

Can return to work on campus

- Maintain safe distancing
- Maintain good hand hygiene practices
- Wear your face covering when required
- Follow University COVID-19 guidance for working on campus

## **Moderate COVID-19 age 50-69 – Slight increase in risk of severe illness from coronavirus**

All of the above but also:

- If in a higher risk role (front facing role, lots of contact with different people) consider options to reduce impact of face to face risks.
- This may mean that managers will need to adjust the duties of those in the Moderate COVID-19 age or make adjustments to actual duties that are being carried out where possible.

# COVID-19 and my team: High or Very High Risk or answered yes to one of the five health questions

## **High COVID-19 age 70-79 – Increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus**

All of the previous considerations and:

- Working on campus closely with others (such as teaching, sharing a vehicle, using public transport) may be possible provided controls (e.g. screens, PPE) are effective in managing the risk
- Seek advice from Occupational Health if uncertain

## **Very High COVID-19 age 80 or above – Serious risk of severe illness from coronavirus**

All of the above and:

- May be able to return to on campus work if workplace risks / tasks are controlled and limited contact with others
- Seek advice from Occupational Health if uncertain

**Staff in these categories are able to return to campus working but they may need adaptations made to their role, location or certain tasks. You will need to ensure that staff are aware of the adaptations that can be made to assist them to return to campus working.**

# COVID-19 and my team: Reasonable adjustments

There are a number of reasonable adjustments that may be suitable to consider when assisting staff with returning to on-campus working. These may include:

- Adjustments to work, working hours and work tasks
- Flexibility regarding working from home/on campus
- Regular 1:1s to provide advice, support and guidance if required
- Training and supervision for new work and working
- Potential redeployment

Advice is available from your [HRBP / HR Advisor](#) or the [Occupational Health](#) team

# COVID-19 and my team: COVID-19 symptoms

- Please ensure all team members are aware that they should **not** come onto campus if they:
  - Have any COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, or
  - live with others who have symptoms and are awaiting test results or
  - Live with others who have tested positive, or
  - Have been contacted by NHS Test and Trace and have been informed they are a close contact
- Staff should stay at home, self-isolate and request a COVID-19 test.
- Anyone who has an inconclusive test result should get a further test and remain working from home. If the 2nd test is negative, they can return to work.
- Anyone testing positive should remain working at home for 10 days from when the symptoms started or from the date of the test if they have had no symptoms.