**The University of Manchester**

**Guidance for All Staff Returning to the Campus**

The UK Government COVID Alert Status has been reduced to Level 3 and there has been further easing of restrictions. The Government advice is now for return to work where it is safe to do so. The University has been putting in place measures to make the campus ‘COVID-Secure’ and has prioritised certain areas for return to working on the campus.

This document provides guidance for you as it is anticipated you will be returning to work on the campus soon. It is important that you read and follow this guidance carefully. **COVID-19 poses a risk for you, for those you live with as well as those you come in contact with.**

Your welfare, the welfare of your colleagues and the welfare of those you live with is important to us. Please observe safe practice standards.

Staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 ([Check if you have COVID-19 symptoms](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/)) or have had a recent positive test or been identified as having been in contact with someone who has tested positive recently by the NHS Test and Trace Service ([NHS Test and Trace Service](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/)) should follow NHS guidance and not return to work until they are well and no longer pose a risk of transmitting the infection.

**Key Issues You Need to Consider**

1. **What are the main things I need to understand about the risk of COVID-19?**
	1. COVID-19 is a highly infectious and potentially fatal disease.

*This a serious but a manageable risk*

* 1. The impact of the disease is highly variable.

*Infected individuals may not necessarily show any signs of the disease but may still be able to pass it to others*

* 1. Some people are more vulnerable and have a higher risk of severe disease.

*It is important that such individuals are not exposed to any unnecessary risks.*

*Some individuals with no obvious underlying risk factors may also develop severe disease.*

* 1. It appears to be primarily spread by respiratory droplets and possibly aerosols, and also contact with surfaces on which the respiratory droplets fall or have been contact with contaminated surfaces (e.g., hands). Respiratory droplets can spread widely when sneezing or coughing. Infection can occur through nose, mouth or eyes

*It is important to maintain social distancing and strict hygiene measures such as frequent handwashing/sanitising hands.*

* 1. Handwashing with soap for at least 20 second according to NHS guidance ([NHS Handwashing Guidance](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/)) is effective in reducing the risk of transmission. Hand sanitisers (with at least 60% alcohol content) should be used where handwashing is not possible.
	2. Normal surgical facemasks/face coverings reduce risk of transmission by limiting spread of respiratory droplets and aerosols.

*Face coverings must be worn in all public indoor spaces and where social distancing is not possible for short periods.*

*They should not be generally used as a substitute for social distancing.*

1. **Can I come into work if I have medical conditions that may make me more vulnerable to more severe COVID-19 infection?**
	1. Since 1st of August 2020, the [Government advice](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/advice-for-people-at-high-risk/) is that even those deemed to be ‘extremely vulnerable’ need not shield.
	2. For people who are deemed to be ‘extremely vulnerable’,
		* If you can continue to work from home (and are not required on the campus), you should do so.
		* If you are required to work on the campus, you should talk to your line manager/supervisor so that they can make arrangements for you return to work safely.
		* If you are concerned about this because of the nature of your work (e.g., if it involves prolonged face-to-face contact with others) or for other reasons, please discuss this with your line manager/supervisor as soon as possible and well in advance of starting work, so that necessary adjustments can be made to allow you to work safely.
	3. Guidance on vulnerability is attached to this document. Please read this carefully and discuss with your line manager/supervisor if you have concerns.
2. **Can I speak to my GP if I am uncertain about my health and whether I can return to work?**

Yes. We encourage you to discuss your health with your GP or other relevant health professional if you are not sure of how your health may the impact on your ability to start work now.

1. **What do I do if I have childcare responsibilities until schools re-open?**

Discuss this with your line manager/supervisor.

1. **What do I need to do to reduce my risk of infection and the risk of infection to others?**
	1. We all have a responsibility and statutory duty to ensure we keep ourselves and those we work with safe.
	2. Please follow all the guidance on the campus as well as in this document carefully.
2. **What should I do if I am anxious and uncomfortable about returning to the workplace?**

We appreciate and recognise that even in circumstances where colleagues are not classed as extremely vulnerable or vulnerable, some will be anxious about returning to work. In these circumstances, discuss these concerns with your manager. They will be able to explain in detail the measures that are being taken to safeguard colleagues generally and the particular measures being put in place in your specific workplace and/or for your specific onsite work (e.g. small group teaching).

**Practical Guidance on Working During COVID-19 Pandemic**

1. **Before setting off for work**
	1. If you or someone you live with have any symptoms of COVID-19 then you must not go into work and also inform your line manager.

Follow [NHS guidance](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/) on how to look after yourself and/or those you live with, and isolate as per the guidance.

* 1. There will be no food preparation on the campus; take a packed lunch from home or purchase it from the campus food outlets.
	2. Take your face covering with you. You will need this on the campus and also if you use public transport.

[Guidance on how to wear a face mask/covering](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own)

* 1. Avoid carrying any unnecessary bags to reduce surfaces that can be contaminated.
	2. Wash your hands carefully before setting off to reduce your risk of transmitting the disease.
	3. Carry hand sanitiser (minimum 60% alcohol) with you and use it frequently to sanitise your hands.
1. **Traveling to and from work**
	1. The UK Government advice is to avoid using public transport *if you can*. If you are able to walk or cycle to work, you should do so. However, if you need to use public transport you can do so.
	2. If you use public transport, then maintain social distancing (at least 1m but preferably 2m between you and other people) and you **must** wear a face covering.
	3. Use contactless payments or term passes
2. **Arriving or leaving work**
	1. You will be required to wear a face covering indoors in the public areas on the campus. You need to sanitise your hands put on your face covering before entry into the building.
	2. On arrival or departure, please use the allocated and signposted entry and exit doors only.
	3. Use hand sanitiser from the dispenser near the door immediately on entry to avoid contaminating high contact surfaces in the building.

Alternatively, if there are toilets on ground floor, these may be dedicated as washrooms solely for handwashing. Wash your hands thoroughly using soap and warm water.

* 1. Follow any signposts and markings on the floors, stairwells and lifts to maintain social distancing.
	2. Make your way to and from your area of work directly and if possible, avoid touching high-contact surfaces such as door handles, lift buttons etc. You may be able to use your elbow or foot to push open the doors.
1. **Working**
	1. The campus will have reduced capacity because of social distancing measures.
	2. You may be working individually or in a small team.

If you are working alone (e.g., office-based staff), you may have to follow a rota to allow others to work on the campus as well.

If you are working in a team, each team will have a designated leader and defined rota.

If you are designated team leader, you will have responsibility for

* providing staff induction along with the Line Manager
* safe practice by your team and
* supervision of more inexperienced members of your team; you may be able to delegate this to another suitability experienced member of your team.
	1. Make sure you have had a safety induction before you start.
	2. Make yourself familiar with all safety protocols and follow them carefully.
	3. When you arrive or leave your work area, you must wash your hands carefully so as not to contaminate high-contact common surfaces such as door handles.
	4. You must observe social distancing and will be allocated a specific area for your work.
	5. You will have to wear a face mask or face covering.
* In public spaces indoors, you can wear reusable face coverings.
* In laboratory spaces, you must wear a disposable mask; this will need to be changed at least every 4 hours or earlier if damp/contaminated.
	1. If you are sharing any equipment, you must clean it with the appropriate agent after you finish using it.
	2. You may have to help with regular cleaning of high contact surfaces like door handles, switches, taps etc. in your immediate area.
	3. When you finish work, clean all the surfaces in your allocated area; there is likely to be someone else working in the same space in rotation with you.
1. **Taking breaks**
	1. There will be no food preparation on the campus; bring your lunch from home or purchase it from campus food outlets.
	2. There will be common areas available for taking breaks and eating lunch but these should not be used for social gathering; social distancing must be maintained.

If you are in single use office space, you should use this for your lunch or breaks to avoid crowding common spaces.

* 1. Stagger break times with your colleagues
	2. Wash your hands carefully on arrival and departure from the break area.
1. **Sharing your concerns**
	1. It is important you feel enable to raise concerns about safety in your workplace. Your voice is important in helping us improve our practice and protect our staff from harm.
	2. You should raise this with your Supervisor or Line manager in the first instance.
	3. If you are not satisfied that your concerns have been addressed satisfactorily and remain concerned, then please raise the matter with your Head of Department/Division/Directorate.
	4. It is also important you provide feedback to your Line Manager on what works well and what does not.

**GUIDANCE FOR STAFF ON VULNERABILITY TO COVID-19**

Staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 ([Check if you have COVID-19 symptoms](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/)) or have had a positive test recently or been identified as having been in contact with someone who has tested positive recently by the [NHS Test and Trace Service](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/) should follow NHS guidance and not return to work until they are well and no longer pose a risk of transmitting the infection.

From 1st of August, 2020 shielding recommendations for extremely vulnerable and vulnerable individuals have been lifted and they should be able to return to work if required to do so and if the work place is COVID-secure. We have taken the necessary measures to make the University campus COVID-secure.

However, if you still have ongoing concerns about your return to work because of your health then you should discuss these with your line manager. If you are unable to work from home and your work involves high risk activity such as extended face to face contact with others, appropriate arrangements will be made to support you to work.

The definitions of vulnerable status are given below for your guidance.

1. **People listed as “extremely vulnerable” in the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/350) are as follows:**
2. Solid organ transplant recipients.
3. People with specific cancers:
4. people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
5. people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
6. people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
7. people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
8. people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
9. people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
10. People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary (COPD).
11. People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as Severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell).
12. People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
13. Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

*However, the list of conditions set out in the regulations is not exhaustive, and there may be others who might also be considered to be “vulnerable” to the virus.*

1. **People listed as “vulnerable” in the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/350) are those with any of the following underlying conditions:**
2. Chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema or bronchitis.
3. Chronic heart disease, such as heart failure.
4. Chronic kidney disease.
5. Chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis.
6. Chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, a learning disability or cerebral palsy.
7. Diabetes.
8. Problems with the spleen, such as sickle cell disease or removal of the spleen.
9. A weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy.
10. Being seriously overweight, with a body mass index of 40 or above.

*However, the list of conditions set out in the regulations is not exhaustive, and there may be others who might also be considered to be “vulnerable” to the virus.*

1. **Individuals who are over 70, pregnant women or certain ethnicities (BAME) may be also considered vulnerable (See attached risk stratification).**

**Risk Factors for Covid-19**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **LOW RISK** | **MEDIUM RISK** | **HIGH RISK** |
| **AGE** |  | Men over the age of 60 with underlying health conditions which, if taken in isolation, may be considered low risk.All BAME staff over the age 55 | Over 70 years of age.Men over the age of 60 with serious underlying health conditions |
| **RACE** | BAME staff no underlying health conditions and less than 55 years old. | BAME staff with no underlying health conditions over the age of 55 years old.BAME staff with an underlying health condition that, if taken in isolation, would suggest they are low risk. Particular attention should be paid to BAME workers with high blood pressure, diabetes or asthma. | BAME staff with serious underlying health conditions. |
| **WEIGHT** |  | Having a BMI of 40 or above (seriously obese). |  |
| **UNDERLYING CONDITIONS** |
| **Autoimmune/immune** |  | Problems with the spleen such as sicklecell disease, splenectomy or asplenic.Weakened immune system as a result of HIV/AIDS, SLE/Lupus | Organ transplant and remaining on ongoing immunosuppression medicationWorkers having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancerWorkers receiving treatment for rheumatoid arthritis i.e. Methotrexate,Hydroxychloroquine, Sulfasalazineactions should be taken for staff dependent. |
| **Cancer** |  | Chemotherapy or radiotherapy in the last six months. | Undergoing active chemotherapy orradiotherapy.Cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia who are at any stage of treatment.People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs. |
| **Cardiac Conditions** | Previous heart attack with no ongoing problems; controlled high blood pressure, etc. | Chronic heart disease such as heartfailure, ongoing angina. |  |
| **Diabetes** | Controlled by diet or tablets with no diabetic complications. | Well controlled on insulin and with no diabetic complications. | Diabetic complications or poor glucose control. |
| **Disability** |  | Workers with disability or currentadjustments to role. | Workers with disability or adjustments to role and further underlying health conditions |
| **Medication/Treatment** |  | Workers taking medications such as steroid tablets, chemotherapy or immune modulators. | Workers having treatment which can affect the immune system such a protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitorsWorkers taking any of the following medication:AzathioprineMycophenolate (both types)CyclosporinSirolimusTacrolimus |
| **Metabolism and other** | Minor derangement of liver function. | Chronic liver disease such as active hepatitis.Chronic kidney disease. | Workers with rare diseases and inborn errors such as SCID or homozygous sickle cell disease.Severe diseases of body systems such as severe kidney disease (dialysis). |
| **Neurological** | Mild multiple sclerosis only with sensory or visual changesStable mild cerebral palsy. | Chronic conditions such as Parkinson’s Disease, Motor Neurone Disease, Multiple Sclerosis or Cerebral Palsy.Learning disabilities (from the point of view of being able to follow guidance to reduce transmission of Covid-19). |  |
| **Pregnancy** |  | Staff less than 28 weeks with no underlying medical conditions  | Workers over 28 weeks, or any pregnant worker regardless of length of pregnancy with chronic underlying medical problems such as cardiac problems or respiratoryproblems. |