

COVID Alert Level 5 ('National Lockdown')

Updated Guidance for Research on Campus: working arrangements for academics, research staff and postgraduate researchers

COVID-19 infection rates are high. Research activity on campus is only permitted with authorisation from your Head of School. Authorisation is limited to activity which cannot be done remotely or delayed. Campus research activities that are authorised must be undertaken with strict adherence to the risk assessment and safe working guidelines.

Access to specialist research facilities will continue to be permitted for academics, research staff and postgraduate research students **if the research cannot be reasonably conducted from home**. Specialist facilities include research laboratories and associated suites and specialist collections. There is no access to staff offices or other general facilities. This is aligned with [government guidelines](#).

1. The health and safety of our staff and students is paramount at all times.
2. There are operational constraints on the number of buildings which can be kept open with a COVID-secure environment, and this is subject to change. This will unavoidably impact on whether it is possible for some specialist facilities to remain open.
3. Head of School permission continues to be required before research activity is conducted on campus.
4. If the part of the research that requires access to campus could be reasonably delayed for a few weeks without detriment to the project, then this should be considered.
5. Academics, research staff and PGRs who do not need to be in University buildings to do their research should continue to work remotely from home.
6. Research activity on campus must continue to adhere to these organisational principles:
 - Activity onsite should be limited to use of the facility/equipment
 - Writing up work, analysing data and other work which does not require staff to access laboratories or other specialist facilities on campus should continue to be done remotely from home.
 - All meetings should be online – this includes PGR and related supervisory meetings, laboratory and other research team meetings, workshops and other events.
7. There should be strict adherence to the [guidance](#) on working safely in labs and research facilities during coronavirus (COVID-19). This will include, but is not limited to:
 - Social distancing of 2m
 - Wearing of face coverings
 - Regular hand sanitation

Failure to adhere to a safe working practice will result in disciplinary action and exclusion from the premises during this period.

8. **All COVID-security (and COSHH) [risk assessments](#) for use of facilities should be reviewed and updated** (including current heightened risks of Covid transmission and travel to/from work) as well as for procedures being undertaken under current working conditions (e.g., adequate technical support etc).
 - **In every case it is essential that arrangements are made for the supervision of the worker necessary to ensure that the work is conducted safely.** No work will be authorised without a proper assessment of all factors relevant to the health and safety of the worker.
 - Arrangements must be in place to ensure full compliance with University requirements, for example by ensuring the presence in the building of a Safety Adviser (or person acting with delegated authority). **Any non-compliance will be treated as a disciplinary offence.**
9. Staff should be familiar with requirements for working in COVID-secure environment or have had suitable demonstrable induction.
10. There should be adequate supervision of postgraduate researchers and any other junior researchers at all times (in accordance with the risk assessment and working arrangements authorised by the Head of School).
11. There should be adherence to lone-working policy where relevant.
12. Be aware that staff may not be able to come for work if they are shielding or have childcare responsibilities. If those staff needed for the safe operation of the facility, equipment or supervision are unavailable then alternative arrangements should be made or the facility/equipment should not be used.
13. Laboratories and other facilities will continue to operate at reduced capacity, with rota working or other forms of rationed access as required.
14. Any decision making about priorities for access to a specific facility (or building) will continue to be made locally, in line with the principles already agreed in each Faculty during the first lockdown. These include the following priority considerations, **where the only changes are updated dates and clarification for PGRs and PGTs:**
 - COVID-19 health and medical research
 - Clinical trials and linked laboratory activity, e.g. biomarker measurements
 - Research experiments of long duration which cannot tolerate a break (e.g. stem cell research)
 - PGRs with a demonstrated need to complete experimental, archival or related data collection and analysis whose full-time registration ends on or before **30th September 2021**; with consideration also given to the needs of other PGR cohorts
 - Research staff with a demonstrated need to complete experimental, archival or related data collection and analysis on campus whose contract is due to end before **31st July 2021**
 - Research team members who need to complete experiments or other forms of data collection and analysis to address grant reviewer's comments, or to address reviewer comments for a revise and resubmit deadline for a proposed output, or to complete preliminary data to finalise a grant submission **before 31st July 2021**.

- Externally-sponsored research where the delivery of key project objectives **before 31st July 2021** requires access to laboratories or other specialist facilities
- **Current students undertaking a research component for a PGT or integrated masters' award** with a demonstrated need to finalise lab-based experimental, archival or related data collection and analysis (**noting students should only be on campus where this is essential and Head of School authorisation is required**).
- Those EOs/SEOs essential to the activities described above.

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