

Campus Management Group
Risk Assessment for Central Teaching Spaces - COVID-19

Date: Sept 2021	Assessed by: Estates Safety Office, Directorate of Estates and Facilities	Checked / Validated* by: Campus Management Group	Location: Central Teaching Spaces on UoM campus	Review date: Dec 2021
--------------------	---	---	---	--------------------------

Task / premises: (7)

COVID-19: Use of central teaching spaces

Background:

Infection with SARS-CoV-2 occurs by inhalation of aerosolised virus or by contact with droplets and contaminated fomites (surfaces). Transmission of the disease is either through the direct inhalation of respiratory droplets from people coughing or sneezing (there is also a theoretical risk of transmission through normal conversation) or by transferring contamination from surfaces that have been exposed to respiratory droplets. The most common symptoms are recent onset of a new continuous cough, high temperature or change in taste or smell (anosmia). An expanded list of symptoms if present will permit access to a PCR test. See the university campus safety hub for more up to date information and advice <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/campus-management/keeping-you-safe-on-campus/>

This risk assessment evaluates the risks associated with teaching relating to SARS-CoV-2 infection and specifies a combination of covid secure control measure arrangements to minimise these risks, so far as is reasonably practicable, to facilitate a safe learning environment for teacher and students.

The risk for teaching activity, with the mitigations in place and advanced community public health controls, is low (i.e., not increased above the general risk for COVID infection). Specific health risk or related concerns is addressed through staff discussion with their line manager in the first instance. Further advice on covid risk and controls is available on StaffNet from Nalin Thakkar, Vice President: <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=26952>

Notes:

This risk assessment considers risks associated with teaching engaging classes up to 600 capacity in the largest settings and 1 lecturer/ small number of teaching staff, taking place in flat or tiered teaching spaces, usually no more than one or two hours in length though the assessment covers an 8 hour day. It covers classes that run in physically static classrooms (i.e. students remain in their seat throughout the class). Their physical location (often sat side by side) should be to minimise direct face-to-face positioning where this doesn't impact on the student experience in line with DfE requirements.

Our university is supplying surgical face masks (IIR type) which are available at main building entrances and in teaching settings where face coverings are expected and required to be worn (unless medically exempt). Clear face coverings are provided for teaching staff presenting if they prefer to wear these.

It is a university **expectation** that face coverings are worn (unless medically exempt) in all central teaching spaces, other spaces where **required** by local risk assessment, and **strongly encouraged** when circulating indoors on campus and especially in crowded spaces e.g. busy corridors at lecture changeovers. Teaching staff are permitted to remove their face covering to deliver teaching as they will be socially distanced, or can wear a clear face covering provided by Faculties who will notify staff of local distribution/ collection arrangements.

Other face coverings which meet [government guidelines](#) are also acceptable to wear and you can continue to use these on campus if you prefer to do so.

For faculty teaching spaces including classrooms, studio, workshop, editing suites, practice or lab spaces, involving specialist equipment/instruments, involving physical contact or exertion (for e.g. physical theatre, singing), or taking place for more than two hours, a local risk assessment must be considered/ or appropriate generic template used and reviewed by School Safety Advisors/Head of School. If the outcome of the local risk assessment considers it necessary then face coverings may also be required to be worn (unless medically exempt) by School Safety Advisors/Head of School and the CMG approved safety sign displayed to require this. Teaching staff are permitted to remove their face covering to deliver teaching as they will be socially distanced, or can wear a clear face covering provided by their Faculty. Schools must check that their activities are compatible with COVID cleaning and hygiene arrangements - activities can only be programmed with these agreed and in place.

Guiding Principles

The University will seek assurance from those given responsibility for an area that all areas have taken all necessary steps to comply with both the government's guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19 and implement measures outlined in this risk assessment to meet statutory requirements.

All staff and students are encouraged to report any health and safety concerns regarding the workplace controls in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

These should be reported to the Line/Division Manager/ School Safety Advisor in the first instance. Building defects or concerns over covid secure controls must be reported to the Estates Helpdesk on 2752424 estates-helpdesk@manchester.ac.uk who will direct to the appropriate team for action/ response.

Estates will monitor the effectiveness of this risk assessment and covid controls during Semester 1 including scheduled audits of CO2 levels in CTS space.

The latest UK Government guidance - 'Higher Education Covid-19 Operational Guidance' has been considered in the preparation of this risk assessment:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses/higher-education-covid-19-operational-guidance>

All covid controls provided for use in rooms **must not** be removed or misused eg. wipes, signs, CO2 monitors, air purifiers (in limited use), face coverings.

Activity	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Measures to control risk	Action	Risk Rating	Result
Teaching in flat or tiered central teaching spaces	Infection with SARS-CoV-2 and resulting COVID-19 disease	Staff and students in teaching spaces and anyone they subsequently come into contact with could develop COVID-19. Infected people display a wide range of symptoms from being asymptomatic to severe illness and possible fatal disease	<p>Exclusion of those who are sick or isolating. All staff and students experiencing symptoms should self isolate, request a test and follow current Government guidance/medical advice.</p> <p>All students who are self isolating should contact their School/PGR student support team. School/PGR student support teams should follow published university procedures for reporting positive COVID-19 cases and cases of self isolation.</p> <p>Staff experiencing symptoms and self isolating should inform their line manager. Line managers should follow published University procedures for reporting positive COVID cases and cases of self isolation.</p> <p>Attendance criteria are suspended to prevent students from feeling pressured to attend teaching if they feel unwell.</p> <p>Additional information available and updated on the campus safety hub: https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/campus-management/keeping-you-safe-on-campus/</p> <p>Covid secure hygiene controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students and staff have access to face coverings provided at main building entrances and in teaching spaces. These are expected to be worn in all central teaching spaces, unless an individual is medically exempt (proof of exemption will not be requested by teaching staff or estates). Safety signs are displayed to wear face coverings/ lecturer to prompt use. Teaching staff are permitted to remove their face covering to deliver teaching as they will be socially distanced, or can wear a clear face covering provided by their Faculty who will notify staff how to obtain. Staff and students should sanitise or wash their hands for at least 20 seconds before entering teaching spaces, in accordance with NHS guidelines. Hand sanitisers are positioned at building entrances and at strategic points throughout teaching buildings. Estates to conduct a thorough daily clean of touch points of doors handles, desks, chairs and teaching lectern using long acting anti-viral products. 	<p>All staff to have completed induction for safe return to campus in accordance with University guidance.</p> <p>All students to receive clear information and guidance on safe return to campus.</p> <p>Face coverings expected to be worn in CTS space unless exempt/ teaching</p> <p>University guidance for staff and students to clearly outline responsibilities for maintaining COVID security, and actions to take if experiencing symptoms.</p> <p>School and Faculty teaching and learning</p>	LOW	A

Activity	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Measures to control risk	Action	Risk Rating	Result
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching staff to clean lectern/ IT equipment with COVID safe cleaning wipes before and after each use, and dispose of wipes in nearest bin. Wipes will be provided in each room and checked each day by Estates. Contact Helpdesk to restock on 0161 27 52424 estates@manchester.ac.uk Any equipment use or object handling in class should be minimised. Where this is not possible equipment/objects must be wiped before and after each use. Wipes will be provided in each room and must not be removed from a CTS room as they are for use by staff throughout the day. Social distancing is encouraged where practicable and without impacting on the student experience inside buildings and in teaching settings. All centrally booked teaching rooms have been assessed by Estates to identify any improvements to fresh air ventilation. Mechanical ventilation has been optimised with mitigation provided only if needed eg. Air purifier with HEPA filter. Audits of CO2 levels/ flow rates during Semester 1 will refine assessments/ mitigation. Teaching staff must open windows where these are the means of local ventilation. In cooler months external airflow is expected to be more prevalent and open windows can be adjusted accordingly. Additional information on ventilation can be accessed in the FAQ: https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=50700 Staff and students are not permitted to move furniture from fixed points in the room whilst teaching. Furniture should remain positioned to minimise the risk of close contact face to face Covid-19 transmission. Any health and safety equipment provided in the room eg. CO2 monitors or air purifiers must be left untouched and fully operational. If found not operational please check they are plugged in or report as a priority to the Estates Helpdesk 0161 275 2424 or estates@manchester.ac.uk. This equipment is checked by Estates staff at the start of each teaching day. Safety information/ instructions are provided for teaching staff at the PC 	<p>teams to add information and links to University websites with detailed COVID-19 safety guidance to the front pages of Blackboard sites for all taught units.</p> <p>Central and local Estates teams to be responsible for managing and monitoring room arrangements for all teaching rooms, and the provision of cleaning wipes in teaching rooms, prior to the start of the semester and throughout the semester.</p>		
Arriving and exiting teaching spaces,	Infection with SARS-CoV-2 and	Staff and students in teaching spaces and anyone they	<p>Staggered arrival and leave times and the wearing of face coverings indoors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All students and staff are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings (unless exempt) provided at main building entrances when circulating 	Central and local Estates and operational teams to be	Low	A

Activity	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Measures to control risk	Action	Risk Rating	Result
controlling traffic flow (pinch points and gathering) at the start and end of classes	resulting COVID-19 disease	subsequently come into contact with could develop COVID-19. Infected people display a wide range of symptoms from being asymptomatic to severe illness and possible fatal disease	indoors, particularly when crowded at busy change over times between lectures. Covid-19 guidance posters are displayed in building entrances. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching staff are permitted to remove their face covering to deliver teaching as they will be socially distanced, or can wear a clear face covering provided by their Faculty who will notify staff how to obtain. Classes to end 10 minutes before the subsequent class to allow for safe exit prior to the arrival of the next class and reduce the risk of crowding Students to arrive at building no more than 5 minutes before class Where possible, keep left on staircases and when circulating in corridors Doors to teaching rooms should be opened by teaching staff 10 minutes before the start of the session and kept open where possible (reducing the need for students to touch door handles and/or wait in corridors) Students should be requested to go directly to class, rather than waiting in foyer spaces or corridors to minimise congestion in shared space Students should be encouraged to enter teaching spaces promptly and to occupy space from the back of the room to the front (reversed when departing the space). Students should be encouraged to leave classrooms after sessions have ended at 10mins to the hour and instead can submit follow up questions to seminar leaders after the session, online or outside. 	responsible for arranging signage Face coverings strongly encouraged to be worn circulating indoors unless exempt Teaching staff to ensure teaching finishes promptly at 10 mins to the hour to reduce risk of crowding in circulation space (corridors, stairwells) particularly at busy change over between lectures		

Useful resources

Campus Management – Safety on campus:

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/campus-management/keeping-you-safe-on-campus/>

StaffNet update from Nalin Thakkar, Vice President on Covid-19 risk and controls:

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=26952>

The latest UK Government guidance - 'Higher Education Covid-19 Operational Guidance':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses/higher-education-covid-19-operational-guidance>

Notes to accompany General Risk Assessment Form

This form is the one recommended by Safety Services, and used on the University's risk assessment training courses. It is strongly suggested that you use it for all new assessments, and when existing assessments are being substantially revised. However, its use is not compulsory. Providing the assessor addresses the same issues, alternative layouts may be used.

(1) Date: Insert date that assessment form is completed. The assessment must be valid on that day, and subsequent days, unless circumstances change and amendments are necessary.

(2) Assessed by: Insert the name and signature of the assessor. For assessments other than very simple ones, the assessor should have attended the University course on risk assessments (THS 15 Principles of Risk Assessment)

(3) Checked / Validated* by: delete one.

Checked by: Insert the name and signature of someone in a position to check that the assessment has been carried out by a competent person who can identify hazards and assess risk, and that the control measures are reasonable and in place. The checker will normally be a line manager, supervisor, principal investigator, etc. Checking will be appropriate for most risk assessments.

Validated by : Use this for higher risk scenarios, e.g. where complex calculations have to be validated by another "independent" person who is competent to do so, or where the control measure is a strict permit-to-work procedure requiring thorough preparation of a workplace. The validator should also have attended the University's risk assessment course or equivalent, and will probably be a chartered engineer or professional with expertise in the task being considered. Examples of where validation is required include designs for pressure vessels, load-bearing equipment, lifting equipment carrying personnel or items over populated areas, and similar situations.

(4) Location: insert details of the exact location, i.e. building, floor, room or laboratory etc. If off-campus, provide information about expected location(s) or attach itinerary.

(5) Assessment ref no: use this to insert any local tracking references used by the school or administrative directorate.

(6) Review date: insert details of when the assessment will be reviewed as a matter of routine. This might be in 1 year's time, at the end of a short programme of work, or longer period if risks are known to be stable. Note that any assessment must be reviewed if there are any significant changes - to the work activity, the vicinity, the people exposed to the risk, etc

(7) Task / premises: insert a brief summary of the task, e.g. typical office activities such as filing, DSE work, lifting and moving small objects, use of misc. electrical equipment. Or, research project [title] involving the use of typical laboratory hardware, including fume cupboards, hot plates, ovens, analysis equipment, flammable solvents, etc.

(8) Activity: use the column to describe each separate activity covered by the assessment. The number of rows is unlimited, although how many are used for one assessment will depend on how the task / premises is sub-divided. For laboratory work, activities in one particular lab or for one particular project might include: use of gas cylinders, use

of fume cupboard, use of computer or other electrical equipment, use of lab ovens, hot plates or heaters, use of substances hazardous to health, etc

(9) Hazard: for each activity, list the hazards. Remember to look at hazards that are not immediately obvious. For example, use of a lathe will require identification of the machine hazards, but also identification of hazards associated with the use of cutting oils (dermatitis), poor lighting, slipping on oil leaks, repetitive actions, etc. The same activity might well have several hazards associated with it. Assessment of simple chemical risks (e.g. use of cleaning chemicals in accordance with the instructions on the bottle) may be recorded here. More complex COSHH assessments e.g. for laboratory processes, should be recorded on the specific COSHH forms.

(10) Who might be harmed and how: insert everyone who might be affected by the activity and specify groups particularly at risk. Remember those who are not immediately involved in the work, including cleaners, young persons on work experience, maintenance contractors, Estates personnel carrying out routine maintenance and other work. Remember also that the risks for different groups will vary. E.g. someone who needs to repair a laser may need to expose the beam path more than users of the laser would do. Vulnerable groups could include children on organised visits, someone who is pregnant, or employees and students with known disabilities or health conditions (this is not a definitive list).

For each group, describe how harm might come about, eg an obstruction or wet patch on an exit route is a hazard that might cause a trip and fall; use of electrical equipment might give rise to a risk of electric shock; use of an ultraviolet light source could burn eyes or skin.

(11) Existing measures to control the risk: list all measures that already mitigate the risk. Many of these will have been implemented for other reasons, but should nevertheless be recognised as means of controlling risk. For example, restricting access to laboratories or machine rooms for security reasons also controls the risk of unauthorised and unskilled access to dangerous equipment. A standard operating procedure or local rules (e.g. for work with ionising radiation, lasers or biological hazards) will often address risks. Some specific hazards may require detailed assessments in accordance with specific legislation (eg COSHH, DSEAR, manual handling, DSE work).

Where this is the case, and a detailed assessment has already been done in another format, the master risk assessment can simply cross-reference to other documentation. For example, the activity might be use of a carcinogen, the hazard might be exposure to hazardous substances, the existing control measures might all be listed in a COSHH assessment. Controls might also include use of qualified and/or experienced staff who are competent to carry out certain tasks; an action plan might include training requirements for other people who will be carrying out those tasks.

(12) Risk Rating: the simplest form of risk assessment is to rate the remaining risk as high, medium or low, depending on how likely the activity is to cause harm and how serious that harm might be.

- The risk is LOW - if it is most unlikely that harm would arise under the controlled conditions listed, and even if exposure occurred, the injury would be relatively slight.
- The risk is MEDIUM - if it is more likely that harm might actually occur and the outcome could be more serious (e.g. some time off work, or a minor physical injury).
- The risk is HIGH - if injury is likely to arise (eg there have been previous incidents, the situation “looks like an accident waiting to happen”) and that injury might be serious (broken bones, trip to the hospital, loss of consciousness), or even a fatality.

Schools or administrative directorates may choose to use other rating systems. Typical amongst these are matrices (of 3x3, 4x4, 5x5 or even more complex) which require the assessor to select a numerical rating for both “likelihood that harm will arise” and “severity of that harm”. These may give a spurious sense of accuracy and reliability - none are based on quantitative methods. There are methods of estimating risk quantitatively, and these may be appropriate for

complex design of load bearing structures and the like. Advice on methods of risk assessment is available from Safety Services. Whatever system of assessment is adopted, it is essential that the assessor has received suitable training and is familiar with the meaning of the terms (or numbers) used.

(13) Result: this stage of assessment is often overlooked, but is probably the most important. Assigning a number or rating to a risk does not mean that the risk is necessarily adequately controlled. The options for this column are:

T = trivial risk. Use for very low risk activities to show that you have correctly identified a hazard, but that in the particular circumstances, the risk is insignificant.

A = adequately controlled, no further action necessary. If your control measures lead you to conclude that the risk is low, and that all legislative requirements have been met (and University policies complied with), then insert A in this column.

N = not adequately controlled, actions required. Sometimes, particularly when setting up new procedures or adapting existing processes, the risk assessment might identify that the risk is high or medium when it is capable of being reduced by methods that are reasonably practicable. In these cases, an action plan is required. The plan should list the actions necessary, who they are to be carried out by, a date for completing the actions, and a signature box for the assessor to sign off that the action(s) has been satisfactorily completed. Some action plans will be complex documents; others may be one or two actions that can be completed with a short timescale.

U = unable to decide. Further information required. Use this designation if the assessor is unable to complete any of the boxes, for any reason. Sometimes, additional information can be obtained readily (e.g. from equipment or chemicals suppliers, specialist University advisors) but sometimes detailed and prolonged enquiries might be required. E.g. is someone is moving a research programme from a research establishment overseas where health and safety legislation is very different from that in the UK.

For T and A results, the assessment is complete.

For N or U results, more work is required before the assessment can be signed off.

(14) Action Plan. Include details of any actions necessary in order to meet the requirements of the information in Section 11 'Existing measures to control the risk'. Identify someone who will be responsible for ensuring the action is taken and the date by which this should be completed. Put the date when the action has been completed in the final column.