



Face Coverings

There is evidence that 'Face Coverings' help reduce the onward transmission of the coronavirus that causes Covid-19. These Face Coverings have a different role to Face Masks defined as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), referred to as respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE). The use of Face Coverings and PPE is described in the section below.

The following Government document will be useful for when you consider what is needed in your buildings: www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19.

Those working in embedded space in Cambridge University Hospitals may be required to follow different face covering protocols as advised by the hospitals. Please see advice from your Departmental Administrator/Business and Operations Manager.

The use of Face Coverings vs PPE:

PPE

Key Points:

- Where PPE is already being used in a work activity to protect against non-COVID-19 risks, it should continue to be used.
- When managing the risk of COVID-19 in a non clinical/healthcare setting, additional PPE beyond what is usually worn is not beneficial.

Government advice describes the main steps to be taken to manage COVID-19 risk in the workplace. COVID-19 is a different type of risk to those that are normally faced in a workplace, and needs to be managed through social distancing, hygiene and other measures including Face Coverings, not through the use of PPE (except where required in the clinical/healthcare setting).

Workplaces should not encourage the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against COVID-19 outside clinical/healthcare settings or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. Specific advice for First Aid responders has been provided by the Safety Office.

Unless in a situation where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is very high, the risk assessment should reflect the fact that the role of PPE in providing additional protection is limited. However, if the risk assessment does show that PPE is required, then it must be provided free of charge to those that need it. Any PPE provided must fit properly.

Please note: some versions of FFP2 and FFP3 masks have a valve installed to increase comfort while breathing – these valves are not filtered and allow free movement of unfiltered air into the local environment. Please be mindful of this when selecting and ordering this type of PPE and include this in any risk assessment where this could be an issue.

FACE COVERINGS

Key Points:

- Wearing Face Coverings has been shown to help reduce the onward transmission of the coronavirus that causes Covid-19; evidence on how much protection is afforded to the individual wearing them is more limited, so by wearing a Face Covering you are mainly helping to protect others from exposure if you were carrying the virus.

There is an expectation that you will wear a Face Covering in all University buildings where social distancing of 2m is not possible and when moving around buildings. Face coverings are also recommended for indoor meetings and teaching sessions lasting longer than 15 minutes even where it was possible to observe the appropriate social distance. The Face Covering needs to cover the mouth and nose. Face Coverings are not a replacement for the other ways of managing risk associated with Covid-19, including social distancing, minimising time spent in contact with others and increasing hand and surface washing.

There is advice on making face-coverings at home and how to use them safely on www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering.

Some people will be medically exempt from wearing Face Coverings. Please be mindful of this before assuming somebody is not following the requirements for wearing Face Coverings in your building. Currently, Face Shields (transparent plastic covering the entire face) can be used as an alternative to cloth/paper Face Coverings and are useful if a person is reliant on lip reading and some other situations.

PROCUREMENT

Item	Information	To be initially procured centrally?
1. Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)	FFP3 and FFP2 masks from most companies are in short supply and may have an extensive lead time with unconfirmed delivery dates – supplies are currently being directed to NHS and front line staff. As per Government recommendations outlined above, these will not be required for returning to the workplace unless required for that specific work activity.	✗
2. Type IIR masks	To EN14683, these are medical face masks made up of a 4 ply construction which prevents large particles from reaching individuals or working surfaces. Type IIR Face masks include a splash resistant layer to protect against blood and other bodily fluids. Have a Bacterial Efficiency Rating of 98%.	✓
3. Type I Face coverings	These coverings made up of a 4 ply construction which prevents large particles from reaching individuals or working surfaces. Have a Bacterial Efficiency Rating of 95%.	✓
4. Gloves	Gloves are not recommended for general use throughout the working day to protect from Covid-19, unless specifically identified by risk assessment due to the nature of the work activity– hand washing is the priority.	✗
5. Hand-rub/Gel	That of recognised manufacture and efficacy – this will likely be used in the workplace for a considerable length of time and is already provided in many area.	✓
6. Cleaning Materials	These should already be supplied through your cleaning and hygiene contracts.	n/a
Note: Supplies of PPE, including RPE (FFP2 and FFP3 masks), must continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, and those in industrial settings like those exposed to dust hazards.		

If your department requires Type I face coverings, Type IIR masks and Hand-rub/Gel, please email your volume requirements for these products only to COVID19FinanceDivision@admin.cam.ac.uk. Your email will be acknowledged immediately, with the team targeting a detailed response time of three working days. If you have any queries around this process only, please email COVID19FinanceDivision@admin.cam.ac.uk.

If a risk assessment identifies the need for other RPE/PPE/cleaning materials, please raise your requirements via iProc as is the current University process. Your departmental key contact can advise who, within your department is trained and has access to iProc. Departmental key contacts for each University department can be found on https://ufs.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/key_contacts.pdf. If you have any queries around this process only, please email your departmental key contact.

We would actively discourage the purchase of any RPE/PPE/cleaning materials from sources other than current University suppliers which can be found on iProc as these organisations provide goods approved the University to internationally recognised standards. If you have any technical queries regarding your requirements for any of these items, please contact safety@admin.cam.ac.uk.