

COVID Response

January 2022

Guidance on easing of COVID-19 restrictions

Occupational Health and Safety Service
HSD213M (rev 4)



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Document Control

Version	Reviewed by:	Title	Tracking	Date
First issue	SafeSpace team	HSD213M Guidance on Easing of COVID-19 restrictions		July 2021
Rev 1	SafeSpace team	HSD213M Guidance on Easing of COVID-19 restrictions	Wording changed in Table 1 with regard to face coverings requirements References removed of specific distances required for social distancing Removal of some outdated references to local infection rates	September 2021
Rev 2	SafeSpace team	HSD213M Guidance on Easing of COVID-19 restrictions	References to face covering use in multi occupancy spaces changed from 'strongly advised' to 'expected'	December 2021
Rev 3	SafeSpace team	HSD213M Guidance on Easing of COVID-19 restrictions	Wording changed in table 1 with regard to face coverings to reflect recent changes from DfE	January 2022
Rev 4	SafeSpace team	HSD213M Guidance on Easing of COVID-19 restrictions	Wording changed in table 1 with regard to face coverings to reflect recent government announcement (19.01.22) Review of wording throughout the document to remove out dated references of old guidance	January 2022

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Risk assessment
 - 2.1 Complete a work place risk assessment
 - 2.2 University advisory precautionary behaviours/control measures
 - 2.3 Record of risk assessment
 - 2.4 Communication of control measures
 - 2.5 Monitoring and review
3. Additional support
4. References

1. Introduction

The University continues to adopt precautionary behaviours (control measures), which will be identified through risk assessment and guidance to help prevent transmissions of the COVID-19 virus within the workplace and educational settings.

We should all be mindful that staff and students may be anxious about returning to the University in relation to the COVID-19 risk. Certain control measures, albeit not prescribed by the government, will remain in place at the University and the workplace will continue to be subject to risk assessment.

2. Risk assessment

2.1 Complete a workplace risk assessment

The University (like all other workplaces), must continue to conduct risk assessments to control the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, by implementing sensible and proportionate control measures, as required in Health and Safety legislation. Appropriate control measures have been identified by Departments/Institutions throughout the pandemic, (originally through the Test 1 and 2 risk assessment checklists) that were conducted by Estates Division (Test 1) and Departments/Institutions (Test 2).

The Safety Office SafeSpace team subsequently inspected premises to assure that control measures were appropriate.

With the recognition of anxiety by some staff returning to the workplace, it is advised that any relaxation of measures are adjusted slowly. This will ensure that the impact of the changes can be monitored, anxiety minimised and controls adjusted as necessary.

2.2 Advised precautionary behaviours/control measures

Departments/Institutions should adopt the control measures outlined in Table 1. These are not extensive and can be enhanced if your Departments/Institution wishes to do so. The measures should be reviewed on an ongoing basis and control measures adapted accordingly. This guidance will be updated and recirculated as advice changes.

Table 1 – Advised control measures Hazard - COVID 19		
Control measure	University guidance	<u>When to review/adapt</u>
Face covering use	1. The use of Face Coverings is recommended in all internal multi occupancy buildings; they can be removed, but with an ongoing consideration for others who may prefer to use them; this includes if you meet with	If central University advice changes on face covering use.

	others in close proximity, and/or in smaller rooms, where it would be courteous to ask if others are comfortable for you not to wear a face covering. 2. Notices should continue to be displayed to encourage continued use of face coverings.	
Social Distancing	1. A degree of social distancing should still be considered in all workplace settings including rest/social areas. 2. Notices displayed to encourage continued commitment to social distancing.	Managing 'pinch points' and occupancy levels, together with other mitigating factors now need consideration on an ongoing basis as part of workplace risk assessments.
Hand hygiene	1. Enhanced handwashing/sanitisation should still be encouraged. 2. Supplies of hand sanitiser should continue to be placed next to entrances/exits and in communal areas. 3. Notices displayed to encourage continued hand hygiene.	Adjust supply in accordance with demand. Advise to maintain this control measure long term.
Workplace cleaning	1. Continue to ensure the workplace is cleaned regularly concentrating on hand contact points and shared surfaces e.g. door handles. 2. Ensure that your cleaning provider has a recorded cleaning schedule. 3. Continue to provide cleaning materials for DIY use in all multi-occupancy spaces and food/eating areas. 4. Display signage to encourage staff/students to clean their own areas before/after use.	Adjust supply of DIY cleaning materials in accordance with demand. Advised to have this control measure in place long term.
Ventilation assessment	1. Ensure that ventilation risk factors are known for all internal communal spaces (these should have already been identified by completing ventilation risk assessments [4.1] throughout the pandemic). 2. Ensure that in high risk areas, strict control measures are in place i.e. limiting number of occupants or limiting duration of use of an area.	Space occupancies are reviewed on an ongoing basis and in light of prevailing government/Public Health requirements and guidance.
Eating and drinking	1. In house food provision can recommence. 2. Lunch break areas can open with a degree of social distancing, consideration of suitable occupancy levels and provision of DIY cleaning materials and are subject to ongoing risk assessment.	

Individual testing	1. Follow current government requirements on Covid testing, report positives and follow requirements for self-isolation accordingly. [4.2, 4.3]	Continue for as long as advised by Government.
COVID-19 Vaccination	1. Encourage individuals returning to the workplace to take up a COVID-19 vaccination [4.4]. (Note: vaccination cannot be enforced)	The University will continually monitor and follow Government and scientific advice on vaccines/vaccine uptake and their use in risk assessment as a control measure.
Welfare provision	1. Toilets and showers should have adequate cleaning procedures and cleaning materials in place. 2. Hand Dryers may be turned on again but only in well ventilated spaces, where ventilation is poor these should remain isolated.	
First aid provision	1. First aider provision needs to be in place for the number of building occupants at all times. 2. In multi occupancy buildings, or where buildings are in close proximity, it is possible to share First Aid provision.	Each time building occupancy is increased.
Symptoms – stay at home advice	1. All staff must be instructed not to attend the workplace if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or other communicable illness.	Permanent control measure.

2.3 Record of risk assessment

The risk assessment should be recorded and signed, using your usual Department/Institution risk assessment procedure. (The standard *University risk assessment handbook* **[4.5]** template can be used).

2.4 Communication of control measures

You should ensure that once recorded, the risk assessment is made available to all staff and students. Specifically, any control measures you require staff to follow should be included in your return to work communications. We advise that return to work information is communicated to staff before they return so that they are fully informed and prepared. If control measures change, new communication should be sent out informing staff of the changes.

2.5 Monitoring and review

Workplace Risk Assessment must be ongoing to ensure that control measures remain appropriate. The University will provide updated information should the Government/Public Health requirements change in response to the changing situation.

To reduce personal anxieties, staff should be consulted to ensure that they are involved in decision-making, and are comfortable to move to reduced controls.

Ensure that your Safety Committee is informed of any significant review findings.

As the immunity of the population increases and the risk of serious illness from exposure to Covid-19 decreases, resulting in the limitation of those requiring medical intervention or hospitalisation, the direct link between the number of positive cases and the need for the strictest control measures is broken. However, Covid-19 will continue to circulate amongst our community, as with all communicable diseases. For this reason, the maintenance of proportionate control measures in the workplace and in our behaviours remain beneficial in the long-term.

Should the situation with Covid-19 change significantly, we will follow and implement Government guidance or requirements as prescribed by any legislative changes and will continue to follow local Public Health England (PHE) advice should any local outbreaks occur. This may result in the University introducing additional prescriptive requirements. As required, this guidance will be updated and circulated.

3. Additional support

If you require further advice or support, enquiries should be directed to safe_space@admin.cam.ac.uk

4. References

- 4.1 [HSD211M Ventilation Risk Assessment Tool](#)
- 4.2 [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- 4.3 [Report symptoms and get a test | University of Cambridge](#)
- 4.4 [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccines - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- 4.5 [HSD044M University Risk Assessment handbook](#)



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Safety Office
Greenwich House
Maddingley Road
Cambridge CB3 0TX

Tel: 01223 333301
Fax: 01223 330256
safety@admin.cam.ac.uk
www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/

HSD213M (rev 4)
© University of Cambridge