

# Return to Campus Process - Occupational Health and Safety

## 1. Introduction

When Covid 19 resulted in nationwide lockdown the University introduced a strict process to manage the return to campus of staff and third parties, as well as activities connected to travel within the UK and overseas. This process was proportionate to the risk and in accordance with relevant regulations at the time, with the process being amended as restrictions eased. With the introduction of the Scottish Government's latest Strategic Framework, and the aim of managing the virus rather than suppressing it, the time is right for a wholesale review of the return to campus process. On campus presence has steadily increased and continues to do so, therefore it makes sense to integrate the return with business-as-usual processes for managing health and safety by using existing processes and documents, amended as necessary to include Covid related aspects where appropriate.

It is therefore proposed to remove all of the documents from the Safety, Health and Wellbeing [webpage](#) and start afresh.

Information on the [COVID hub](#), including [Return and Resume](#) and staff and student sections will need reviewed and refreshed to remain current.

## 2. Key Objectives

The key objectives of the revised safe return to campus process are to ensure that:

- Returning staff receive a local induction on what to expect when they return to campus with relevant information on health and safety and any general changes in the workplace since they were last on campus. They will also complete the OHS Induction Part 1 and Part 2.
- Risk assessments are in place for work areas and activities to include relevant Covid control measures and the significant findings are shared with staff.
- Executive Deans and Chief Officers are assured by their Heads of Department/School/Directors that staff within their areas have received relevant health and safety information to facilitate a safe return to campus.
- The Director of Innovation and Industry Engagement and Assistant Director of Estates (Strategy and Asset Management) are assured by third parties occupying space on campus that they are aware of the University's arrangements for managing Covid and have ensured their staff are provided with this information.
- The actions in the above points are deemed a one-off exercise before reverting to the business as usual processes for induction, risk assessment, assurance reporting, auditing by SHaW and Internal Audit Service Key Controls Checklist.
- Students, visitors, contractors and others can readily access information about the University's Covid measures.

## 3. Key Points

- **A risk assessment** is still necessary to identify the risks from Covid and the control measures required to reduce transmission. A template risk assessment and return to campus assurance forms are available from [SHaW Website](#) or via [safety@strath.ac.uk](mailto:safety@strath.ac.uk)

The current template risk assessments will be revoked and replaced with a single template risk assessment that identifies key risks and control measures. Departments can then save and amend the document to reflect their risks and controls. These new

risk assessments should continue to be shared with TU colleagues as previously agreed. Details of TU web addresses are available in Appendix 1.

- **All buildings** have reverted to pre-pandemic opening arrangements as per the [Access to University Premises Policy](#). Buildings are maintained as per pre-Covid activities plus enhanced water flushing and servicing sanitiser stations.
- For any **filming activities** on campus, Departments should contact Estates on [estates.helpdesk@strath.ac.uk](mailto:estates.helpdesk@strath.ac.uk) and Media and Corporate Communications on [corporatecomms@strath.ac.uk](mailto:corporatecomms@strath.ac.uk) in addition to the Covid requirements.
- Estates Services continue to:
  - Maintain building safety services including ventilation, water, fire alarm systems and the fabric of the building as part of its programme of planned preventative maintenance. All planned maintenance activities are being performed.
  - Provide cleaning of frequently touched points and provision of hand sanitisers and cleaning materials in communal areas including central pool teaching rooms.
- There is no longer a requirement for staff to sign into buildings for occupancy monitoring purposes with the exception of areas or buildings where this is part of a designated scheme of work or Estates Services has requested this to assist with monitoring building usage.

#### 4. Return to Campus Activities

The current return to campus processes will be replaced with the following, defined by the planned activity.

##### **Activity 1: Staff and PhD Students Return to Campus (whether on a full/part time basis or a mix of remote and on campus working.)**

- HoD ensures a Covid risk assessment is in place for their department and signs off. An updated template Covid Risk Assessment is available for departments to amend. HoDs can determine the most appropriate method of communicating the risk assessment to their staff e.g. staff or student to sign onto the e-risk assessment or the significant findings are communicated to them. This should include those staff and students who have already returned to campus to ensure they have the most up to date information about the risks and control measures.
- HoD ensures risk assessments for activities conducted within the department are reviewed by the relevant manager/PI as part of the usual risk assessment review process. Recognition should be taken of the need for additional Covid controls where there is a higher risk of transmission identified. For example, research may involve close proximity work with patient volunteers who have existing health conditions and the risk assessment may stipulate face coverings are required for such work.

Note 1: Where there is collaborative work between departments and sharing of lab space, the lead department should complete the risk assessment for the activity and share the findings with the people who will be undertaking the work.

Note 2: Where occupancy levels in departments are low consideration needs to be given to lone working and security arrangements.

Note 3: Activities include research work on and off campus, office work, lab work, hosting events, training, maintenance, learning and teaching etc.

- Returning staff who have not previously completed a Return to Campus Agreement, must now undertake the OHS Induction Part 1 (Myplace) and Part 2 (word document). HoDs are reminded that it is mandatory for all staff to complete the OHS Induction every 3 years therefore staff who have already returned are likely due to refresh their training.

Note: It is mandatory for staff to complete the OHS induction when they first start and at three yearly intervals thereafter. The form has been amended to include relevant information about reducing the risk of Covid/respiratory illnesses, raising any concerns about their health with their line manager and completing the online fire safety awareness module.

- Returning staff are provided with information about changes to their workplace since they were last on campus. This could take the form of a discussion with their line manager, an information sheet, a powerpoint presentation or other suitable means of communicating this information. Content would be determined locally to reflect the arrangements. In addition, a Covid-19 University Safety Arrangements information sheet is available setting out key control measures in place and expected behaviours.
- HoD provides an update to their Executive Dean or Chief Officer confirming all staff in their department have completed the process.

Note: Return to Campus Assurance Statement – [Staff](#) is available from SHaW.

- HoD should inform Director of Estates Services and Head of Security that their department has completed the necessary process, is returning in whole or part and when it is planning to return to campus.

### **Activity 2: Staff or Students conducting Fieldwork, External Research Visits and Travel within the UK.**

- HoD ensures risk assessments are conducted and include travel, hazards at the location being visited/from the activities undertaken, Covid etc. and the assessment has been signed off by the relevant manager/PI. Staff or student to sign onto the risk assessment or the significant findings are communicated.
- Researcher/PI/PhD student engages with external institution/venue to ensure their local health and safety arrangements, including Covid-19 requirements, are understood and adhered to.

Note: Reverting to business as usual processes, where staff are travelling on a regular basis in the UK and the work activities are similar, then rather than conducting a risk assessment for each trip, the member of staff/student can conduct one risk assessment covering anticipated trips in the following 12 months which is reviewed prior to each trip and any additional risks added to the risk assessment as necessary.

### **Activity 3: Staff or Students conducting Fieldwork, Periods of Study and External Research Visits and Travel Overseas**

- HoD ensures risk assessments are conducted by the relevant manager/PI and include travel, hazards at the location being visited/from the activities undertaken, Covid controls to reflect the requirements of the country being visited etc. HoD signs off risk assessment. Staff or student to sign onto the risk assessment or the significant findings are communicated.

- Researcher/PI/PhD student engages with external institution/venue to ensure their local health and safety arrangements, including Covid-19 requirements, are understood and adhered to.

Note: If the proposed trip involves a member of staff going abroad for more than a month, then further advice on tax implications and employment rights must be sought from Finance and HR before departure. [https://www.strath.ac.uk/media/1newwebsite/covid-19/Overseas\\_working\\_guidance\\_final.pdf](https://www.strath.ac.uk/media/1newwebsite/covid-19/Overseas_working_guidance_final.pdf)

#### **Activity 4: Learning and Teaching Activities in Central Pool Teaching Rooms**

- HoD ensures risk assessments are conducted and signed off by the relevant tutors and includes hazards associated with the learning and teaching activity. A template Covid Risk Assessment is available for departments to amend.

Note: The risk assessment can combine several similar teaching activities on a programme to avoid the need for numerous risk assessments.

- HoD provides Executive Dean with assurances that risk assessments have been completed for all teaching activities planned for the semester.

#### **Activity 5: Third Parties**

- Director of IIE and Assistant Director of Estates (Strategy and Asset Management) should contact third party occupants who have not already completed a return to campus process to ascertain their anticipated return date.
- Third parties will be provided with information about the University's Covid safety arrangements to share with their staff.
- Third parties will be asked to confirm they have risk assessments in place for their work activities, including any Covid safety aspects.
- Director of IIE and Assistant Director of Estates (Strategy and Asset Management) provide their respective Chief Officers with an update confirming all third parties have completed the process.

Note: Return to Campus Assurance Statement – [Third Parties](#) is available from SHaW.

- Director of IIE and Assistant Director of Estates (Strategy and Asset Management) should inform Director of Estates Services and Head of Security with the names of third party occupants who have completed the necessary process and when they are planning to return to campus.

## Appendix 1

### Email to Heads of Department /School from Senior Officers regarding the sharing of Risk Assessments with the TU's September 2021

Dear Head of Department / School,

In support of the Scottish Government guidance for Covid-19, the University has a responsibility to ensure we consult with Trade Unions (TU's) on the measures we are taking to minimise the risk of transmission of Covid-19.

To this end we have agreed to inform TU appointed Health and Safety Representatives about new risk assessments **before** new work activities commence or where risk assessments have been updated.

To facilitate this, we have established three separate email accounts for each of the TU's where they can be informed of any new or updated risk assessments on the e-Risk system. You should use the template email below to provide details of the relevant risk assessment reference numbers and provide details of how comments can be fed back.

As a general guide risk assessments for:

- Operational and technical staff should be sent to [UNITE-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk](mailto:UNITE-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk)
- Academic professional staff to [UCU-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk](mailto:UCU-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk)
- Administrative and professional staff (APS) to [UNISON-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk](mailto:UNISON-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk) (for grades 3-6) and [UCU-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk](mailto:UCU-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk) (for Grade 6 and above)
- the email should also be cc'd to [USCO-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk](mailto:USCO-riskassessments@strath.ac.uk) to assist with monitoring the number of notifications to TU colleagues.

Can I also take this opportunity to remind you that risk assessments on the E-Risk system should be made available so that they can be viewed by all relevant staff.

Should you have any questions please contact Pamela Loughlin, Acting Head of Safety, Health and Wellbeing or for any e-Risk system queries please contact [safety@strath.ac.uk](mailto:safety@strath.ac.uk).

Regards

Executive Dean / Chief Officer

## TEMPLATE EMAIL

Dear Trade Union Colleagues,

As part of the University's efforts to consult with Trade Unions on health and safety matters, please be advised that the following e-Risk Assessments have recently been created or updated for our department and are open for you to view. If there are any comments please feel free to feedback to the person conducting the risk assessment and copy in our Department Safety Co-ordinator by [insert date when comments should be received].

e-Risk Nos. [insert reference number]

Regards

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