Guidance for Returning to work for Teaching SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19)
1. Introduction

1.1 This document outlines the University high level policy for enabling research staff to operate in teaching spaces general areas following the removal of specific Covid controls justified by the reduction in covid risk due to ongoing vaccinations programs. The universities current covid risk assessment can be found on the health and safety covid resources page.

1.2 This document complements existing government guidelines and requirements.

1.3 In the event that you develop symptoms of Covid-19 or test positive you must self isolate, inform your line manager and complete the UoS Covid reporting form.

1.4 As of the 16th of August 2021 close contacts of covid positive persons are not required to self isolate if they are under 18 or have been double vaccinated, but should arrange to take a PCR test. If you do not meet this criteria then you must self isolate and report as described in section 1.3 above.

1.5 Staff should wash their hands regularly with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.

1.6 Anyone traveling to the UK must ensure that they are following the required testing and or quarantine arrangements for new arrivals as determined by the covid status of their country of origin and or regions they have travelled through.

1.7 Individuals that have been informed by a medical professional that they are unlikely to be protected by the vaccine due to not producing relevant antibodies should contact their line manager and HR about reasonable adjustments and may require an occupational health referral.

1.8 It is strongly recommended that any member of the University of Sussex that is able to be vaccinated against covid-19 does so. Line managers and supervisors should be flexible where possible to enable staff to attend vaccination appointments when required.

1.9 Tissues used due to a sneeze or cough should be covered with a tissue and disposed of immediately into a standard waste bin.

2. Testing

2.1 All staff and students attending campus should take an LFD (lateral flow device) test at least once a week. Ideally 2 tests would be taken weekly 3 days apart. Where this is not practical 1 test is acceptable.
- LFD tests are available via the following routes
- From the UoS run test centre (when operational)
- From on campus home testing kits distribution points
- From the on campus pharmacy
- Direct home delivery from UK gov

2.2 LFD tests should be performed regardless of if an individual has been vaccinated. The only group that should note perform regular LFD tests are individuals that have had a confirmed
case of covid within 90 days of the test.

2.3 PCR (polymerase chain reaction,) testing should be performed by individuals with symptoms, individuals that have requested a PCR test as a result of a positive LFD or who have been instructed to take a PCR test by the NHS. In this case an individual should self isolate unless they have a negative PCR test after the initial LFD test. PCR tests can be ordered here

3. Face Coverings

3.1 Face coverings are not mandated in University of Sussex operated buildings. With the exception of the Clinical Imaging Sciences Centre due to it being a shared NHS facility and the presence of patients.

3.2 Face coverings are recommended in large gatherings where it is not possible to distance yourself from other persons. It is strongly recommended that staff and students wear one but is not mandated and would not be grounds for asking an individual to leave a teaching session unless they were otherwise unwell.

3.3 Buildings with high footfall will have signs stating that at times of high occupancy the university expects and recommends that face coverings are worn.

4. Hand sanitiser

4.1 Hand sanitiser gels are available in every building for both students and staff to use. This measure has been retained on the grounds of good practice with regards to Covid and other disease control.

5. Room Selection and Ventilation

5.1 Ahead of return to campus an assessment has been carried out of spaces and their ventilation rate by SEF. This included an assessment of mechanical ventilation systems, identifying the room that is determined to have the lowest number of air changes (discounting cupboards, plant rooms and other less accessible areas) and then assessing the number of air changes in this space. The lowest ventilation rate for each building can be found here. Occupied offices and teaching space should therefore have a rate greater than the rate specified in the ventilation paper.

5.2 Should you have concerns about a specific room a form to query the ventilation rate within specific places is available here and should be completed by the member of staff with concerns having discussed with their line manager. This form is for use with spaces that have 7 or more occupants.

5.3 A review of the area will cause on of the following to occur

- Information will be provided on the ventilation system
- A check may be carried out on the windows and their ability to be opened
- The installation of a CO2 monitor to monitor the ventilation rate
- Setting a room occupancy limit
- The room may be removed from use
5.4 All mechanical ventilation systems that are able to bring in outside air have been set to bring the maximum amount of external air into the building. A majority of systems perform any heat reclamation by running warm air leaving the building through pipes that run alongside cold air coming in so as to warm incoming air. This method enables the retention of heat without recycling any particles into the building and is demonstrated in figure 1 below.

Figure 1

5.4 Ventilation system settings will be reviewed in November 2021. If additional heating is required it is important to note that convection heaters should not be used on the basis of fire safety. Oil filled radiators should be used in areas where additional warmth is required, an example of this is shown in figure 2 below.

Figure 2

6. Meeting rooms and other Open Plan Spaces (including offices)
6.1 Guidance on offices and meeting spaces can be found here.

7. Escalation for non-compliance within General Teaching Space
7.1 Students, staff and any other person displaying symptoms or who is currently required to isolate due to travel must not attend in person classes.

7.2 In the hopefully rare case where members of the University are not adhering to the need to self isolate, please follow this escalation process.

When considering another person’s health consider the primary symptoms of Covid-19 which are:

- A High temperature
- A continuous cough, with an unknown cause
- A loss or change to your sense of taste and smell

Of these only the cough is likely to be visible to others. While temperature can be assessed by seeing if someone is warm to the touch this is not recommended in a teaching or workplace setting. An individual shivering is not in itself an indication of a temperature.

Other symptoms of cold, flu or hay fever such as red eyes, sneezing and a runny nose are not typically symptoms of Covid-19.

7.3 If the student or member of staff is displaying potential symptoms, staff should ask them to leave the session.

7.4 In the hopefully rare occasions where an individual with a persistent cough is present, and who refuses to leave the teaching session, the session can be ended on safety grounds.

7.5 Scenarios

Below are some possible scenarios and guidance on what to do, this won’t cover all eventualities but the concepts can be applied in similar circumstances.

**Scenario 1 I think someone is unwell**

Step 1 The only visible primary symptom of Covid-19 is a new persistent cough. In this context a new cough means one that is not related to an existing condition for instance asthma or damage caused by smoking. It is not typically possible to tell if someone has an elevated temperature by looking at them. It is not recommended to touch or otherwise try to determine if someone is running a temperature. Shivering or being flushed may be caused by nervousness or simply being cold.

Step 2 If someone has other symptoms for instance a runny nose or a sneeze, these are not typically associated with Covid-19.

Step 3 Where someone has an obvious continual cough that is not linked to a known cause like asthma or choking on a drink, ask the student to leave the session.

Step 4 If the student will not leave the session and other options have been exhausted, then it is advisable to close the activity. Explain the reasons to the class and make a
judgement if it is best for you to leave or for the class to leave and join from an online system. A date to reschedule the class must be arranged.

**Scenario 2 I am aware that someone should be self-isolating**

**Action**

It is not usual for this information to be available. However if you have concerns you can discuss with the student if they should be self-isolating. For more information on when people should self-isolate and when to leave self-isolation please see the guidance below.

- [NHS guidance](#)
- Guidance from the [University on self-isolations](#) is available on the Health & Safety Covid-19 Resources page.
- [Travel isolations and quarantine](#)

It is important that anyone with symptoms or who has tested positive completes the covid reporting form. Details of where to find this appear below.

If you feel unwell or have been instructed to self-isolate, please leave immediately and report your symptoms on the University Reporting Tool at:

www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/specialist/covid19symptoms