

Covid-19 Return to Work Health & Safety Guidance



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1. Introduction

Edinburgh Napier University Approach

This guidance document applies to all staff, students, visitors and contractors on all Edinburgh Napier properties. Please note this document will be updated in consultation and agreement from University workstreams, Public Health and Government Guidance.

To ensure you have the most up to date copy it can be viewed on the Health and Safety [website](#).

The safety and wellbeing of our Edinburgh Napier staff and students is our priority when planning for the return to campus. ULT have set up return to work Campus Workstreams which will look at how we can facilitate a safe return to all University spaces. The project has been organised into 10 workstreams, along with headline responsibilities for delivery. Further detail in relation to specific deliverables sits at the workstream level.

- Ensure a successful transition back onto campus, prioritising the health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff, visitors, and the wider community, while optimising learning & teaching, research, commercial income and student experience
- Maximise the positive legacy of the transition, through a learning approach, which feeds forward to learn, build upon and inform future practice

This document and associated guidance has been prepared as part of the University's return to campus framework.

It lays out the expected behaviours of everyone in relation to following the rules around social distancing and general behaviours and good practices, and our approach to the key elements of health and safety on campus.

It is essential that we establish safe procedures for those returning to campus in order to protect each other and our families.

Public Health and Government guidelines focus on maintaining social distancing measures, but this will also serve to provide additional guidelines aimed at minimising the spread of the coronavirus on campus.

There will be a phased approach to the return to campus and this will not start until we are assured it is safe to do so.

We recognise that staff and students will have circumstances that need to be considered and the planning process will take into account individual needs so we can ensure everyone is safe and able to return to campus when the time is right.

For the return to campus to be safe and sustainable, we must all play our part.

The University is committed to:

- ✓ Placing the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff at the heart of everything we do and identifying and making available a range of support, advice and information.
- ✓ Adhering to the Public Health and Government's guidance on the containment and management of COVID-19 by developing and putting in place plans at University level and providing guidance to be put in place by our Schools and Services.
- ✓ Communicating, in a timely way, advice and information to make sure that our staff and students are fully informed and aware of the latest news and what it means for them.
- ✓ Openly welcome feedback and suggestions from our staff and students, and act on these as appropriate to ensure a safe and positive return to campus for all.
- ✓ Living the University values and behaviours and operating with fairness and transparency in all that we do.

University Covid-19 Risk Assessment

The current over-arching University Covid-19 Risk Assessment has been developed in consultation with the University Return to Campus Life Workstreams, including our trade unions and staff representatives. We will update with University safe systems of work/procedures in line with current COVID-19 Public Health and government guidelines.

In addition, the Health & Safety team are working with schools/services to review all their activities and risk assessments to ensure that they are updated with any additional measures that require to be implemented as a result of the COVID-19 risk.

Prior to reopening, any work areas or labs that have been closed due to lockdown will be checked and assessed before staff can return e.g. checking ventilation systems, undertaking maintenance checks, arranging a deep clean and increase ventilation by opening windows.

Any enquiries or questions are to be directed to [the Health and Safety team](#) who will be more than happy to help.

Staff should:

- ✓ Take good care of their health and wellbeing and access as needed the range of support available.
- ✓ Understand and put in place the university's guidance on containment and management of COVID-19, through applying the University and school/service plans.
- ✓ Ensure that they keep themselves up to date with the advice and information shared with them by the University and their line manager, to make sure they are fully informed and aware of the latest news and what it means for them.
- ✓ Discuss with their line manager any support and development needs, and proactively access opportunities that will help them to achieve their full potential and adapt to a 'new normal' following the return to campus.

[University Coronavirus updates](#)

2. Before returning to work

Where you can, still work from home

- we will be slowly phasing people back into work
- please, only come in when you have been asked to
- you must have prior approval from your Dean/Director

This means we can gradually start to increase the number of people on site as restrictions ease and when we are sure that the current controls are functioning correctly.

You must also familiarise yourself with the over arching Covid-19 Return to Work Risk Assessment and your school/service risk assessments.

Please do not attempt to enter the building out with these times unless you have prior authorisation

Health Check

Before coming into work do a “conscious check” on both your own and your family’s health and check you are feeling well.

Do not come to work if you or anyone you live with has:

- a high temperature (above 37.8°C),
- a new continuous cough
- or a loss, or change, in sense of taste or smell

If you or others in your household do not feel well or if there is any doubt, please stay at home and let your Line Manager know you are unwell.

You must not attend work and self-isolate in accordance with the Government's [guidance](#).

Any member of staff who displays the following symptoms at work must be sent home immediately and should engage with the [Test & Protect Service](#) and arrange to have a test to see if they have COVID-19.

- If you show symptoms: stay home for 10 days from the onset of symptoms
- If someone in your household shows symptoms: stay at home for 14 days from the onset of their symptoms
- You should also request a test for COVID-19 if you are showing symptoms.

In the first instance all staff should go to www.nhsinform.scot where they can book a test online and also find further information. Staff can also book a test by calling 0800 028 2816.

In addition, if you require assistance with www.nhsinform.scot you can call 0300 303 2713 for assistance in booking a test.

If you need support to isolate and can't get this from friends, family or online, the National Assistance Helpline is there to help and can be reached on 0800 111 4000.

Test & Protect : Protect Scotland app – a free mobile app from NHS Scotland will alert you if you have been in close contact with another app user who tests positive for coronavirus – [further details / download app](#)

3. Travelling to Work

Wherever possible, try to travel to work alone or with members of your household and walk or cycle if you can. (Note - shower facilities not currently available)

Public Transport

If you do need to take public transport try to travel at off-peak times, wear a face covering as required by government guidance and make sure you wash your hands at the start and end of your journey. (Transport Scotland - [advice on how to travel safely](#))

Transport Scotland

[advice on how to travel safely](#)

Use of own vehicle

Car parks are open. As far as possible employees should be using their own car. The use of hire vehicles is discouraged.

4. Access/egress from the building

Only main entrances to buildings will be open with any secondary entrance/exits remaining locked (please note these doors will unlock on the activation of the fire alarm). By adopting this control it will ensure that we do not have unauthorised persons on the premises but it will also reduce the number of touch points that could then become infected.

Whilst people will have washed their hands before leaving home it is important to note that all entrances have sanitising stations. **On entering a building you must sanitise before you proceed any further.**

As a matter of etiquette and courtesy please adopt a universal system of stepping back and allowing people to leave buildings before anyone enters, this will ensure we maintain social distancing at entrances.

5. Social distancing

Viruses, such as coronaviruses, travel in droplets expelled from the original host via sneezing, coughing, or just speaking. Unlike bacteria, viruses do not possess any metabolic machinery themselves. In other words, viruses can only survive for a limited time outside of the host and need to get to the next host quickly. If a potential host is standing within the range of travel by the virus-containing droplets, then they have a high probability of catching the droplets and becoming infected.

We know that social distancing will need to be in place for a significant period of time and we are looking at how we can ensure we adhere to this requirement and other measures set out in the Government guidelines.

At the University you will see a number of ways we have facilitated social distancing e.g. floor markings, one-way systems.

Remember:

Social distancing applies to all parts of the University not just the places where most people spend most of their time, but also entrances and exits, break rooms, catering facilities, welfare facilities and similar settings. These are often the most challenging areas to maintain social distancing so please keep this in mind.

6. Face coverings

Face coverings

People must by law wear a face covering in shops, on public transport and public transport premises such as railway and bus stations and airports, and in certain other indoor public places, such as libraries and reading rooms.

Face coverings must be worn on campus, accommodation, communal areas and all other teaching areas. Keep your face covering on until you are seated at your office desk or in the teaching space. Always maintain social distancing and turn up for class on time to reduce queuing. Also if you do not require to be in the campus you are encouraged to leave as soon as the class has finished.

What is a face covering?

- These can be scarfs, bandanas, Buff® etc., alternatively you can make face coverings at home.
- Face shields may be used, but only if they are worn in addition to a face covering underneath, as the evidence shows that they do not provide adequate protection.
- The key thing is it should cover the mouth and nose but not inhibit your ability to breathe freely in any way.
- It is essential you wash or sanitise your hands before and after putting it on.

Wearing a face covering must not be considered an alternative to social distancing, you must maintain social distancing wherever possible.

[How to safely wear and take off a face covering](#)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment (PPE) protects the user against health or safety risks at work. [Face coverings are not PPE](#) as they do not protect people from work-related hazardous substances.

Please note that you are not required to wear any additional PPE due to COVID-19 (hand washing and social distancing are the most effective ways to limit the spread of the virus), only where the risk assessment indicates that PPE is required e.g. first aiders and potential Covid-19 decontamination.

The wearing of gloves in communal areas is not recommended. Employees should remember gloves can become contaminated and this contamination can be passed to other shared surfaces and your face. Regular hand washing is the most effective way to limit the spread of infection.

Surgical masks or respirators should continue to be reserved for those who need them to protect against risks in their workplace, such as health and care workers, or essential lab work where wearing this type of mask is specified in the relevant COSHH/Risk Assessment.

7. Hygiene

Handwashing

The coronavirus, which causes COVID-19, is an enveloped virus. Once the viral envelope is damaged or destroyed, the virus will become inactive.

Hand washing with soap and water for 20 seconds is very effective against the coronavirus as the detergent can inactivate the COVID-19 by dissolving its lipid layer.

You need to wash your hands:

- ✓ When you arrive at work and when you leave to go home
- ✓ When you leave your workstation
- ✓ Before and after any breaks
- ✓ Before and after putting a face covering on
- ✓ After touching shared surfaces e.g. handrails, light switches, printers, shared equipment

- ✓ Wash your hands regularly throughout the day for at least 20 seconds
- ✓ Dry hands well to avoid skin irritation

- ✓ Avoid touching your face
- ✓ If you need to touch your face you should wash or sanitise your hands first

Hand sanitising

- There are frequent hand sanitising stations at the entrance and around the campus - please ensure that you use them and handwashing facilities with soap and water frequently.
- If hand washing facilities are not available, you can use hand sanitiser.
- If you pass a hand sanitiser point on site, please use it.
- Ensure that you allow the sanitiser to dry fully before touching any surfaces.

8. Health & Wellbeing

The outbreak has been a worrying time for everyone and it is important that everyone feels supported and listened to. It is crucial that their wellbeing is being looked after while working.

By maintaining regular contact arrangements, staff will have the opportunity to share any concerns or anxieties they may have and managers will be able to identify early on if someone is struggling with work.

Support available:

[Health & Wellbeing Covid-19 Support](#) | [Mental Health & Wellbeing](#) | [Return to Campus Life](#)

9. Safety and security

Due to the reduced number of people working on campus, and for your safety and security, we are introducing a number of additional layers of safety and security. Those returning to campus must wear and have visible their staff ID cards. You may require your ID card to access certain parts of the building.

Lone working

Due to the current situation and reduced numbers of staff within the University, lone working may become more prevalent. Please see [Working Alone Policy](#).

10. First aid

We will have a limited number of first aiders available - if you need help in an emergency please call 4444 and assistance will be arranged.

If you need help in an emergency, please call 4444

Please remember that first aiders must still comply with social distancing measures so you may be given guidance from a first aider on how to treat yourself while they watch.

PPE has been made available to first aiders who need to give hands-on first aid treatment. Please get in touch with the Health & Safety team if you have any questions.

11. Fire evacuation

If the fire alarm sounds, evacuate the building using the nearest available exit (one-way systems will cease to operate) following, where possible, the rules around social distancing. Once outside social distancing should be maintained.

12. Cleaning procedure

Cleaning and washing hands regularly are the principal hygiene controls for the COVID-19 virus.

As part of the phased re-opening of buildings there will be a cleaning procedure in place to ensure that the areas being re-opened are adequately cleaned. There will also be ongoing cleaning of these buildings with a focus on the common and other high volume/high touch areas. **To aid the cleaning process a clear desk policy will apply in all workspaces.**

In addition, hand sanitisers will be placed at the entrances to buildings and in common spaces and key points around the building. These will form the first point of hygiene control in each building.

Sanitising wipes will be available across work areas with the occupants taking responsibility to use and dispose of the wipes as directed.

The primary control for personal hygiene is that all building occupants regularly wash their hands in line with the guidance issued through Public Health Scotland.

13. Catering facilities

We are working to find a safe way to re-open catering facilities. This might mean only a take-away service to begin with.

- Try to stagger meal breaks and rest breaks with other team members, this may require communication and co-operation with other teams within the building.
- Wash/cleanse hands thoroughly before and after a meal break.

14. Communal kitchens

Many of our buildings have communal kitchens as part of the welfare facilities for staff. In the main these are all small areas. As a consequence of this communal kitchen use will be restricted to one person at a time. Where the room is occupied a maximum of one person is able to wait on the opposite side of the space/corridor to the kitchen door and where possible maintain social distancing.

Kitchen use will be restricted to one person at a time.

- Avoid touching your face unless you have washed or sanitised your hands
- Clean before and after use of the kitchen
- Keep food and drink in your own sealed containers
- Don't share food and drink with others
- Don't share plates, mugs, glasses and cutlery
- Clean and remove all items - do not leave on draining board

15. Offices

Many staff work in open plan offices or offices with more than one occupant.

A reduction in the number of staff in the office at any one time is essential. This can be achieved by considering the layout of the office and then forming staff teams with rotas being developed.

If there is more than one person using a room:

- Work back-to-back, or side-by-side
- Avoid face-to-face working if possible
- Weather permitting open windows for added ventilation
- Wipe down shared surfaces at the start and end of the day
- Ensure that you clear your own desk and wipe down at end of the day
- Desk fans not to be used

16. Libraries

Follow local campus Information Services procedures and guidance. Face coverings must be worn in libraries and reading rooms.

17. iPoints

The iPoints will be available on campus where information and assistance is required. Please ensure that you maintain social distancing 2 metre, when waiting in a queue and wear a face covering.

18. Teaching rooms

All teaching rooms and spaces have been assessed, do not exceed the capacities of the room and ensure that you keep seated and please do not raise your voice or shout as this could spread droplets. The rooms are set up with 2 metre distancing and must not be moved or altered.

19. Laboratories, workshops, research areas

Specific guidance and direction will be given to staff prior to using these areas.

Please refer to guidance from the [Research & Innovation Office](#).

20. Sports facilities

This is currently under discussion.

21. Ventilation

All our ventilation systems are in compliance with current requirements for maintenance and servicing and are being managed by Property & Facilities.

22. Signage

Floor markings, directional signage and information signs will be in place.

Please respect each other and follow good manners and behaviour and always be courteous where access is restricted e.g. narrow corridors and stairs.

23. Corridors, stairs and lifts

Corridors and stairs

A one-way system will be implemented where possible. There will be floor markings and signage to guide you throughout the building. Where queues are likely to form, it is essential that we respect and do not invade each other's personal space and maintain our distance.

Lifts

Please follow signage.

24. Doors

To aid ventilation, office doors should be left open where possible, **except where it is a designated fire door** and windows should be opened. You **must not wedge fire doors open** as they serve a critical function. Fire doors will remain operational as per normal (pre COVID-19) circumstances. Many of the fire doors in our corridors have magnetic locks on the back to hold them open and automatically close in the event of a fire.

25. Further Information

General information on Covid-19

[NHS Inform](#)

[Health and Safety Executive](#)

[Scottish Government](#)

[Universities UK](#)

Face coverings

[Scottish Government](#)

[World Health Organisation](#)

Social distancing

[Scottish Government](#)

Test & Protect

[Protect Scotland app](#)

Travel

[Scottish Government](#)

[Transport Scotland](#)

Handwashing

[Video](#)

Guidance for Universities

[Scottish Government](#)

Guidance for labs and research facilities

[Scottish Government](#)

Health & Safety Team

[website](#)