

Easing restrictions in the Department of Engineering

The University has updated its safety guidance (<https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/policy-guidance/miscellaneous/hsd213m-guidance-easing-covid-19-restrictions>) so that we can ease restrictions in the Department of Engineering.

Current COVID measures and access controls will remain in place until Monday 20 September 2021 when:

- we will return to normal pre-COVID access arrangements, which means that staff and students can gain access during normal hours without having to seek permission
- while safety risk assessments will continue to be necessary, the stance with regard to COVID measures will largely shift from prescriptive measures to precautionary advice
- staff and students will have to exercise good personal judgement and courtesy towards others with regard to face coverings, social distancing and sanitising hands, surfaces, etc.

This shift *enables* a return to work on premises but must not be mistaken for an *instruction* to work on premises. A return to working on premises must be discussed with your Head of Division, Head of Group, academic leader, manager or supervisor as appropriate. This is part of the ongoing dialogue about new ways of working and the development of charters. Leaders and their teams must discuss and agree their patterns of work and how they will evolve over coming weeks.

The following extract from the University document presents the basic measures common to all staff and students:

Face coverings - The use of face coverings is strongly 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 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.

In addition, you should consider continuing to wear face coverings if:

- a) Other mitigating factors such as a degree of social distancing (high density areas/crowds) or adequate ventilation is compromised.
- b) When moving around buildings/rooms in multiple occupation.
- c) Where your own risk assessment identifies you should wear appropriate PPE (providing additional personal protection to you as well as to others)
- d) Notices displayed to encourage continued use of face coverings.

Social distancing - A degree of social distancing will need to be considered in all workplace settings including rest/social areas with notices displayed to encourage continued commitment to social distancing.

Hand hygiene - Enhanced handwashing/sanitisation still to be encouraged with supplies of hand sanitiser placed next to entrances/exits and in communal areas and notices displayed to encourage continued hand hygiene.

Safety risk assessments for ventilation will continue to apply when people need to meet, work and study in rooms and laboratories, but will be made using an updated basic tool (<https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/policy-guidance/miscellaneous/hsd211m-ventilation-risk-assessment-tool>). The Silver Team will work with local coordinators to assess the safe occupancy of rooms and notices will be updated. The Silver Team will make safety risk assessments of any specific

area or activity using <https://airborne.cam/> and other resources, if they do not yield to analysis using only the basic tool. It is likely that the limiting factor for the number of people in a shared space will be allowing room for people to social distance when they wish. Staff and students will be trusted to pay heed to these safety notices.

Two examples are given below as illustrations of typical outcomes from using the new basic tool.

Example 1. A meeting of one hour or less will be deemed low risk if all the following conditions are met:

- hand sanitiser or a washing facility is available at the entrance to the room with a poster or notice reminding people to sanitise/wash their hands
- the attendees remain separated by one metre or more
- fresh air enters the room from open doors/windows or mechanical ventilation
- the room is left empty for 10 minutes prior to occupation, receiving fresh air from open doors, windows or mechanical ventilation
- the activity entails lecturing, training, talking or eating rather than high aerosol generating activities such as loud talking or aerobic exercise.

Example 2. An indefinite meeting will be considered low risk if all of the above conditions are met providing at least one of the following conditions is also met:

- the attendees wear face coverings
- the air in the room is known to change ten times every hour (verified by the Silver Team).

When people share space in office, labs, meetings or lectures, it will be very important to make sure that everyone is sensitive to others and make reasonable accommodations in following the recommendations above. Heads of Division, Heads of Group, academic leaders, managers and supervisors will need to facilitate dialogue when needed. Everyone should assume that people need space in a meeting and face coverings should be worn, until they have checked the safety notices and checked with each other to agree on how to proceed. Lecturers will need to guide students, when they attend lectures and other teaching events, particularly to avoid unnecessary clustering or crowding, and will be provided with specific guidance in due course.

If any staff or students have concerns about the arrangements or their implementation, then they should first raise the issue with their manager or supervisor, but are welcome to contact the Silver Team (silver-team@eng.cam.ac.uk) if a resolution cannot be found.

Members of staff in need of HR support or advice on wellbeing should contact:

- research-office@eng.cam.ac.uk if they are a postdoctoral researcher or visitor
- hr-office@eng.cam.ac.uk if they are a member of any other staff category.

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