**COVID-19 – RETURN TO ONSITE WORKING**

**POLICY**

1. **PURPOSE OF POLICY**

This policy is written to provide all staff, workers and contractors in Somerville College with information and requirements in relation to returning to work during the current coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic. This policy will be regularly reviewed to take account of any updated guidance from Government, Public Health England (PHE), the University, and Conference of Colleges. It also takes into account the legal requirements contained in the Coronavirus Act (2020) and The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020.

This policy applies to all those who work on-site at Somerville College or properties owned and maintained by the College, such as off-site student accommodation. It does not apply to properties that are commercially let. This policy applies to Academic and Support staff, workers and contractors who are engaged to work on-site.

1. **PLANNING**

In considering the return to work, we will consider the following three tests:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Is it essential?** |  | **Is it safe?** |  | **Is it mutually agreed?** |
| If our people can continue to work from home, we’ll consider continuing this for as long as possible.  Operational activities may need an on-site presence, and we recognise that arrangements will need to be different in term-time compared to vacations, so we will carefully review our arrangements over the coming weeks and months. |  | We have a duty of care to identify and manage risks to ensure the workplace is sufficiently safe to return to. We aim to have a gradual return to work to test measures in practice and ensure they work. |  | It is vital to ensure a clear dialogue between us and our people so concerns can be raised and individual needs taken into account.  We will have clear guidance and processes to support this. |

The expectation is that teams will, using this document as a guide, lead a collaborative local effort to complete appropriate risk assessments and to develop a work plan to allow them to meet the three tests. This document provides a guide, and support will also be provided from the Return to Work planning project, Somerville Management Team, Peninsula Health & Safety, Estates Services and Human Resources, as needed.

Heads of Departments will confirm that they have met these three tests for their areas, by having a completed risk assessment, induction plan and any department-specific training documentation in place. The Treasurer and Domestic Bursar will sign-off on these.

Once the three tests have been satisfied, on-site activity will need to build up gradually, with regular reviews to ensure that the risk assessments and work plans are fit for purpose. There will be capacity restrictions which limit the number of people who can access buildings / offices at any one time and, in line with government guidance, only work activities that cannot be undertaken remotely may resume on-site.

We recognise that preparing to return to on-site working will involve great complexity; we expect team managers and supervisors to work collaboratively across teams, to ensure that the safety of our people remains our highest priority, and that the plans delivered are fit for purpose.

## 

## **2.1 Building Risk Assessment / Work Plan**

In order to demonstrate that the two tests outlined above have been met, Heads of Department must confirm that a risk assessment has been conducted, and ensure there is a suitable work plan in place to capture the outcome of their risk assessment.

**The risk assessment template in should be used for this purpose.** The template is based on the checklist outlined in the government’s sector guidance[[1]](#footnote-1). Finalised departmental risk assessments will be held centrally, for all HoD to refer to.

In line with the government’s guidance, the aim of the risk assessment is to do everything reasonably practicable to minimise the risks, recognising we cannot completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19 whilst people are working in and around our buildings; it will also not always be possible to keep a distance of 2m in certain spaces. In all cases a [hierarchy of control](#_Hierarchy_of_Control) will be considered.

We will share risk assessments and plans with staff, so that they understand the reasoning behind the identified risks and control measures. We welcome collaborative input to these documents, as this is the best way to achieve workable solutions. The usual method for consultation is through the Support Staff Liaison Group (SSLG); however, if there are not enough members to be quorate (because, for example, they are furloughed), the College Bronze Group will be asked to review, cascade and gather feedback.

We will ensure that disabled staff are consulted to ensure their particular needs are not inadvertently overlooked, at the earliest opportunity.

The building work plan should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are (a) effective, (b) appropriate to the number of work activities that are authorised and (c) reflect the UK government’s guidance at the time of review. During the initial course of the project, the Project Lead will update the Bronze Group and the Return to Work project group on updates to the guidance which may affect local work plans, and departmental plans should be updated accordingly. After the close of the initial project phase (30 September 2020), departmental managers will be responsible for reviewing and updating their local plans.

## **Hierarchy of Control**

The basis of all working plans will be to reduce COVID-19 transmission between individuals by applying the requirements and guidance set out by the UK Government. The following hierarchy of control must be applied:

1. Every possible step must be taken to facilitate working from home, in line with the College’s plans and guidance for Return to On-Site Working. This may include putting in place reasonable adjustments for disabled staff.
2. Individuals must not work on-site, if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
3. Individuals must not work on-site if they or anyone else in their household is self-isolating.
4. Individuals must not work on-site if they are a Clinically Extremely Vulnerable person, or if a risk assessment identifies that an individual is at an increased risk that cannot be appropriately mitigated by other means.
5. The Public Health England guidelines[2] on social distancing must be followed, including, where possible, maintaining a 2-metre distance from others. Specifically:
   1. Individuals must be regularly reminded to maintain good personal hygiene e.g. washing hands with soap and water or hand sanitiser often, for at least 20 seconds.
   2. Cleaning regimes must be enhanced to ensure contact points that are touched regularly are periodically cleaned and procedures are in place to reasonably clean down areas or surfaces if an individual who has been in work reports symptoms.
   3. Work activities should be planned to reduce mixing of people to make sure that, as far as possible, an individual only meets a limited number of other people whilst in the workplace, to reduce cross-infection.
   4. Where the 2m distance cannot be maintained, especially for periods longer than 15mins, then additional measures will be adopted, such as:
      1. Keeping the activity time involved as short as possible
      2. Using screens or barriers to separate people from each other
      3. Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face) whenever possible
      4. Reducing the number of people each person has contact with by using “fixed teams or partnering” (so each person works with only a few others)
      5. Increasing the frequency of hand washing and surface cleaning in that localised area.
   5. If after the above measures have been fully assessed, there is still considered to be a residual risk, then the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) will be adopted.

## **2.3 Process plan**

The steps required in order to complete the risk assessment/work plan will vary for each building. Some activities should proceed in parallel e.g. planning of space and ventilation checks (as they will combine to set maximum occupancies for rooms and areas), and occupancy levels along with results from consulting with staff should feed into the risk assessment. Hence these steps should run concurrently. The University’s Return to On-Site Working pilot project has revealed that it is likely to take approximately 10 – 20 working days for all of the necessary steps to be completed suitably, and departments should account for those timescales in their planning.

## **2.4 Water Systems**

The Maintenance and Estates Department will oversee the necessary building and infrastructure checks. This may include things such as water systems, heating and ventilation systems, and natural ventilation such as windows. treatment documentation should be recorded and kept as evidence that flushing has been carried out.

Due to building closures, systems will require testing to ensure that they are in working order. Depending on the age of the systems, this may take time. The Estates department will maintain their usual documentation of these processes.

## **2.5 Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Systems**

The Maintenance and Estates Department will be able to support, to help decide how building systems should be operated based on both process demands and occupancy when re-opening. Ventilation systems may impact on the occupancy levels of rooms therefore it is important to consider this alongside social distancing measures. A record of ventilation systems for areas should be completed as part of the assessment for occupation of spaces.

## **2.6 Building Checklist**

The Building Checklist should be completed by the Maintenance and Estates Department.

Some facilities/building management activities may have been put on hold during the closure period e.g. lift insurance and fire alarm inspections. The Estates and Maintenance Department will check and co-ordinate records so that catch-up testing can be prioritised for building opening, where it has lapsed. However, there may also be other systems that require testing, such as emergency lighting and sprinkler systems.

# **Preparing and Supporting our People**

## **3.1 Planning for Staff Return to On-Site Working**

We consider the safety, mental health and wellbeing of all staff to be of paramount importance, and must be the first consideration when planning a return to on-site working. Plans should take account of the fact that the impact of working from home or returning to working on-site will be different for different people.

Where essential on-site work has been identified, the required staff member(s) should be contacted by their line manager and invited to discuss their personal circumstances (including caring responsibilities, whether they or a member of their household is in a clinically vulnerable group, if they consider themselves to be at greater risk because of their ethnicity, and if they have health conditions and/or disabilities), the work requirements, and health and safety practicalities, before a decision is made about when they should be asked to return to on-site working.

Where disabled staff have reasonable adjustments in place, these should be reviewed in line with new on-site working arrangements. **We understand that staff may prefer to discuss some of these issues with HR, rather than with their line manager, but we do encourage those conversations between manager and team member, as this is often the most effective way of agreeing any adjustments**. We encourage team members to refer to the *Guidance for Staff* document as part of their individual preparations for returning to on-site working. Further information about supporting staff to return to on-site working is also available to line managers.

### **3.2 Vulnerable Groups**

From the 1 August 2020, the Government confirmed that clinically extremely vulnerable people who have been “shielding” can return to their place of work, as long as appropriate social distancing measures can be observed.

As part of our risk assessment processes, we will work carefully with those individuals, and with employees who may have had members of their household who were shielding, to identify any risks and appropriate mitigation measures.

If national or local guidance changes during the coming weeks and months, working arrangements for impacted individuals will be reviewed.

## **3.3 Travelling to and from Work**

The Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 does not cover commuting to and from a routine place of work. However, as the management of COVID-19 relies on implementing measures to limit the potential spread, we believe it is reasonable to consider what changes in work practice might be adopted to support staff to avoid non-essential use of public transport, where possible, and to observe the government’s guidelines on social distancing as far as is practicable. Current PHE guidance is to consider all other forms of transport before using public transport. Walking and cycling are actively encouraged.

**3.4 Car Parking**

We do not currently have availability for all those staff who may wish to park on-site. The logistics are extremely complicated, but if an individual raises a concern with their manager during the course of a risk assessment or induction conversation, due regard will be given to the possibility of a temporary parking space. Where this is not possible, we will endeavour to support continued working from home.

## **3.5 Induction Process**

All staff returning to work on site must be given clear instructions before the return on site (by post or telephone for staff who do not have internet access, and ensuring that these are in a format(s) that is accessible to all) on how to maintain a safe environment in the workplace. They will also receive an induction briefing once they return, covering information, instructions and reassurance about health, safety and wellbeing, reminders about any changes to working arrangements, information about what to do if the staff member develops COVID-19 symptoms, and what ongoing support is available to them. We will give due consideration to providing these documents in translation, for those whose native tongue is not English.

## **3.6 Staff Members with a Suspected or Confirmed Case of COVID-19**

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms while at work, you must go home immediately and remain there for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started. You must arrange to be tested via the University’s [Early Alert Service](https://www.ox.ac.uk/coronavirus/health/covid-testing) or the NHS website and notify your line manager / supervisor of the results.

If a manager or the HR team is notified that a member of staff is experiencing new COVID-19 symptoms at home, they should advise the staff member to remain at home for at least 10 days from when their symptoms started.

In all cases, you must inform their line manager / supervisor if you feel unwell with symptoms of coronavirus and either leave work immediately or remain at home. Line managers should tell HR, so that a record can be kept of any symptomatic staff and the outcome of their test results. We will record sickness absence in line with the College’s policy. Any additional cleaning should also be identified and undertaken.

Further information about the response that you should take if you or a member of your household develops COVID-19 symptoms, including accessing testing, is detailed in the University’s HR [Guidance for Staff](http://www.ox.ac.uk/coronavirus/return-to-workplace/staff-guidance).

If you do test positive for COVID-19, the testing service (NHS or University) will inform the NHS Test and Trace system so that the formal process can be implemented.

## **3.7 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)**

An incident report is required under RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) when:

* An unintended incident at work has led to someone’s possible or actual exposure to coronavirus. This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.
* A worker has been diagnosed as having COVID-19 and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work. This must be reported as a case of disease.
* A worker dies as a result of occupational exposure to coronavirus.

Cases where individuals develop symptoms of COVID-19 in the workplace are not necessarily reportable. There needs to be a specific work activity that has taken place that might have reasonably caused the exposure. Further information on reporting requirements are available on the HSE’s website[[2]](#footnote-2).

# **Creating and Maintaining a Safe Work Environment**

## **4.1 Social Distancing**

This section provides examples of practical measures that should be considered as part of departmental and team risk assessment and work planning:

### **General**

* Regularly question whether work needs to be done in the building(s) or whether it could be done at home.
* Discourage or stop all non-essential visitors to the building.
* Implement regular counts on the number of people and adjust working practices accordingly.
* Start with low numbers of people at first, then gradually increase as the measures become embedded. Constantly review the implementation of measures and ability of people to social distance and adjust up or down to ensure measures are effective.
* Encourage people to plan their work activities at home, as far as possible, to keep the time they spend in a building to a minimum.
* Limit movement within a building and certainly between buildings, unless important for the role.
* Prescribe and mark circulation routes to minimise contact between people when accessing or leaving a building.
* Introduce one-way flows through buildings, where necessary and practicable.
* Check long corridors for line of sight or ability to pass whilst maintaining social distancing.
* Use fixed teams or booking processes to reduce the number of people mixing and to avoid overcrowding.
* Discourage all close contact.
* Plan which groups need to use the same room at any one time and determine the available space.
* Use visual displays or notices at entrances to remind individuals of the importance of social distancing, hygiene, and cleaning procedures.
* Introduce rotas of permitted individuals to reduce the number of people in a building at any one time, or who regularly work with each other, e.g. persons A, B and C work together on Mondays and Wednesdays, persons D, E and F work together on Tuesdays and Thursdays
* Consider relocating groups of people to other parts of a room, building or even other buildings to help maintain a 2m distance, noting that the further people are relocated the more likely it is to introduce new work-related risks or impact on other elements, most notably security.
* Define and record who is permitted to work in a space at any one time
* Implement booking systems to enable individuals to utilise shared spaces, whilst reducing the numbers to appropriate levels.
* Issue simple and clear guides to individuals on how to avoid transmission of COVID-19.
* Display notices around the building to remind people to maintain a 2m distance as far as is practicable, but note that the overuse of signs and markers can lead to confusion, and they quickly lose their influence. Consider where signs are required and will have greatest impact. (Please note that branded signage will be available from a central [University Store](#_University_Stores_for).)

### **Lodge**

* Introduce additional entrances or exits if that helps to avoid people queuing or mixing in reception areas.
* Provide hand sanitiser at entrances and exits.
* Provide clear signs pointing to available handwashing facilities and notices to encourage regular handwashing while in the building.
* Place floor markings to highlight 2m distance.
* We note that Lodge Porters will have a role to inform and remind people of new routes or procedures within the College grounds.
* Review the ‘signing-in’ process to maximise distances between individuals and the Lodge Porter.
* Consider introducing cleanable screens to provide a physical barrier between individuals.

### **Lifts**

* Utilise stairs as far as possible.
* Reduce maximum occupancy in lifts, ideally single occupancy, and display permitted numbers.
* If more than one person is permitted, then mark the standing positions on the lift floor.

### **Toilets**

* As far as possible, limit the number of people in toilet areas in order to try and maintain a 2m distance.
* Always maintain a number of accessible toilets for the number of people accessing a building – seek advice if there is any uncertainty.
* Set clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible.
* Encourage the use of cubicles instead of open urinals where more than one person is/may be present.
* Encourage good hygiene, including closing seat lids when flushing.
* Encourage people to maintain as much distance as possible when using hand basins.
* Maintain provision for hand drying by paper towels or hand driers.
* Where possible, designate facilities to specific groups of people to reduce the need for sharing facilities.
* Encourage waiting outside shared toilets, where 2m distances cannot be maintained.
* Do not restrict access to hand wash basins to the detriment of encouraging hand washing and personal hygiene.

### **Changing Rooms and Showers**

* Determine if showers are necessary, remembering risk from individual use of towels/drying.
* Where shower and changing facilities are required, set clear use and cleaning guidance.
* Introduce enhanced cleaning of all facilities regularly during the day and at the end of the day.

### **Dining Hall**

As the kitchen refit is planned, consideration will be given to the following:

* Current Government guidance is that cafes should open for food collection only with seating areas to remain closed.
* Somerville may be able to offer ‘lunch box’ style options for hot and cold food with cashless payments and pre-ordering to reduce queues and close contact.
* There should be no reusable items to minimise contamination; single use packaging may be brought back into use for a period.
* We will ensure that distancing measures are in place, and this will be reviewed regularly to understand any impacts on student and staff experience, and the manageability of the restrictions. Signage will provide clarity on procedures.

### **Shared Kitchen Areas and Breakout Spaces**

* Within communal spaces, a 2m distance should be maintained. Consider removing and/or relocating furniture to assist with this separation.
* If staff breaks are scheduled phase breaks to reduce the number of people using rest areas at one time.
* Alternative spaces may need to be provided to ensure that individuals do not have to wait for excessive times for rest periods.
* Encourage staff to take breaks outside when possible.
* Staff should be encouraged to bring their own prepared food and drink items to limit the need for mixing or sharing facilities.
* Procedures for delivery of food items e.g. milk or sharing utensils should be reviewed, to minimise contact between individuals.
* Cleaning agents should be provided in shared kitchen areas and individuals should be encouraged to wipe down equipment handles immediately after use (further information on [cleaning](#_Cleaning) regimens can be found later in the document).
* Handwashing facilities should be clearly indicated, with handwashing before and after eating encouraged.

### **Fire Exits and Assembly Points**

* Encourage people to evacuate as per normal procedures (including those who may need assistance during an evacuation), utilising all available exits and avoiding delay in leaving the building. In an emergency the need for social distancing is less of an issue than the need to evacuate a building in as quick a time as possible.
* If individuals do need assistance in evacuation, then Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) must be in place and reviewed. This specifically needs to consider the availability of trained dedicated escorts to operate evacuation chairs. If support is unavailable, then alternative arrangements for individuals must be outlined in the PEEP – seek advice if there is any uncertainty.
* Inform individuals to maintain as much distance as possible at assembly points, if 2m isn’t possible.
* Encourage individuals to stay within the groups they routinely work in, rather than mixing with others with whom they have had infrequent contact.

### **Personal Belongings**

* Regulate use of locker rooms, changing areas and other facility areas to reduce concurrent usage.
* Encourage storage of personal items and clothing in personal storage spaces, for example lockers, during working hours.

### **Offices and Workstations**

* Use of office spaces should be reduced as far as possible, by continued working from home (depending on operational needs).
* Office space will be limited by social distancing measures and maintaining a 2m gap between people, wherever possible. For desk use, this is likely to reduce occupancy to around a quarter or third of normal levels, depending on the size and layout of desks.
* Distances can be worked out from floor plans or measuring actual space between desks. If you require assistance in working out spacing for your team, please speak to the Estates and Maintenance Department.
* Consider how desks will be marked or allocated for use. This could be by numbering system or signs on desks. The use of shared or ‘hot desks’ should be restricted. However, if this was identified as being necessary, then procedures for use of shared desks, cleaning of equipment etc. should also be detailed at each.
* Consider how to mark and communicate circulation routes around offices and corridors, especially if one-way systems can be adopted for entering or exiting a workspace. Displaying notices may be useful for the initial return period whilst people become familiar and adapt to new routes.
* Consider the impact that any new layouts may have on disabled staff members.
* Providing details to staff before they first come back to the building may help to provide reassurance and ensure people know what changes to expect, particularly if entrance routes may be altered.

### **Meeting Rooms**

* The College’s approved video-conferencing software is Teams, which will be used even within buildings, to help reduce the need for face-to-face contact. The use of headsets should be considered, to minimise disruption to others in the same space.
* Utilise small meeting rooms as single-person offices instead, for essential on-site staff, to help increase social distancing between individuals.
* Set capacity limits on larger meeting rooms and ensure people sit apart from each other, or do not face each other by removing chairs or demarcating chair positions.
* Establish meeting etiquette while entering and leaving to ensure distancing is maintained, ensuring appropriate cleaning after use.
* Maintain booking details of people using meeting rooms, in case contact tracing is required.

### **Shared Facilities**

* Restrict access to shared equipment to one person at a time e.g. printers, photocopiers, binding machines.
* Provide signage or visual markers around equipment to help maintain 2m distances and remind users to wash their hands after using shared equipment.
* Designate certain areas to specific groups to maintain social distancing.
* Review layouts, as far as possible, accepting the limitations on some workspaces.
* Provide cleaning materials.

### **Workshops and other specialist rooms**

* Utilise tape or markers to clearly set out modified workspaces.
* Utilise booking systems wherever possible or rota systems to reduce the number of people needing to use same space at any one time.
* Avoid face-to-face contact by working back-to-back, side-by-side, or at angles across from each other.
* Restrict occupying the same space to short periods (e.g. less than 15mins), wherever possible.
* Consider the use of screens where social distancing (e.g. 2m) cannot be avoided, both to the sides or facing individuals in front.
* Reorganise workspaces, where possible, so equipment is closer to hand.
* Plan work activities carefully so equipment and materials are close to hand before starting.
* Maintain good workshop practice, by ensuring surfaces are clear of items, so they can be easily cleaned.
* Minimise the shared use of equipment, by specifying items to individuals or small groups.
* Ensure that everyone uses individual, named uniforms or workshop coveralls (i.e. no sharing), that they are kept separated from those of other individuals, and that they are laundered on a regular basis e.g. weekly.

**Handling goods, merchandise and other materials.**

* Set cleaning procedures for material and equipment entering or leaving the site.
* Encourage increased handwashing and introduce more handwashing facilities for workers handling deliveries or provide hand sanitiser where this is not practical.
* Avoid signing for packages, utilising electronic alternatives such as photographs to capture handover.
* Introduce screens where 2m distances cannot be maintained between those delivering, receiving or collecting items.
* Consider how the Lodge and other receiving areas can have their layout altered to support social distancing.
* Restrict non-business deliveries, for example, personal deliveries to workers.

### **Work Vehicles**

Shared work vehicles should be used by one person at a time and the cab wiped down after each use, with hand washing before and after driving.

For staff working in workshops or as a mobile team working across different buildings, there may be occasions when social distancing is not always possible. In such cases, staff should be advised that face-to-face contact should be avoided as per the [hierarchy of control](#_Hierarchy_of_Control) guidelines.

Staff should also be reminded that many adopted measures will be specific to each building they enter. They must make themselves aware of the local arrangements or seek guidance from the department they are visiting, if there is any uncertainty.

## **Signage**

To support social distancing, the use of visual indicators and reminders is recommended, for example:

***Reception/Entrance***

* Marking around reception desk to prevent an approach of less than 2m (where space allows).
* Signage on entrance doors as a reminder that social distancing measures are in place.

***Internal Spaces***

* Signs reminding employees not to attend work if they have symptoms (such as a fever, persistent cough, or loss of smell/taste) and to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
* Floor markers for large corridors and open areas to indicate spacing.
* Directional floor markers to signal one-way routes.
* Toilet and kitchen area signs, e.g. to indicate maximum numbers and hand washing etc.

***Lifts***

* Signs for lifts to indicate reduced occupancy numbers e.g. one person at a time

Please note that overuse of signs can lead to confusion, and they can quickly lose their influence. Consider where signs are required and will have greatest impact. Line managers should send their signage requirements to the RTOSW project team.

## **CLEANING**

Public Health England indicates it is necessary to frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, using standard cleaning products.

It will be necessary to review existing cleaning regimes and identify where additional cleaning might be needed, especially where frequent contact by different people is possible. It may also be necessary to ask staff to decontaminate their own equipment or areas at regular intervals throughout the day, especially for sensitive or frequently touched items. Cleaning responsibilities need to be clearly agreed between the department and the Housekeeping team, in order to avoid confusion.

**5.1 Options for cleaning**

We will give consideration to the following options, and may use all or some of these. Staff will be kept informed as to their individual responsibilities:

1. **A day cleaning service**: to clean regular touch points and shared area surfaces (e.g. door push plates and handles, light and power switches, security access controls and lift buttons, toilet and handwashing facilities, stair handrails, kitchen areas and appliances, other shared items of equipment including reception pens, desks, photocopiers, printers, photocopies, keyboards etc). It may be necessary to amend existing cleaning rotas/hours to facilitate this.
2. **Cleaning materials for individuals**: to provide materials for staff to clean their areas and regular touch point areas during their working hours. This may include rolls of surface wipes, paper towels, disinfectant, gloves etc. These day-to-day waste items can be disposed of via the normal departmental waste streams (e.g. used paper towels via general non-hazardous waste streams), as the risk of contamination would be considered low. Individuals will also be asked to declutter spaces, as far as possible, to help with any enhanced cleaning regime.
3. **Access to hand sanitisers:** toprovide hand sanitiser in corridors and shared areas of buildings which do not have hand washing facilities nearby. We will consider providing individuals with their own supply, especially those who may have to work around a building or in different locations.

The Housekeeping team will provide suitable equipment and cleaning products, and advise on their correct use.

### **5.2 Cleaning Requirements following a Reported Case of COVID-19**

If a staff member reports new COVID-19 symptoms please follow the below cleaning procedure as soon as possible:

1. The minimum PPE to be worn for cleaning an area where a person reporting new symptoms, has been working is disposable gloves and an apron. Hands should be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds after all PPE has been removed.
2. Public areas where an individual has passed through and spent minimal time but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids (e.g. corridors) can be cleaned thoroughly as normal.
3. Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, following one of the options below:
4. use either a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine

or

1. a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer’s instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants

or

1. if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked to ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses

All waste from cleaning relating to a reported case, including disposable cloths and tissues, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full. The bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied, before being put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage for 72 hours. It can then be placed for normal waste disposal. If storage for at least 72 hours is deemed inappropriate, then the appropriate clinical waste stream should be used.

## **5.3 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) protects the user against health or safety risks at work. It can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, safety footwear and safety harnesses. It also includes respiratory protective equipment, such as face masks. Where PPE is already required in the department for an existing (non-COVID-19) work activity, this must be used as per normal procedures. However, existing risk assessments should be reviewed, particularly to check the impact of shared use, as well as the general provision, storage, cleaning, maintenance and supervision of required control measures.

For COVID-19, the [hierarchy of control](#_Hierarchy_of_Control) must be applied; this details the most effective ways of minimising the spread of COVID-19.

When managing the risk of COVID-19, additional PPE beyond what individuals would usually wear is not considered necessary. Government guidance[[3]](#footnote-3) states that there is currently very little scientific evidence of widespread benefit from the use of additional PPE outside health or social care work settings.

However, when departments are completing individual risk assessments / work plans in line with the [hierarchy of control](#_Hierarchy_of_Control), they may identify specific activities or locations that require specific types of PPE. Where a risk assessment identifies a need for PPE, this must be to the individuals concerned, along with information and instruction on their correct use, fitting, and disposal.

In terms of disposing of items, normal non-hazardous waste disposal routes will be sufficient, unless the risk assessment identified an increased risk of contamination (e.g. following clean up after a reported case); such items should be put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage for 72 hours. After which, it can then be placed in normal waste disposal streams.

## **5.4 Face Coverings**

From the 7 September 2020 staff, students, visitors, contractors and members of the public will be required to use face coverings across the University and College buildings, as detailed in the [Face Coverings Policy](https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/rtosw/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Frtosw%2FShared%20Documents%2FGuidance%20Documents%20and%20Templates%20for%20All%20Departments%2FReturn%20to%20Onsite%20Working%20%2D%20health%20guidance%2FFace%20coverings%20policy%20and%20FAQs%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2Frtosw%2FShared%20Documents%2FGuidance%20Documents%20and%20Templates%20for%20All%20Departments%2FReturn%20to%20Onsite%20Working%20%2D%20health%20guidance).

Somerville College will be following the University’s [guidance](https://www.ox.ac.uk/coronavirus/health/face-coverings) and [policy](https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/rtosw/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Frtosw%2FShared%20Documents%2FGuidance%20Documents%20and%20Templates%20for%20All%20Departments%2FReturn%20to%20Onsite%20Working%20%2D%20health%20guidance%2FFace%20coverings%20policy%20and%20FAQs%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2Frtosw%2FShared%20Documents%2FGuidance%20Documents%20and%20Templates%20for%20All%20Departments%2FReturn%20to%20Onsite%20Working%20%2D%20health%20guidance) on face coverings; individuals may, of course, choose to wear a face covering before 7 September 2020.

When wearing a face covering you should remember to:

* Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it.
* When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as this could contaminate them with germs from your hands.
* Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you’ve touched it.
* Continue to wash your hands regularly.
* Change and wash your face covering daily.
* If the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer’s instructions. If it is not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste.
* Practise social distancing wherever possible.

## **Managing Existing Work-Related Hazards**

When returning to work or re-opening buildings it will be necessary to review existing risk assessments.

In addition to the general building checks, a reduction in the level of supervision, support staff, or modifications to working practices (including an increase in out-of-hours working) may introduce new hazards or alter the risks associated with existing hazards. Line managers and supervisors must review their existing risk assessments to identify where this is the case.

**Appendix 1 – Audit of changes**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Version updated** | **Detail of change** | **Updated by:** | **New version saved as** |
| 30 June 2020 | 1.0 | Creation of new document | HS |  |
| 21 July 2020 | 1.1 | Formatting change, and details added around risk assessments | HS | 1.1 |
| 27 July 2020 | 1.2 | Amended to reflect changes/comments from Senior Mgmt Team; circulated to Project Team for input and comments | HS | 1.2 |
| 20 August 2020 | 1.2 | Updated to reflect changes to face coverings policy, University Early Alert Service and other changes to regulatory guidance. Circulated as final version for publication. | HS | 2.0 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

1. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb9752086650c2799a57ac5/working-safely-during-covid-19-labs-research-facilities-230720.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/riddor-reporting-further-guidance-coronavirus.htm#dangerous-reportable> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)