

Code of Practice for day visits to off campus sites in the UK

During the initial stages of the 'lockdown' due to COVID-19, only essential travel was permitted and, in the context of work, only key workers permitted to attend the workplace. As a consequence many activities were put on hold due to the restrictions.

As restrictions relating to COVID-19 start to ease, there will be a growing need to resume some of these activities which include:

- Off campus meetings
- Site visits
- Collection of physical artifacts / samples

This code of practice sets out the principles that must be followed in planning and preparing the risk assessment for a visit within the United Kingdom. Approval will be through the normal travel approval process in the Faculty / Directorate or by the Head of School / Director where this is not in place for local travel. Arrangements for travel outside the UK, where permitted, is covered by the University's [Interim Travel Policy](#).

You should **not** undertake the visit all if you:

- are experiencing any coronavirus symptoms (a new continuous cough, fever or loss / changed sense of normal smell or taste)
- are [self-isolating](#) as a result of coronavirus symptoms or sharing a household or support bubble with somebody with symptoms
- are [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) and cannot shield during your journey
- have been advised by the [NHS test and trace service](#) that you should self-isolate

In planning the visit and developing the risk assessment there are two elements that both need to be considered, travel and arrangements at the destination.

Travel

The current guidance from the UK Government is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#checklists-for-safer-travel>

At the time of preparing this document, the key principle remains

- To work from home where possible
Therefore any request for travel authorisation must explain why it is not possible to undertake the work from home and the business need for example:
Commercial work (site visits to plant etc)
Student related (collecting samples, placement visits etc)

In addition, the guidelines state that you should:

- consider all other forms of transport before using public transport
- avoid the busiest times and routes
- keep your distance when your travel (2 metres apart where possible or in accordance with government guidelines at the time of travel)
- wash or sanitise your hands regularly

It should be noted that policy is different across the UK and if your planned destination is in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland you should check for any local regulations that may apply.

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-what-you-can-and-cannot-do/pages/overview/>

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/coronavirus-covid-19>

Where an area is subject to a local lockdown, travel into, out of, or within the lockdown area should be avoided.

In terms of business travel, the most likely modes of transport will be private car or motorbike and where this is not possible public transport, including domestic air travel. Should other modes of transport be considered the current Government guidance should be followed.

Private transport (car / motorbike)

You should only use this option if you have Class 1 business use included in your motor insurance and all of the normal conditions for using a motor vehicle for University use apply.

You should:

- Check that your vehicle is safe and roadworthy if you haven't used it for several weeks.
- Plan your journey and ensure adequate rest breaks are included.
- Limit the time you spend at garages, petrol stations and motorway services.
- When starting or finishing your journey wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible.
- Consider taking refreshments on your journey to avoid purchasing on route.
- Consider using parking apps and contactless payment for parking.

Where more than one person is travelling and it is necessary to car share:

If you normally share a vehicle with people from other households or support bubbles for essential journeys, it is recommended that you find a different way to travel so that you can maintain social distance. For example, consider walking, cycling or using your own vehicle if you can.

If you do have to travel with people outside your household or support bubble try to:

- share the transport with the same people each time
- keep to small groups of people at any one time
- open windows for ventilation
- face away from each other
- consider seating arrangements to maximise distance between people in the vehicle
- clean your car between journeys using standard cleaning products - make sure you clean door handles and other areas that people may touch
- ask the driver and passengers to wear a face covering

Public transport

From 15 June 2020, you must wear a face covering on public transport in England. You will be breaking the law if you fail to do so and could be fined.

- A face covering is a covering of any type which covers your nose and mouth.
- Some people don't have to wear a face covering for health, age or equality reasons.
- You should remove your face covering if asked to do so by a police officer or other relevant person.
- It is important to wash or sanitise your hands before and after touching your face covering.

Plan your journey

- Consider all other forms of transport before using public transport.
- before and during your journey, check with your transport operator for the latest travel advice on your route
- travel at off-peak times
- use quieter stations and stops – get off a stop early if it's less busy
- keep changes to a minimum, for example, between bus and train
- walk for more of your journey, for example the first or last mile
- book your tickets online in advance or pay by contactless

On your journey

Some people don't have to wear a face covering for health, age or equality reasons, see [Government guidelines](#) . Where possible, keep a 2 metre distance from others during your journey. If you cannot keep a 2 metre distance, reduce the risk to yourself and others by maintaining a 1 metre distance where possible, and taking suitable precautions, such as:

- avoid physical contact
- try to face away from other people
- keep the time you spend near others as short as possible

Be aware of the surfaces you touch. Be careful not to touch your face. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing.

Help keep yourself, other passengers and transport staff safe:

- ensure you maintain social distancing, where possible, including at busy entrances, exits, under canopies, bus stops, platforms or outside of stations
- be prepared to queue or take a different entrance or exit at stations
- wait for passengers to get off first before you board
- wait for the next service if you cannot safely keep your distance on board a train, bus or coach
- avoid consuming food and drink on public transport, where possible
- respect other people's space while travelling
- be aware of pregnant, older and disabled people who may require a seat or extra space
- be aware that not all disability is visible and some people may be exempt from wearing a face covering

Additional guidance for domestic air travel

- Where possible, check-in online to avoid face-to-face contact at the airport.
- You are strongly encouraged to check in baggage to the aircraft hold and minimise any hand baggage. This will speed up boarding and disembarking and minimise the risk of transmission.
- Follow instructions from airport and airline staff, which may include:
 - where to sit
 - how to queue at check-in, security or when boarding the aircraft
 - instructions on screens, barriers or floor markings
- Where possible, avoid touching surfaces in the airport. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds after using self-service check-in, luggage trolleys and other frequently touched surfaces.
- Depending on the airport you fly from and where you are flying to, you may need to have your temperature checked before flying.
- Follow advice in the airport to prepare for security checks.
- Avoid walking around the airport and mixing with people that you do not normally meet.
- In shops at the airport, follow social distancing measures and, where possible, pay by contactless card.

On board the aircraft measures to control coronavirus transmission will depend on:

- the technical features of your aircraft
- any specific requirements of your destination
- the individual risk controls identified by your airline

Your airline will advise you on measures in place for your flight.

In England and Scotland passengers must wear a face covering on board aircraft.

You can remove your face covering to:

- communicate with someone who relies on lip reading
- avoid harm or injury
- take medication
- eat or drink, if reasonably necessary

During the flight, you should:

- remain seated as much as possible
- follow instructions and guidance from crew
- use contactless payment where possible
- be aware there is likely to be a reduced food and drink service
- make the cabin crew aware if you become ill

At all times follow the instructions from your transport operator.

At the destination

Where a company or organisation is being visited it is the expectation that the company or organisation will have a code of practice for operating within the COVID-19 restrictions and these should be reflected in the risk assessment. Any concerns about the arrangements at the host organisation should be raised with your line manager.

In the absence of any detailed instructions from the host company or organization, or where the visit is to a location that is public space, then in preparing for your visit you should consider the following:

- Availability of washrooms / toilets
- Taking with you hand sanitiser / wipes
- Taking with you a face covering
- Ensure you maintain social distancing (to the Government's guidelines at the time of travel)
- Respect other people's space
- Consider taking refreshments and food with you which may not be available locally
- The risk assessment should also include other non COVID-19 related risks associated with the activity

15 July 2020