

PMB_SOP_Returning to onsite working_013

Peter Medawar Building Standard Operating Procedure for Staff, Students and External Site staff returning to onsite working

Whilst many of you will be pleased to be back in work, we recognise that you may also have concerns about your safety. With this change of policy, we are looking to implement a gradual return to pre-COVID occupancy levels in the building.

We want to assure you that a full risk assessment has been carried out regarding working within this building and appropriate measures to keep everyone safe have been implemented. These will be kept under review as working on site resumes.

If you have any concerns about returning to work, please speak to your supervisor or HR representative. You will not be forced to return to the office if you can safely and effectively carry out your work from home.

A copy of the risk assessment can be found at: <https://www.medawar.ox.ac.uk/internal>.

This document outlines what measures are in place in this building and provides guidance for you.

COVID-19: primary symptoms

These are: a fever or high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste.

General principles for COVID-secure working

The University's move to BCP Level 1 means most restrictions are lifted, but we must still take some precautions and ensure we reduce the risk of COVID transmission as much as possible. The key principles are:

- Before you return to work please contact your PI or Line Manager to plan your return and discuss any concerns you may have.
- Individuals must not work on-site if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If individuals are at work and start to display symptoms, they must leave immediately and seek a PCR test.
- Individuals must not work on-site if they are self-isolating due to testing positive for COVID-19, suspected symptoms of COVID-19, or if they have been advised to isolate by NHS Test & Trace.
- Any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 must be reported to your PI or Line Manager and HR.
- Staff and students working on-site are encouraged to participate in regular asymptomatic testing as promoted through the University's health measures in place at the time (currently Lateral Flow Device testing). Further information can be found at: [Health | University of Oxford](#)

Close contact

A contact is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 during the period in which they are infectious to others. This period typically last from 48 hrs before symptoms develop (or a positive asymptomatic test result) until up to 10 days after the onset of symptoms.

'Close' is defined as:

- Being within 2m for more than 15 mins.
- Being within 1m of for more than a minute without face-to-face contact.
- Having a face-to-face conversation within 1m.
- Having skin-to-skin physical contact.
- Being coughed on.
- Travelling in a vehicle with someone who is infectious.
- All members of a person's household are automatically deemed to meet the definition of a close contact.

Moving around the building

Entry and exits

Authorised personnel will have access to the building via key fob. DO NOT let other people into the building. Staff must use their key fob to access and leave the building.

Visitors must not come to the building if they are self-isolating and must report symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test to their host within a 48hrs period. Visitors must contact their host to collect them. They must sign in / out in the Visitors Book, which is kept on a table by the entrance door. Visitors should always be accompanied whilst in the building. Contractors must liaise with the Building and Lab Manager before undertaking any on-site work.

Corridors

- For the corridors in levels 30, 40 and 50 a one-way system for clockwise travel has been introduced.
- For all stairways and the corridors in levels 10 and 20 a "wait and pass" policy has been introduced in combination with a "keep to the left" approach.

Lifts

You should try and use the stairs wherever possible. Only one person to use the lift at any one time. Lifts **must not** be used during an emergency evacuation.

Cleaning and hygiene

Cleaning

- As part of their daily cleaning duties the cleaners will sanitise all communal touch points *e.g.*, door handles, light switches, and stair rails.
- Cleaning products are provided in kitchens, meeting rooms and communal areas so if you use or touch anything you must wipe it down.

If you have any issues regarding cleaning or cleaning supplies please contact Daniel Hambidge (Unit Administrator).

Hygiene

- Good personal hygiene is crucial to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Washing of hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is encouraged or use of hand sanitiser when washing is not available.
- Wall mounted sanitisers are located at entrances / exits, by the lifts and in kitchen areas so please make sure that you use them on a regular basis.
- Ensure you 'catch' any coughs or sneezes either in a tissue which is then disposed of or cough or sneeze into your elbow rather than hands.

Shared spaces - kitchens, toilets, meeting rooms, offices, labs, showers, lockers

Ventilation

A key consideration regarding occupancy under current university guidelines revolves around air ventilation in a given space. If a space is well ventilated, then social distancing measures can be relaxed.

Areas with mechanical ventilation systems are considered well ventilated, this includes all lab areas in the PMB. In areas where there are no mechanical ventilation systems in place, windows / doors should be opened in such a way as to encourage ventilation. All of the office and meeting spaces in the PMB fall into the latter category. So, for offices to be considered well ventilated a combination of windows and/or doors must be open. Single occupancy offices housing a single user need not be ventilated unless meeting with another person in that space.

If this is not feasible (due to excessive cold weather, the window not operating, *etc.*) then further mitigating measures will be required. Staff sharing an office in this situation should discuss which measures they would like to enforce from the following:

- Create a rota such that individuals can work at a 2m distance from one another.
- All individuals in the office to wear face covering.

Once decided, the office should notify the Unit Administrator and Lab Manager about the measures being undertaken.

There are several offices in the PMB where workstations are less than 1m apart; these offices represent areas where the risk of transmission is higher than those other areas where more space is available. Individuals **are strongly advised** wear a face covering when working in these areas even when well ventilated. These offices are as follows:

- LV 30: 30.08, 30.11, 30.10, 30.17, 30.20, 30.21, 30.29
- LV 40: 40.06, 40.09, 40.18, 40.20, 40.24, 40.25
- LV 50: 50.21

If you have any concerns regarding your safety and work environment, please speak to your supervisor, Daniel Hambidge (Unit Administrator), or Peter Thomas (Laboratory & Building Manager).

Kitchens and interaction areas

- Reduced capacity will continue in the interaction areas, try to maintain a distance of at least 1 metre, where you can and be mindful of each other's space.
- Phase breaks with your colleagues to reduce the number of people using rest areas at one time.
- We recommend that you continue to wear face coverings in all shared communal spaces.
- Only 1 person to use the kitchenettes and 3 people to use the larger kitchens at any one time.
- Clean equipment handles immediately after use.
- Wash your hands before and after eating.
- Wash and take away your cutlery and crockery, do not leave it on the draining board.
- Reading materials (magazines, books, newspapers, *etc.*) should be taken away with you and not left in shared spaces.
- Do not share food and drink.

Toilets

You should:

- Close seat lids before flushing the toilet.
- Wash your hands thoroughly using soap and water.
- Try to maintain a >1 metre distance where possible; be mindful of each other's space.

Meeting rooms

- The PMB meeting rooms can be used but you should try to maintain a distance of at least 1 metre and have a maximum of 6 people in the meeting rooms at any one time.
- Windows should be opened so that fresh air is circulated. If windows are closed, we would expect attendees to maintain 2m distancing or the meeting should be hosted online.
- We recommend that you continue to wear face coverings in all shared spaces.
- Sanitisers are placed in each room, and you should use them on entering and leaving the room.
- Any meeting room equipment used must be wiped down, by the event organizers, before and after use with the cleaning products provided.

To book a meeting room please contact Daniel Hambidge daniel.hambidge@ndm.ox.ac.uk.

Offices

- Office layouts should have people sitting back-to-back or side-to-side and **not** face-to-face.
- Try to maintain a distance of at least 1 metre; be mindful of other's space.
- We recommend that you continue to wear face coverings in shared offices.
- Keep windows open for ventilation and air flow. See also 'Ventilation' section above.
- Frequently sanitize surfaces and equipment used (keyboards, telephones and mouse) with >70% alcohol or anti-bacterial cleaner.
- When there is a positive test everyone who is not isolating must help clean surfaces in the office with disinfectant.

For those using laboratory spaces

In principle, the same rules as for offices spaces, plus in addition:

- It is recommended to wear a disposable fluid resistant surgical mask at all times unless medically exempt.
- Frequently sanitize surfaces, countertops and equipment with 1% Virkon or >70% alcohol. Decontaminate workbenches or instruments (*e.g.* Pipettes, pipette guns / pipette controllers) before and after use. Frequently use >70% alcohol spray to clean gloved hands or change gloves.
- Social distancing is recommended in the labs. Laboratory occupants must remain greater than 1m apart and workstations will be assigned or arranged at least 1m apart. However, there are instances (*i.e.* for training) where individuals have to spend an extended period of time (>15minutes) less than 1m apart. In this instance, those individuals are required to form a 'training bubble' whereby if anyone in that bubble tests positive for COVID, the rest of the bubble will be encouraged to take lateral flow/ PCR tests and look out for symptoms. If considered not feasible or practical, please discuss this with your PI/line manager.
- Be especially mindful of shared rooms, *e.g.*, tissue culture, bathroom, freezer room, *etc.*
- Use of shared calendar(s) and group electronic communication is recommended to schedule time in shared lab environments to maintain social distancing.
- For shared equipment / rooms which require short-term use (*e.g.*, gel-doc) avoid entering while others are using and keep your use as short as reasonably possible. Wipe contact surfaces before and after each use.
- Be sympathetic of other users. If use of core facilities / instruments is required, your work should be coordinated with the person responsible prior to start of work / analysis.
- On leaving the laboratory, wash hands with soap and water, paper towel dry.

PMB supervisors (PI or PI-assigned persons) will check activities in their areas of responsibility and be responsible for ensuring members of their groups are compliant.

All PMB lab users are responsible for health and safety in the laboratory. If you are aware of an individual who is repeatedly not following best practice, please mention this to them, or otherwise discuss this in confidence with the Building and Lab Manager or their PI.

Although we would hope all individuals will be compliant, any person repeatedly not adhering to this SOP may be subject to disciplinary action and have their approval to access the PMB removed.

Showers

If you use the showers, please clean the shower cubicle thoroughly after use with the cleaning wipes provided. Remember to take all your belongings (*e.g.*, towels, shower gels, *etc.*) with you. Anything found in the shower room by the cleaners will be disposed of.

Communal Lockers

Lockers that are not specifically assigned to an individual will no longer be available to use; personal belongings must be left in your car or stored at your desk. No personal items should be left in shared spaces (except the kitchen fridges allocated for food).

Emergency evacuation

If the fire alarm is activated, leave the building immediately by the nearest designated fire exit. Proceed to the assembly point (the lawn between the University Club and the Zoology Research and Administration Building) and once there maintain a distance of 1 metre from others and, if possible, remain in the 'bubble' of people you normally work alongside. Do not re-enter the building until the Building and Lab Manager, a member of PMB management team, or a Fire & Rescue Service Officer gives you permission to do so.

First Aid

- First Aid kits are located in kitchen areas. If you need first aid help a list of first aiders is posted on the walls in each kitchen area.
- If emergency care is required, please contact the Emergency Services immediately by dialling 999.

Further questions and help

If you have any concerns or queries regarding the arrangements in place for this building, then do speak to us. A listed of useful contacts is below:

Laboratory & Building Manager – Peter Thomas	01865 281249
Unit Administrator – Daniel Hambidge	01865 281231
Administrative Assistant – Suki Kenth	01865 281652
Security Services – Emergency (24 Hours)	01865 289999
Security Services – Non-emergency (24 Hours)	01865 272944
Emergency Services	999

Useful Links

- Oxford University Coronavirus information page including FAQs: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/coronavirus>
- <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/>
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- HSE Guidance: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/working-safely-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm>
- Foreign Office advice: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors>