

Lifting the Coronavirus Lockdown: Policy on Safe Working During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown is eased, we recognise that UCCF needs to return to normal operations where possible and adapt to new ways of working as required. This policy explains the changes to our office working environment and new ways of working.

These adaptations have been informed by UCCF's COVID-19 risk assessment, the results of which can be found on the UCCF website. We have also consulted with all office staff about the changes. The risk assessment will be reviewed on a monthly basis and this policy updated accordingly, to reflect any relaxation of safety measures or the introduction of new measures. Both documents will also be reviewed and updated should the Government release any relevant new guidelines in their response to the pandemic.

We encourage staff to let us know if they have any concerns, have identified any potential risks, or have any suggestions for further adaptations we can make. Staff can do this by raising concerns or making suggestions to the Head of Human Resources and Facilities Manager.

In advance of your return

At present we are asking office staff to attend work in Blue Boar House (BBH) only where it is not possible for them to fulfil aspects of their jobs adequately at home. At this stage, staff who can do their work effectively from home should continue to do so. (N.B. Some of our workforce are on furlough as a result of the temporary reduction in the need for certain roles).

Individuals with serious underlying health conditions who have been advised to shield against coronavirus should continue to do so for the duration of their shielding period. Those in other vulnerable groups, such as pregnant staff and those aged 70 or over, are being consulted individually about potential adaptations to their role.

If you or someone you live with has coronavirus symptoms

It is absolutely essential that if you or anyone you live with develops a:

- Fever, particularly a high temperature (i.e. a temperature of 37.8 degrees or over);
- Continuous cough; or
- Loss of sense of taste or smell,

you do not attend work and self-isolate in accordance with the Government's guidance at www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection.

In line with UCCF's *Sickness Absence Procedures and Policies*, you should notify your Team Leader/Supervisor by telephone before you are due to start work, or as soon as possible if that is not practical (no later than 10am), and email the Head of Human Resources (hr@uccf.org.uk).

Travel to and from work

We encourage staff to minimise their use of public transport, by walking or cycling where possible. If travelling by car, you must not car-share with anyone outside your household.

Where you need to use public transport, please think about social distancing, where possible staying two metres away from others and avoiding touching surfaces. You might also consider wearing a face covering on public transport.

Individuals required to use public transport may find it helpful to refer to the Government's guidance at www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers and www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering.

You should wash your hands thoroughly when you arrive at work, using the handwashing facilities or hand sanitisers provided. You should also wash your hands thoroughly as soon as you get home from work.

Working patterns

To reduce the risk of infection spread, we suggest the following measures:

- Staggering staff start/end times and lunch breaks;
- Relocating some staff in BBH to spare rooms (e.g. DJ's and Barclay on the UCCF floor) to maintain social distancing while working at desks;
- Not permitting hot-desking for the present and cordoning off some workstations.

We are also considering using "fixed teams or partnering" so each person works with only a few others, or rotating groups of staff, for example via a shift system.

You should speak to your Team Leader/Supervisor and the Head of Human Resources if you have any specific needs regarding your working patterns, for example because of childcare responsibilities or travel difficulties.

Hygiene and cleanliness

General measures

To reduce the risk of infection spread, we have introduced the following measures:

- Signs and posters to provide regular reminders to staff to maintain hygiene standards, particularly in food preparation areas;
- Asking staff not to prepare food or drinks for anyone else, and to consider bringing a packed lunch rather than preparing food onsite;
- Operating a 'one-in one-out' policy at tea-points;
- Requiring that dirty pots, cutlery and crockery are washed in the dishwashers, not by hand;
- Installing additional handwashing facilities/hand sanitisers, including at building entrances and exits, and swapping shared tea towels for paper towels in kitchen/food prep areas;
- Asking staff to clear their workstation and disinfect their desktop, keyboard, mouse, phone and chair armrests at the end of each working day;
- Asking that staff use only their own desk when working in BBH;
- Keeping windows open at all times to maintain good ventilation through the building;
- Fitting new Dorgard devices to some office doors to minimise the need to touch handles/push-plates on high-use routes; and
- Allocating toilets, kitchen and canteen areas between UCCF and IFES. (UCCF staff should use the toilets and kitchen on floors two and three and take their lunch in Grubbs. IFES staff will use the toilets and kitchen on the ground and first floors and take their lunch in InterVarsity).

Playing your part

While we are taking these additional measures, we would like to remind you to play your part by:

- Washing your hands often and thoroughly;
- Avoiding touching your face, particularly your eyes, nose and mouth; and
- Coughing or sneezing into a tissue, and binning it safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available.

Social distancing measures

General measures

While working in BBH, you must maintain social distancing of two metres wherever possible. To assist with social distancing, in addition to the measures detailed above, we have introduced the following:

- A one-way system in the corridors and areas of high footfall around the building;
- Signs and posters advising on limits to number of people and good health & safety practice when entering specific areas such as lifts, break areas, toilets, showers and changing rooms.

As and when the number of staff working regularly in BBH increases, consideration will also be given to:

- Back to back or side to side working (rather than face to face), where possible;
- Screens or barriers to protect workers whose desks face each other.

You should continue to practice social distancing in common areas, including the office entrances and exits; in lifts; in break areas; in toilets, showers and changing rooms.

Meetings

As part of our social-distancing measures, staff should conduct meetings remotely (e.g. via Zoom or a similar video conference platform), where possible. When physical meetings are necessary:

- Only essential participants should attend the meeting;
- Meetings should be kept as short as possible;
- Social distancing of two metres should be maintained throughout;
- Objects such as stationery should not be shared; and
- Meetings should be held in a well-ventilated room wherever possible.

Hand sanitisers are provided in meeting rooms and areas where meetings frequently take place. Floor markings are also provided to help staff maintain social distancing.

Customers and visitors

To reduce the risk of infection spread, we have introduced the following measures:

- Temporarily suspended room hire; and
- Strictly limited visitors to the building to only those necessary (e.g. contractors carrying out essential maintenance work). Please note that for the present, external visitors should not be invited for meetings in BBH.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Our approach to additional PPE

In line with our COVID-19 risk assessment, the use of additional PPE (such as face masks) is not required as an infection-control measure while at work.

Face coverings

The use of a face covering (which is not considered PPE) is, at present, a matter of individual choice. In time, if the Government's guidance changes, we may (in consultation with you) ask you to wear a face covering.

For now if you choose to use a face covering, you must follow the Government's advice at www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering. This advice includes that you:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before putting a face covering on, and after removing it;
- Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you have touched it; and
- Change and wash your face covering daily.

The use of a face covering is not a replacement for observing our social distancing guidelines.