

# **Polasaí um Fhilleadh ar Champas de chuid Ollscoil Mhá Nuad le linn Covid-19**

8 Márta 2021

## **Maynooth University Covid-19 Return to Campus Policy**

8 March 2021

Tá seans ann go n-athróidh an polasaí seo chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar na treoracha is déanaí ó Fheidhmeannas na hOllscoille, ón Rialtas agus ó chomhairle sláinte poiblí

This policy is subject to change to reflect the latest directions from the University Executive, Government and public health advice.

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## Relevant Information

Publication	Link
Maynooth University Covid-19 Guidance Webpage	<a href="https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/coronavirus">https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/coronavirus</a>
COVID-19 Resilience and Recovery 2021 - The Path Ahead	<a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/resilience-recovery-2020-2021-plan-for-living-with-covid-19/">https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/resilience-recovery-2020-2021-plan-for-living-with-covid-19/</a>
Covid-19 National Protocol for Employers and Workers (updated 20 November 2020)	<a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/bb7fd-work-safely-protocol/">https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/bb7fd-work-safely-protocol/</a>
Department of Education and Skills Circular Letter 0051/2020 Letter dated 11 August 2020	<a href="https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0051_2020.pdf">https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0051_2020.pdf</a>
Implementation Guidelines for Public Health Measures in Higher Education Institutions	<a href="https://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Public-Health-Implementation-Guidelines-for-HEIs_05.08.20_Final.pdf">https://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Public-Health-Implementation-Guidelines-for-HEIs_05.08.20_Final.pdf</a>
HSE Covid-19 Guidance	<a href="https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/?source=banner-www">https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/?source=banner-www</a>
HSA Covid-19 Guidance	<a href="https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19_coronavirus_information_and_resources/">https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19_coronavirus_information_and_resources/</a>
DPER Information for Civil and Public Servants	<a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/news/092fff-update-on-working-arrangements-and-leave-associated-with-covid-19-fo/">https://www.gov.ie/en/news/092fff-update-on-working-arrangements-and-leave-associated-with-covid-19-fo/</a>
Government's Covid-19 Webpage	<a href="https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/">https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/</a>
National Standards Authority of Ireland Workplace Protection and Improvement Guide	<a href="https://www.nsai.ie/covid-19workplaceprotection/">https://www.nsai.ie/covid-19workplaceprotection/</a>
Maynooth University Equality & Diversity Policy	<a href="#">Equality &amp; Diversity Policy   Maynooth University</a>
MU Covid-19 Operational Response Plan	<a href="https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/coronavirus/staff/return">https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/coronavirus/staff/return</a>

## 1. Purpose<sup>1</sup>

The overarching purpose of this policy is to set out the processes involved in reopening the University and for the gradual return to campus by University employees in a safe and controlled manner.

This policy will provide direction and guidance to University employees on the steps being put in place to give effect to the following documents:

- Government's [COVID-19 Resilience and Recovery 2021 - The Path Ahead](#) ;
- [Return to Work Safety Protocol](#);
- [Implementation Guidelines for Public Health Measures in Higher Education Institutions](#); and
- [Department of Education and Skills Circular Letter 0051/2020 Letter dated 11 August 2020](#).

This document also needs to be read in conjunction with the [MU Covid-19 Operational Response Plan](#), which sets out the procedural steps of the reopening of Maynooth University.

## 2. Definitions

### Public Health and Safety Advice

The term “public health advice” shall be understood to mean advice from the HSE, the HSA, the Government and/or it's agencies.

### Lead Worker Representatives

A Lead Worker Representative (LWR) is a University employee, or employees, who voluntarily agrees to be appointed to work collaboratively with the University to assist in the implementation of measures and monitor adherence to the measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

### At Risk Employees

Covid-19 can make anyone seriously ill, but for some people, the risk is higher. The HSE identifies those who may have a higher risk of becoming seriously ill if they contract Covid-19. For further information, please see the following link to the [HSE website](#).

### Physical/Social Distancing

The practice of implementing measures to maintain safe distances for preventing the spread of disease.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Equipment used to protect an individual from the risks of Covid-19.

### Covid-19 Induction Training

Mandatory training that every employee returning to campus must undertake.

### Contact Tracing

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<sup>1</sup> This policy will be updated as required and in line with public health advice.

This is the process of identifying persons who may have come into contact with an infected person and the subsequent collection of further information about these contacts.

#### Contact Log

This is a person-to-person contact log of all employees on campus, which will assist in contact tracing should a positive case arise.

#### Covid-19 Response Plan

This is a process to identify and isolate employees who develop symptoms of Covid-19 while on campus.

#### Risk Assessments

The overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to Maynooth University employees who are comprehended by the scope of the Department of Education and Skills Guidance Letter dated 11th August 2020.

This policy is subject to change to reflect the latest directions from the University Executive, Government and/or public health advice.

### **4. Principles**

#### University Responsibility

In implementing this policy, Maynooth University will prioritise the safety and wellbeing of its employees and students at all times. As such, the University will be guided by the latest public health and safety advice. Specifically, the University will adhere to the Return to Work Protocol, public health guidance and government circulars from the HSA, HSE, Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Public Reform.

In keeping with the wider approach in society in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is recognised that the successful implementation of this policy can only be done on a co-operative basis with shared responsibility between all members of the University Community.

#### Personal Responsibility

Each member of the University community has a responsibility to minimise the spread of Covid-19 and must take personal responsibility for their actions during this period. All employees must adhere to the latest public health and safety advice and guidance from the University.

Failure to adhere to this policy, guidance from the University regarding Covid-19, or public health and safety advice may lead to disciplinary action.

#### Returning to Campus

Decisions on an individual employee's suitability to work on-campus are taken as part of a considered and risk-based approach in line with public health advice and relevant guidelines. Decisions on an employee's suitability to work on-campus are made via the Return to Campus Process. All University employees must ensure that they undertake this process prior to their return to campus (set out below).

#### Physical Distancing

In addition to the measures the University has implemented to promote physical distancing, employees should continue to make every effort to ensure that physical distancing is maintained by employees while on campus. There should be a distance of at least two metres, and never less than one metre kept between individuals at all times. Where necessary and in the context of physical distancing, changes to working practices, physical measures and/or additional control measures should be put in place to minimise risk.

#### Working from Home

In line with current public health advice, where an employee can work effectively from home, they should continue to do so.

### **5. Process of Returning to Campus**

An employee's return to campus will be informed by the government's '[COVID-19 Resilience and Recovery 2021 - The Path Ahead](#)'. This Plan affirms the government's commitment to keeping the education sector operating as much as possible during this period.

Once it is confirmed that an employee is required and/or permitted to return to campus, employees must undertake the return to campus process set out in **Appendix 1**.

### **6. Congregating outside of work**

Employees are asked to avoid congregating in social settings such as household gatherings or parties, as they are known areas where Covid-19 transmission is very high and should be avoided. Employees should also avoid congregating, for example, in shops when buying lunch.

Workers commuting to and from work together, in the same car, should travel as a pod and use face coverings whilst inside the vehicle.

Workers who live in the same household are advised to adhere to the latest public health and Government advice.

### **7. Campus Visitors**

In all instances, visitors and contractors must undertake the process set out in **Appendix 2**.

### **8. Health Status**

University employees must not return to campus if:

- They are showing signs of Covid-19 or have done so in the last fourteen days;
- They have been diagnosed with Covid-19 within the last fourteen days or are awaiting test results;
- They are a close contact of someone who has been diagnosed with Covid-19 in the last fourteen days;
- They have been advised to isolate or are in the '[at risk](#)' category;
- They are required to restrict their movements following overseas travel in line with [public health advice](#); and/or
- If their situation has changed since their Return to Campus Form has been submitted/approved.

Employees are reminded of their legal obligations under Section 13 of the [Safety, Health and Welfare Act](#) to comply with all requirements outlined in this policy.

## 9. Special Leave with Pay

- Special leave with pay is used in lieu of sick leave for Covid-19.
- Special leave with pay should only apply, in lieu of sick leave for Covid-19, when an employee is advised to self-isolate and is displaying symptoms of Covid-19, or has had a positive test.

Employees must follow the procedures set out in **Appendix 3** in order to avail of special leave with pay.

## 10. Self-Isolation

Employees must inform their Head of Department or nominee where HSE or medical advice is that they must self-isolate, in the first instance.

Subject to the provision of the appropriate HSE/medical certification and completion of the process set out in **Appendix 4**, special leave with pay will be granted by the University and applied up until the Covid-19 test result is obtained.

## 11. Covid-19 Diagnosis

Employees must inform the University where they have tested positive for Covid-19. Subject to the provision of the appropriate HSE/medical certification and completion of the process set out in **Appendix 5**, special leave with pay will be granted by the University.

## 12. High-Risk Group

The HSE advice on the 'high risk' groups can be found on the [HSE Website](#).

Where an employee declares that they are in the 'high risk' group on the Return to Campus Form, but are not ill, they must attend the workplace, unless advised otherwise by the University's Occupational Health Provider. Details of the process to apply for those in the high-risk group are set out in **Appendix 6**.

## 13. Very High-Risk Group

The HSE advice on the 'very high risk' groups can be found on the [HSE website](#).

Having considered the HSE advice and information available on the HSE website, an employee who believes they are in the 'very high risk' group, should declare this on the University's Return to Campus Form. The University will apply the process set out in **Appendix 7**.

## 14. Employees with caring or childcare responsibilities or living with a high risk or very high-risk individual

As special leave with pay is not available for an employee who has Covid-19 related caring or childcare responsibilities, or for an employee who is living with a high risk or very high-risk individual, flexible working may be considered on a case-by-case basis, including working from home and/or adjusted hours, based on business needs.

However, an employee who wishes to avail of existing relevant leave entitlements will have such requests considered by the University (e.g. parental leave/carer's leave). When considering such an application, the University will take account of the relevant policy on employee absences. All such requests will be considered in line with the business needs of the University, and the welfare and educational needs of University students will take precedence over all such requests.

Employees who live with a very high-risk individual should attend the workplace and should follow the HSE guidelines to protect themselves and to minimise the risk of transmission. The implementation of the Return to Work Safely Protocol and related procedures are intended to minimise the risk of transmission in the workplace.

## **15. Restricted Movement other than following Non-Essential Travel Overseas**

An employee with no Covid-19 symptoms will be medically/HSE advised to restrict their movements for fourteen days if they are a close contact of a confirmed case of Covid-19 or live with someone who has Covid-19 symptoms. A close contact can stop restricting their movements when both of the following apply:

- The close contact has a negative test (COVID-19 not detected) 10 days after they were last in contact with the person who tested positive.
- The close contact does not have any symptoms of COVID-19 10 days after contact with person who tested positive.

Where an employee is caring for someone in self-isolation, the employee (and the rest of their household) need to restrict their movements for seventeen days. In such instances, the employee should follow the process set out in **Appendix 8**.

## **16. Restricted Movement following Non-Essential Travel Overseas**

The current Government advice is not to travel overseas, and this should be followed to the greatest extent possible. Employees must advise their Head of Department in advance in writing of **all** travel abroad and to include the travel details. This requirement is necessary for the protection of public health.

Employees who are entering Ireland should be aware of the current Government travel advice, which is available [here](#).

More information on international and domestic travel is available on the [University's website](#).

## **17. Covid-19 Induction Training**

All University employees are required to complete an online Covid-19 induction training prior to their return to campus. Employees will be invited to complete this training by the Return to Campus Office once they have completed the Return to Campus Form.

## **18. Contact Tracing and Contact Log**

Every member of the University community has a role to play in reducing potential impacts of Covid-19 and protecting our families and colleagues. We must each take responsibility for adhering to public health guidance and the Covid-19 response measures implemented on the University campus. Contact tracing identifies people who were in close contact with someone who has Covid-19 and assists the HSE in the process of identifying close contacts.

Contact tracing by the HSE may be necessary should a suspected or confirmed case occur on campus. The contact tracing details for the campus community comprises of three elements; (1) University information (2) Departmental information and (3) personal contact logs. Personal contact logs should be kept by each person for a rolling 14-day period (see **Appendix 9**).

Employees are encouraged to download the Contact Tracing App to their mobile device as this will assist with the contact tracing process.

## **19. Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The University has in place supports for employees who may be suffering from anxiety or stress during this period. Please see **Appendix 10** for further details of these supports.

## **20. Lead Worker Representative**

A Lead Worker Representative (LWR) assists in the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and assists in the implementation of the procedures identified in the Return to Work Safely Protocol. Further details of the LWR are available in **Appendix 11**.

## **21. Health and Safety Representatives/Committees**

Local Health and Safety Representatives and/or Committees have a key role to play in the ongoing implementation of all infection prevention and control measures throughout the University. Further information on the University's Health and Safety Representatives/Committees is available in **Appendix 12**.

## **22. Covid-19 Response Plan**

University employees should not attend work if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. However, in the event of an employee developing the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 while on campus, **Appendix 13** sets out the procedure to be followed.

## **23. Outbreak of Covid-19**

An outbreak of Covid-19 is when two or more cases are linked by time, place or person. The local Departments of Public Health are responsible for managing outbreaks of Covid-19 and for bringing the outbreak under control. In order to do this, the Department of Public Health requires continuous and effective communication between the employer, the LWR, employees, and in particular, any workers that were involved in the outbreak. Outbreaks that occur in a single workplace can quickly spread to the wider community if it is not brought under control quickly.

Additional advice on dealing with an outbreak is available from the [HPSC](#) website.

## **24. Cleaning**

Cleaning of work areas, washroom facilities and communal spaces will be conducted at regular intervals. Any high touch/high traffic areas, such as turnstiles, workstations, door handles, locker rooms etc. will be cleaned at least twice per day.

Waste such as used tissues, wipes and cleaning material, should be disposed of in a plastic rubbish refuse bag. When the bag is full, it should be tied and placed into a second refuse bag and tied again. This tied bag will then be left in a safe location for three days (72 hours), before being put out for collection.

All employees are encouraged to utilise the cleaning products provided to conduct wipe downs of their own work areas regularly.

## **25. Hand, Respiratory and General Hygiene**

Employees should ensure that they are familiar with and follow hand, respiratory and general hygiene guidance and advice. More details on hand, respiratory and general hygiene are set out in **Appendix 14**.

## **26. Limiting Time on Campus and Changing Work Practices**

Due to the impact of Covid-19, time spent on campus and work practices may need to be changed to facilitate a safe and effective return to campus. More information on this topic can be found in **Appendix 15**.

## **27. Personal Protective Equipment**

When PPE is used correctly, it can help prevent some exposures to Covid-19. However, PPE should never take the place of other preventative measures such as the measures mentioned in this policy. Examples of PPE include gloves, goggles, and face shields. Details of relevant PPE can be found in **Appendix 16**.

## **28. First Aid**

It may not be possible to maintain a two-metre distance when first aid is required. Employees who are first responders must attend training for an update on infection prevention and control principles. This training will include hand hygiene and appropriate use of personal protective equipment when delivering first aid.

## **29. Roles and responsibilities**

### **All Employees**

- Make themselves aware of their obligations under this policy and public health guidelines.
- Discuss their return to campus with their Head of Department.
- Ensure that they do not come on campus if they are unwell or have been advised to self-isolate.
- Be aware of the symptoms of Covid-19 and know when to self-isolate.
- Complete the Return to Campus Form no later than three days prior to returning to campus.
- Inform their Head of Department if there has been a change in their circumstances since completing the Return to Campus form.
- Complete the Covid-19 Induction Training prior to their return to campus.
- Keep a contact log of all those they have come in contact with.
- Ensure to keep their workspace clean.
- Make sure their contact details on ESS are up to date.
- Co-operate with any testing as advised by public health and put in place by the University in accordance with this advice.
- Be proactive in identifying how their roles can be performed effectively in their new working environment.

### **Heads of Department or nominee**

- Make themselves aware of their obligations under this policy and public health guidelines
- Promote awareness of this policy and relevant guidelines within their Departments.
- Ensure that all employees in their Department adhere to the Covid-19 restrictions and guidelines.
- To disseminate the risk assessment with employees in their Department and to advise Campus Services if the work activities of the Department have changed since the original assessment was carried out.
- Continue to be responsible for the allocation of teaching and other duties, in line with University requirements.

### **Human Resources**

- Make themselves aware of their obligations under this policy and public health guidelines.
- Provide policy and general advice and guidance to all employees.
- Provide ongoing communication to employees regarding Covid-19 updates.
- Make referrals to Occupational Health Providers where necessary.
- Maintain up-to-date information (name, address and contact phone number) on all employees. This information will be needed by the Department of Public Health in the event of a confirmed case or outbreak.

### **Campus Services**

- Make themselves aware of their obligations under this policy and public health guidelines.
- Ensure that the appropriate supply of cleaning equipment is available.
- Provide relevant training to employees.
- Ensure that there is a good supply of hand sanitiser across campus.
- Ensure that there is a good supply of tissues and bins for their disposal across campus.
- Keep Covid-19 Response Plan up to date.
- Arrange for waste such as used tissues, wipes and cleaning material, to be disposed of in the appropriate manner and on a delayed basis.
- Display Covid-19 guidelines across campus in relevant areas.

### **Lead Worker Representatives**

- Keep up to date with the latest Covid-19 advice from the Government and assist in keeping colleagues up to date with the latest advice.
- Report any problems, defects or areas of noncompliance to the Director of Campus Services or the Health and Safety Office.
- Maintain awareness of what to do in the event of someone developing the symptoms of Covid-19 while at work.
- Advise colleagues on maintaining the employee contact log.
- Listen to any Covid-19 control concerns or suggestions of colleagues and raise same with Director of Campus Services or the Health and Safety Office.

# Appendix 1

## Process of Returning to Campus

Prior to returning to campus, all employees are required to complete the Return to Campus Form. Employees should request this form from the RTCO by emailing [return.to.campus@mu.ie](mailto:return.to.campus@mu.ie).

Once completed the RTCO will then assess the form and email the employee a link to mandatory Covid-19 induction training and the return to campus checklist.<sup>2</sup>

The RTCO will then confirm to the employee and the Head of Department that the employee may return to campus on the specified date.

For the avoidance of doubt, the permission to return to campus is personable to each employee, and only those who have received clearance to return from the RTCO may attend campus.

Employees should have regard to any changes in their circumstances in relation to the questions on the Return to Campus Form and notify their Head of Department or nominee if there are any changes following their completion of the Return to Campus Form.

## Risk Assessments

Each workplace within the University has been subject to a risk assessment, and the required measures have been put in place in line with public health advice.

Workplace risk assessments are based on information to hand at the time of compilation. In some instances, it may be necessary to carry out a revised risk assessment if the working practices and/or guidelines have changed to such an extent that the circumstances require a new risk assessment. If an employee has a concern or question about a workplace risk assessment, they should discuss their concerns with their Head of Department or nominee or the RTCO.

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<sup>2</sup> Where an employee declares themselves to be in an at-risk group on the RTC Form, the process set out in Appendix 6 and 7 will apply.

## Appendix 2

### Campus Visitors

Where a Department requires a visitor or contractor to visit campus, the Department should email the RTCO ([return.to.campus@mu.ie](mailto:return.to.campus@mu.ie)), ideally, no later than three days prior to their expected arrival. The Department should also provide the email address of the visitor/contractor to the RTCO.

Once notified, the RTCO will issue the relevant access forms for completion by the visitor/contractor.

In the event three days' notice cannot be provided, please contact the RTCO as soon as you become aware of the need for a visitor or contractor to visit campus.

Please note, no visitor or contractor may come on campus without completing the Visitor Access Form.

## Appendix 3

### Special Leave with Pay

Where an employee is diagnosed with Covid-19 or recommended to self-isolate, they should contact the Covid-19 Response Team in the first instance and advise their Head of Department.

In such instances, employees may be eligible for special leave with pay. Special leave with pay will only apply when an employee is advised to self-isolate **and** is displaying symptoms of Covid-19, or has had a positive test. Employees are required to complete the '*Application for Special Leave with Pay Form*'. This form is available through Human Resources (humanresources@mu.ie).

The employee must provide HSE/medical certification to the University to include estimated date of fitness to return to work.

Special leave with pay granted by the University will not count as part of the employee's sick leave record. Employees availing of special leave with pay are excluded from claiming the DEASP Covid-19 illness benefit payment.

An employee is not entitled to days in lieu for bank holidays whilst in receipt of special leave with pay.

Special leave with pay for employees who are not required to work due to Covid-19 will be based on basic salary and fixed allowances only.

Similar to the general principles applying to the management of sick leave, the employee must contact their Head of Department or nominee as soon as possible, in accordance with the normal absence reporting arrangements. Where circumstances or diagnosis changes, the employee must also inform their Head of Department or nominee immediately.

It is considered good practice in maintaining a positive wellbeing culture in the workplace to have appropriate contact between the Head of Department or nominee and the employee during periods of leave. The nature of this contact should focus on the welfare of the employee and the facilitation of a successful return to work.

From 1 January 2021, special leave with pay may continue for up to 28 days if necessary. This absence must be supported by a positive Covid-19 test, as well as ongoing medical certification. The University's Sick Leave policy will apply for an employee who continues to be unwell in excess of 28 days.

Special leave with pay may be extended past the 28-day period in certain circumstances such as, where an employee had been on Campus during the 14 days prior to commencing the self-isolation period. This extended special leave must be supported by medical certification. If an employee attends work on Campus without the knowledge and approval of their Head of Department, or their nominee, they will not be considered to have attended for the purposes of extending special leave with pay.

## Appendix 4

### Self-Isolation

Where an employee is recommended to self-isolate, they should contact the Covid-19 Response Team in the first instance and advise their Head of Department. Employees may be eligible to avail of special leave with pay, in lieu of sick leave for Covid-19, when an employee is advised to self-isolate **and** is displaying symptoms of Covid-19 or has had a positive test.

Employees seeking to avail of special leave with pay are required to complete the “*Application for Special Leave with Pay Form*”. This form is available through Human Resources (humanresources@mu.ie).

The employee must then arrange a Covid-19 test as soon as possible and inform the University of the Covid-19 test result.

Where the Covid-19 test result is positive, the employee remains on special leave with pay, subject to the provisions at Appendix 3, and this must be recorded by the University as a ‘Covid-19 Diagnosis’ on the relevant HR system.

These arrangements do not preclude an employee working from home at an earlier stage, if this is feasible, depending on the individual case.

Where the employee does not return to work/campus following a ‘not detected’ Covid-19 test result, the terms and conditions of the Sick Leave scheme applies.

## Appendix 5

### Covid-19 Diagnosis

Where an employee is diagnosed with Covid-19 they should contact the Covid-19 Response Team in the first instance and advise their Head of Department. Employees are then required to complete the "*Application for Special Leave with Pay Form*". This form is available through Human Resources (humanresources@mu.ie).

In such instances, an employee is required to wait for ten days post-onset of symptoms and also be five days fever free (which may run concurrently) before returning to the workplace.

It should be noted that the ten days is from the onset of symptoms or when asymptomatic from the day of the Covid-19 test. The ten days is not from the date of receiving a positive Covid-19 test result.

These arrangements do not preclude an employee working from home at an earlier stage, if this is feasible, depending on the individual case.

Medical advice must be sought where an employee is absent in excess of ten days from the onset of symptoms and prior to their return to campus to confirm it is safe to do so.

## Appendix 6

### High-Risk Group

Employees who declare themselves to be in the 'high-risk' group on the Return to Campus Form and who are not ill, must attend the workplace, unless advised otherwise by the University's Occupational Health Provider.

Employees in the high-risk group are advised to take extra care to practice physical distancing and hand hygiene. The use of face coverings and personal protective equipment may also be considered where maintaining social distancing is difficult. The current advice is that all members of the University Community should wear a face covering in almost all indoor spaces on campus, with the obvious exceptions, such as, when eating or in private rooms (see appendix 16 for more information on face covering).

Where concerns remain, particularly where an employee in the 'high risk' group has a role that requires close contact with students and others for prolonged periods, the employee should immediately contact Human Resources via email (humanresources@mu.ie) outlining their concerns. Where appropriate, the University will refer the employee to Occupational Health for assessment. In such instances, the process for referring an employee to Occupational Health set out in **Appendix 7** will be followed.

## Appendix 7

### Very High-Risk Group

Having considered the [HSE advice](#) and information available on the HSE website, an employee who believes they are at very high risk of serious illness from contracting Covid-19 must declare themselves to be in the 'very high risk' category on the Return to Campus Form.

Upon receipt of the RTC form indicating an employee is in the 'very high risk' category, the Human Resources Department will contact the employee with details of the University's occupational health provider and will organise an appointment for the employee to be assessed.

Following this appointment, the University will receive a report from Occupational Health stating one of the following:

1. The employee is fit to return to campus;
2. The employee is fit to return to campus provided certain specified measures are taken;
3. The employee should cocoon and is fit to work from home; or
4. The employee is not fit for work.

If an Occupational Health appointment cannot be secured within a reasonable timeframe, as an interim measure, an employee is required to provide a copy of a valid GP certificate stating one of the above four options while waiting for the Occupational Health assessment.

Where Occupational Health advises that an employee should cocoon and is fit to work from home, the employee is required to follow this recommendation. This period will be recorded on the University's HR system.

In accordance with DPER guidance, where an employee who is at a very high risk of serious illness from contracting Covid-19 and is fit to work from home, the University will prioritise alternative working arrangements to the maximum extent possible e.g. working from home. However, if remote working in an employee's current role is not feasible, then the assignment of work may be outside of their usual core duties.

Where medical diagnosis changes, the employee must inform Human Resources

Where an employee who is at very high risk of serious illness from contracting Covid-19 and Occupational Health advise that they are not fit for work, the terms and conditions of the Sick Leave scheme apply.

## Appendix 8

### **Restricted Movement other than following Non-Essential Travel Overseas**

An employee with no Covid-19 symptoms will be medically/HSE advised to restrict their movements for 14-days if they are a close contact of a confirmed case or live with someone who has symptoms. This is to avoid contact with other people and social situations as much as possible. The 14-day period is from the last date of contact with the diagnosed person.

An employee can stop restricting their movements when both of the following apply:

- The employee has a negative test (COVID-19 not detected) 10 days after they were last in contact with the person who tested positive.
- The employee does not have any symptoms of COVID-19 10 days after they were last in contact with the person who tested positive.

Where an employee is caring for someone in self-isolation, the employee (and the rest of their household) need to restrict their movements for seventeen days.

An employee who has been advised to restrict their movements must arrange a Covid-19 test as soon as possible.

The latest criteria for restricted movement and as updated by the HSE must be followed. The current advice on restricted movements is on the [HSE's website](#).

An employee who has been advised to restrict their movements must complete the "*Restricted Movement Declaration Form*". This form is available through Human Resources ([humanresources@mu.ie](mailto:humanresources@mu.ie)).

Where medical diagnosis changes, the employee must inform their Head of Department or nominee immediately.

An employee who has been advised to restrict their movements but who is medically fit for work remains available for work. The employee should be assigned work for the fourteen-day period by their Head of Department or nominee, and the employee must facilitate alternative working arrangements to the maximum extent possible e.g. working from home. Where this is not possible, due to the nature of the work, the employee must facilitate and cooperate with all alternative working arrangements to the maximum extent possible e.g. the assignment of work outside of their usual core duties.

An employee on restricted movement will be recorded as such by the University on the relevant HR system.

## Appendix 9

### **Contact Tracing and Contact Log**

Contact tracing by the HSE may be necessary should a suspected or confirmed case occur on campus. The contact tracing details for campus community comprises three elements University, departmental and personal.

#### University

Central data will capture which groups of students are expected to be in what location. Contractor and visitor forms will also be maintained centrally.

#### Departmental

Each Head of Department or nominee should also compile and maintain departmental workgroup lists of people that would normally work together and identify where multiple staff share an office or laboratory.

#### Personal

Each employee should keep a personal contact log for the previous fourteen days, which should list:

- Individual contact names and locations of persons with whom you have been in contact for more than 15 minutes AND at a distance less than two metres, OR for more than 2 hours in the same room.
- This contact list may include work colleagues, students, visitors, or third-party service providers.
- This list should be stored securely and readily available upon request from the HSE or the University.

Employees are provided with a template personal contact log as part of the Return to Campus process.

For visitors and service providers, the contact details should include name, company name, mobile number, and contact location.

More information on this process and a Contact Log Template is available on the [University's website](#).

# Appendix 10

## Mental Health and Wellbeing

If an employee is experiencing any difficulties, they are encouraged to avail of the [Employee Assistance Programme](#) available to them. Alternatively, employees may call Inspire Workplaces directly on 1800 201 346.

To support your wellbeing during this unprecedented period, Human Resources have a number of supports available to all employees. These include:

- Live webinars on wellbeing topics
- E-learning courses on wellbeing
- Guides on wellbeing while working from home
- [Inspire Workplace Services](#) - An employee assistance programme which offers;
  - 24/7/365 Helpline Support 1800 201 346
  - Up to 6 sessions of counselling, as appropriate
  - Financial Information
  - Legal Information
  - Consumer/Citizens Information
  - Management Support via Helpline
  - Online Support Hub, with guides, resource library and online self-help courses
- For further information, please view the [Human Resources website](#).

# Appendix 11

## **Lead Worker Representative**

More details on the LWR are available on the [University's website](#). Employees may also find the [HSA's LWR Poster](#) as a useful summary of the LWR's role.

The role of the LWR includes the following:

- Keep up to date with the latest Covid-19 advice from the Government and assist in keeping colleagues up to date with the latest advice.
- Report any problems, defects or areas of noncompliance to the Director of Campus Services or the Health and Safety Office.
- Maintain awareness of what to do in the event of someone developing the symptoms of Covid-19 while at work.
- Advise colleagues on maintaining the employee contact log.
- Listen to any Covid-19 control concerns or suggestions of colleagues and raise same with Director of Campus Services or the Health and Safety Office.

# Appendix 12

## Health and Safety Representatives/Committees

Further information on the Health and Safety Representatives/Committees in Maynooth University can be found on the [University's website](#) or on the [HSA's website](#).

The role of the Health and Safety representative includes the following:

- Report any defects or problems they encounter to H&S.
- Consult with employees on safety measures to be implemented in the workplace.
- Be the first point of contact for employees who have safety concerns.
- Bring any concerns or suggestions regarding safety, health and welfare at the workplace to the Director of Campus Services' attention.

# Appendix 13

## Covid-19 Response Plan

### Covid-19 Response Team

A response team has been established to deal with a suspected case of Covid-19 on campus.

The Team is under the supervision of the Director of Campus Services. The Covid-19 Response Team will operate on an 'on-call' 24/7 basis to ensure a rapid response to any suspected cases of Covid-19 on campus.

While the Covid-19 Response team is led by Campus Services, operational support from Student Health and Registry may be provided where students are involved in the suspected case, and HR may provide support to the Team where employees are involved. Further details of what employees should do if they become unwell while on campus can be found on the [University's website](#).

All members of the University Community are required to follow the instructions of the Covid-19 Response Team. In all instances, when it comes to matters relating to Covid-19, the decision of the Covid-19 Response Team is final. Specifically, where an employee is directed to leave campus by the Team, the employee must follow this instruction.

### Isolation Area

Designated isolation areas are located in the Casey Changing Rooms, Student Health Centre and the Phoenix Sports Centre.

These designated areas, and the access routes to same, are easily accessible and as far as is reasonable and practicable, have been made accessible by people with disabilities.

The isolation areas are behind closed doors, ventilated and equipped with:

- tissues
- hand sanitiser
- disinfectant
- PPE
- gloves
- face coverings
- clinical waste bags.

### Process Steps

In the first instance, where an employee develops symptoms of Covid-19 while on campus, they should notify their Head of Department immediately. Alternatively, the employee may contact the Covid-19 Response Team directly at extension 7999 or (01) 474 7999 or by email [covid.response@mu.ie](mailto:covid.response@mu.ie). The employee should follow the instructions given to them by their Head of Department or the Covid-19 Response Team.

The Covid-19 Response Team should isolate the employee by accompanying them to a designated isolation area while keeping at least two metres away from the symptomatic employee and also making sure that others maintain this distance.

The employee should be provided with a mask to be worn if in a room with other people or while exiting the premises.

Once the employee has made their way to the isolation area, the Covid-19 Response Team should initially assess whether the employee may immediately be directed to go home, contact their GP, and continue self-isolation at home.

The employee should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the unwell individual to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze, and then put the tissue in the waste bag provided.

The Covid-19 Response Team will ask the employee for a copy of their personal contact log, to facilitate contact tracing by the HSE.

Where it is not possible for the employee to leave campus immediately, they should remain in the isolation area and call their GP, outlining their current symptoms. In such instances, the Covid-19 Response Team will arrange transport home (by a person from their household or possibly an ambulance) or to hospital for medical assessment. Public transport of any kind should not be used.

Immediate action following a suspected case should include the closure of the isolation area until appropriately cleaned.

The Covid-19 Response Team will carry out an assessment of the incident, which will form part of determining follow-up actions for the University. Any such advice will be based on the outcome of this assessment.

The HSE may contact the employee directly to advise on isolation and to identify other contacts. The HSE may subsequently follow up with any close contacts of the employee to provide them with appropriate advice and take any necessary actions.

If the suspected case is confirmed

If a confirmed case is identified, colleagues who have had **close contact** will be asked to follow HSE directions and stay at home for fourteen days from the last time they had contact with the confirmed case. The HSE will contact close contacts to advise them on the correct procedures to follow in such instances. Employees should also follow the restricted movements guidance on the HSE website.

Areas where the infected individual had been working will be isolated until cleaned and disinfected by a specialist team.

# Appendix 14

## Hand, Respiratory and General Hygiene

Employees must ensure to:

- Wash their hands with soap and water regularly, particularly after coughing, sneezing, being in a crowd, etc.
- Wash their hands before and after preparing food.
- Wash their hands before and after being on public transport or when entering and exiting vehicles.
- Wash their hands before and after having a cigarette or vaping.
- Not share objects that touch their mouth, for example, bottles or cups
- Use own pens
- Adopt good respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
- Avoid touching their eyes, mouth, or nose.

Employees may also reference the [HSE guidelines](#) on Hand, Respiratory and General Hygiene for further guidance.

## **Appendix 15**

### **Limiting Time on Campus and Changing Work Practices**

Where possible, employees should only work with the same group of people when on campus and should leave campus as soon as their on-campus task and/or working hours are completed. Where possible, any meetings should be held on virtual online platforms rather than face to face meetings. Where a virtual meeting cannot occur, meetings in offices must be planned to maintain a two-metre distance between individuals. Attendees of the meeting should not attend if they are symptomatic.

As part of the workplace risk assessment process, any specific actions are needed to facilitate an employee's safe return to campus, such as limiting the use of shared office space, these will be documented in the workplace risk assessment.

Employees should also minimise their on-campus footprint while on campus and restrict their movements to only those locations that are required to complete the task.

# Appendix 16

## Personal Protective Equipment

PPE will be provided to workers in accordance with identified Covid-19 exposure risks and in line with public health advice.

Employees should be aware that non-medical face masks are not PPE, while respirators and face shields are forms of PPE that may limit exposure to Covid-19.

Face shields are not the most effective option for protecting against Covid-19. Although they may stop some spread of droplets from the nose or mouth, they should only be worn if someone has an illness or impairment that makes wearing a face covering difficult.

### Face Coverings

All members of the University Community should wear a face covering in all indoor settings across the University, except for in sole occupancy offices. The wearing of face coverings by students will be mandatory in all classroom and other teaching settings. The policy of wearing face coverings will apply unless an individual has an illness or impairment that would make wearing a face covering difficult. In such circumstances the staff member should contact the Covid-19 Response Team prior to their arrival on campus, on 01 474 7999 or covid.response@mu.ie. Face coverings should also be worn in outdoor congregated places on campus. The requirement to wear a face covering as set out above been extended to 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Current public health advice recommends face coverings should be used on public transport and in other crowded places.

Where necessary and in the context of physical distancing, changes to working practices, physical measures and/or additional control measures should be put in place to minimise risk.

A washable cloth face covering will be made available at the point of returning to campus for every member of staff who requests it from the RTCO (return.to.campus@mu.ie). It is strongly emphasized, however, that the use of a face covering does not at all diminish the essential need for physical distancing and good hygiene practices. Krok (door handle openers) are also available on request from the RTCO.

When using a face covering, employees should:

- Wash their hands before putting the face covering on, and once on, they should not touch it.
- While wearing a face covering, employees should wash their hands before re-adjusting the face covering and wash their hands again immediately after.
- When removing the face covering, it should be removed from behind, using the ties or ear loops.
- If the face covering is disposable, it should be put straight into a bin. If the face covering is reusable, it should be put in a plastic bag, and the employee should wash their hands after handling it. Employees should then take it home and put it in a hot wash (over 60 degrees) with detergent.
- In all instances, employees must wash their hands after taking the face covering off.

### Gloves

Where it is found that gloves are necessary, workers must not consider them as a substitute for hand hygiene and employees must wash their hands whenever gloves

are removed.

Additional PPE

If you require PPE, please contact your Head of Department or nominee who should then request additional PPE for the Department via the Return to Campus Office by email ([return.to.campus@mu.ie](mailto:return.to.campus@mu.ie)).

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