



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) GUIDANCE

The College recognises that the coronavirus outbreak is unprecedented and therefore special, non-contractual measures are being implemented to support staff and workers with the various circumstances that may arise as a result of the outbreak.

The College is monitoring the situation closely and this is a living document that will be updated as the situation develops. The most up-to-date advice is available on the University of Oxford website and can be found on this link <http://www.ox.ac.uk/news-and-events/coronavirus-advice>. If you have any queries that are not covered by the FAQs, please contact your manager or the HR Manager or Domestic Bursar in the first instance.

The College does not tolerate any forms of discrimination or harassment and wishes to remind all staff, workers and students that any such behaviour as a result of coronavirus is equally not acceptable.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Information about the virus

A coronavirus is from a large family of viruses that cause illness. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 to 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they have not been infected.

Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

Some, or all of the following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- cough
- difficulty in breathing
- fever

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term medical conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

If you are worried about symptoms, please call NHS 111. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment.

What to do if you become unwell and believe you have been exposed to COVID-19

If you have not been to specified areas in the last 14 days, then normal practice should

continue. The most up-to-date list of specified areas can be found on the Gov.uk website on the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>.

If someone becomes unwell in the workplace and has travelled to China or other affected countries, the unwell person should be removed to an area, which is at least 2 metres away from other people. If possible, find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a closed door, such as a staff office. If it is possible to open a window, do so for ventilation.

The individual who is unwell should call NHS 111 from their mobile, or 999 if an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk) and explain which country, if any, they have returned from in the last 14 days and outline their current symptoms.

Whilst they wait for advice from NHS 111 or an ambulance to arrive, they should remain at least 2 metres from other people. They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in a bag or pocket then throw the tissue in the bin. If they do not have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow. If they need to go to the bathroom whilst waiting for medical assistance, they should use a separate bathroom if available.

Vulnerable Employees

The College has a responsibility to protect all employees, but especially vulnerable staff. People of all ages can get the coronavirus however, older people and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) are more likely to become severely ill with the virus.

If you are concerned, we encourage you to discuss your health condition with your GP and inform your manager of any specific advice received so that they are aware of your circumstances and can support you appropriately and discuss your personal needs with you as this situation develops.

Guidance on Facemasks

Current advice from the UK government health service is employees are not recommended to wear facemasks (also known as surgical masks or respirators) to protect against the virus.

Business travel

For non-academic staff, all trips for work **must be approved** by your line manager until further notice. The following rules apply when staff travel to countries that are either:

- 1) already classified as Category 1 or 2
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk>; or
- 2) Become classified during their time there.

If you travel to a country before any FCO guidance has been issued advising no travel, and you need to self-isolate on your return, this will be treated as authorised.

If the FCO issues guidance advising no travel while you are in a country that becomes classified, this will be treated as authorised.

If you choose to ignore FCO guidance and travel to a Category 1 or 2 country, this will not be covered and any self-isolation period will be taken as unpaid leave or holiday leave.

Personal travel

We advise that you follow the most recent Government guidance. If you have holidays booked in an area affected by the outbreak and need to cancel your leave, speak to your line manager, who will help you with this. We appreciate that this may be at short notice and will accommodate the postponement of your holiday.

If you choose to ignore FCO guidance and travel to a Category 1 or 2 country, any self-isolation period will be taken as unpaid leave or holiday leave.

Returning to Work after Personal or Business Travel

If you are returning from a Category 1 area, current Government advice is to stay indoors and avoid contact with other people, even if you do not have symptoms.

If you are returning from a Category 2 area, current Government advice is to stay indoors and avoid contact with other people, only if you are showing symptoms of a cough, high temperature or shortness of breath, even if the symptoms are mild.

If either of the above situations apply to you, please **do not come in to the College** but do contact your line manager as soon as possible to keep the College updated. They may request that you work at home, if that is appropriate.

Emergency Contact Details

Please ensure your emergency contact details are up to date on the PeopleHR system or give the details to your manager. If you need access to the system, please ask your manager or the HR Manager.

FAQs - All Staff

1. What actions are the College taking to reduce risks of exposure in the workplace?

A Bronze COVID-19 Committee, chaired by the Principal, is meeting regularly to ensure coordination of all relevant activities and liaison with Public Health England, Government offices and the NHS.

In addition, we are reviewing our domestic cleaning programme as part of our coronavirus response. We are also continuing to remind Fellows, staff, students and

visitors of the importance of maintaining good personal hygiene at all times, in line with Public Health England advice.

We are:

- Cleaning door handles regularly;
- Holding open the double glass doors into the student pigeon hole area;
- Changing the roller hand towels to paper towels.

2. How do I prevent infection?

The list below is from the NHS website, and is therefore subject to change (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>)

- Have good hand hygiene at all times, washing your hands regularly with hot water and soap (or hand sanitizer gel if soap and water is not available).
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away.

3. As a member of staff, can I work remotely?

If you are fit and well you should continue to attend the workplace in line with your usual work pattern. The College is continuing to operate as normal at present.

If you are ill there is no expectation that you should work, remotely or otherwise. You should report your sickness absence in accordance with the normal procedures in the Employee Handbook.

If you have been advised by a doctor, NHS 111 or through the NHS 111 website to self-isolate then you should do so as instructed. You should inform your manager that you have been instructed to self-isolate.

Depending on your role, you may be able to work from home. Please contact your manager to discuss. You should speak to the IT Manager in advance to ensure you are familiar with the procedure of setting yourself up to work remotely. Please email help@seh.ox.ac.uk for more information on remote working.

Where a casual worker has to self-isolate, in accordance with NHS 111 or other medical advice, the College will, as an exceptional measure, pay the individual for any work that has been agreed and scheduled during that 14-day period.

4. I have an underlying health problem or a member of my family has – what should I do?

We would encourage you to discuss your health condition with your GP and inform your manager of any specific advice received so that they are aware of your circumstances and can support you appropriately and discuss your personal needs with you as this situation develops.

5. I have been told to self-isolate but what do I do about work?

If you have been advised by a doctor, NHS 111 or through the NHS 111 website to self-isolate then you should do so. You can obtain advice at <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>. You should inform your manager that you have been instructed to do so and advise where the guidance to self-isolate originated from. If possible, you should work remotely if your job allows this. Some colleagues are better able to work remotely than others are – we accept and understand this and will deal with this on a case-by-case basis.

6. I want to self-isolate but have not been told to do so by a medical professional.

The College will not pay staff who wish to self-isolate without medical advice to do so. If you have specific reasons for wishing to self-isolate you should discuss them with your manager who may be able to allow you to take annual leave or unpaid leave, depending on operational requirements.

7. I have been diagnosed with coronavirus, what should I do?

You should report your sickness absence in the normal way to your manager. We will ensure that we maintain confidentiality in line with our legal obligations; however, we will advise any close colleagues who may be particularly vulnerable to the virus so that they can make any appropriate arrangements.

8. I have been absent from work for more than seven days with the virus but I am unable to get a medical certificate from my GP or medical professional.

We recognise that it may be difficult to obtain fitness-to-work notes to cover absences beyond 7 days in line with usual procedures due to the pressures on the NHS and/or the requirement to self-isolate. If you find yourself in this situation, you should contact your manager and advise them of the situation. We would ask that you continue to attempt to obtain a fitness-to-work note during your absence, but we will maintain sick pay during your absence.

Any abuse of these special arrangements may result in disciplinary action.

9. What about staff who are unable to work from home?

If you are in self-isolation and are well, but unable to work remotely, the College will treat this as an authorised and paid absence. You will not be required to use holiday entitlement and it will not count towards your sickness record.

10. I have unexpected caring responsibilities due to the closure of my child's school/nursery/day care facility.

If your child is advised to self-isolate, you should also do so and this will be on the same authorised basis as above.

If your school has closed as a precaution, but your child is not advised to self-isolate, then you do not need to self-isolate either. In those circumstances:

1. If you are able to arrange alternative childcare, please do so.
2. If you have to stay home with your child(ren), try to arrange to work from home if possible and practical.
3. If that is not possible (because of the nature of your job, or the care needs of your child(ren) etc.), then this will be treated as authorised and paid absence. You will not be required to use holiday leave.

If you have other caring responsibilities, which might also mean you have to stay at home, the same rules will apply.

11. I am due to travel overseas. What should I do?

Please follow the latest up to date travel advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office>.

As the situation is fast moving, when booking tickets it may be prudent to work on the assumption that travel advice may change and look at the cost benefit of flexible tickets versus cheaper tickets to consider where the whole amount may be lost in the event of cancellation.

12. Are school groups still being allowed to visit the College?

We continue to welcome school-age children to the College for organised visits. At present there are no restrictions on such activities currently in place, however the College will continue to review the situation and advice from Public Health England.

13. Is the College still open to the Public?

Currently, the College is closed to members of the public.

Owner/Version Control
COVID-19 Bronze Committee – covid19@seh.ox.ac.uk

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Audience
Fellows and Staff