

Guidelines for managers and staff:

Advice on handling coronavirus (Covid-19) whilst working on campus and/or from home

Updated: 18 March 2020

Dear colleagues,

Many organisations, including the University, continue to consider the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on employees in light of the emerging picture. Whilst it is not possible to predict the future evolution of the coronavirus and how it may impact staff and students, the University is following all UK Government advice, which can change quite rapidly depending on the perceived risk at a given point. The government action plan to deal with Covid-19 identifies a number of measures, some of which relate to physical controls such as working from home, social distancing and avoiding unnecessary travel. In preparation for this, members of the Vice-Chancellor's Group have been working with members of the senior team – Directors and Heads of Department/Institute – to put in place operational plans for each academic and professional services area, including working from home arrangements.

We have already taken a number of steps to comply with government guidance by postponing or cancelling events and moving to using skype and/or online facilities. All face-to-face teaching has now ceased and Heads/Directors will continue to work with their teams to ensure arrangements to work from home are facilitated. There will of course be a continuing need to support our students and staff who remain on campus currently.

These guidelines are not intended to duplicate University information on coronavirus already available via our University homepage and regular email updates, but rather to provide practical advice relating to contractual and workplace obligations. This set of frequently asked questions, updated since 13 March 2020, will be amended as further advice is received. At the time of writing – 18 March 2020 – the University remains operationally open. The questions and answers noted in this document should therefore be considered temporary for the purposes of managing the Covid-19 outbreak and these will change as further information and advice is received.

This is a difficult time for all of our staff and students and we know staff may be worried about the impact coronavirus could have in the coming months. Colleagues in Human Resources will continue to receive and answer questions and enquiries as promptly as possible, but please direct questions relating to your role responsibilities or working from home arrangements to your manager or Head/Director of Department/Institute as a first step. Your manager will listen to any concerns you might have and will be able to facilitate, as far as possible, your arrangements to work from home, and/or your arrangements whilst continuing to work on campus currently.

My best wishes to you all, Lissie



Frequently asked questions

1. As an employee am I required to follow University advice on coronavirus?

Yes. All staff are encouraged to regularly check advice available on the University's home page and in regular email updates and to follow the advice indicated. The health and wellbeing of our students, staff and our community is of utmost importance.

2. What are my health and safety obligations?

The University has a duty to protect the health and safety of employees. Employees also have a duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety of both themselves and others who may be affected by their acts (or indeed omissions) at work. The safety and wellbeing of staff and students is paramount, and the University is continuously monitoring the situation as government guidance is received.

It remains important for everyone to adopt good hygiene measures and for staff to follow the guidance provided, whether remaining on campus currently or working from home.

3. I am a manager and I am required to support staff to work from home. What should I be considering?

Some teams and individuals can work from home (or a location remote from the University) relatively easily and will be doing so already. As such they are more likely to have suitable IT equipment in place already and experience of accessing University software and services whilst at home.

All managers are encouraged to arrange remote working options with their staff and consider government advice, agreeing working from home arrangements wherever possible, even if they have not thought it possible to work from home before. The views and concerns of the individual carrying out a particular role should be considered. As a guideline (and there will be exceptions to these examples):

- Working from home should be considered for the following:
 - Those who already do so successfully.
 - Those who can do so without significant detriment to their role i.e. with some minor adaptations or changes in expectation.
 - Those who have the equipment and suitable environment to do so.
 - Those who fulfill the above and are at higher risk by virtue of age or health condition.

- The principles of home working should be followed to take into consideration personal circumstances. Such requests may be due to the following examples:
 - Being a part-time carer for an elderly and/or vulnerable adult.
 - Living with a child or other adult who has a severe and chronic health condition.
 - Supporting a partner who has an underlying health condition and

whose external networks of support have been closed due to the coronavirus outbreak.

- The use of public transport to commute where this becomes unavailable.

Colleagues in IT have provided helpful guidance for us all to refer to:

- [Working from home](#)
 - Useful links
 - Accessing University systems from a personal device
 - Using a University device off-campus
 - Making my first Skype for Business call
- [Learning and Teaching online:](#)
 - Moving my first lecture online
 - Hosting my first tutorial or meeting online
 - Live demonstrations and Q&A opportunities

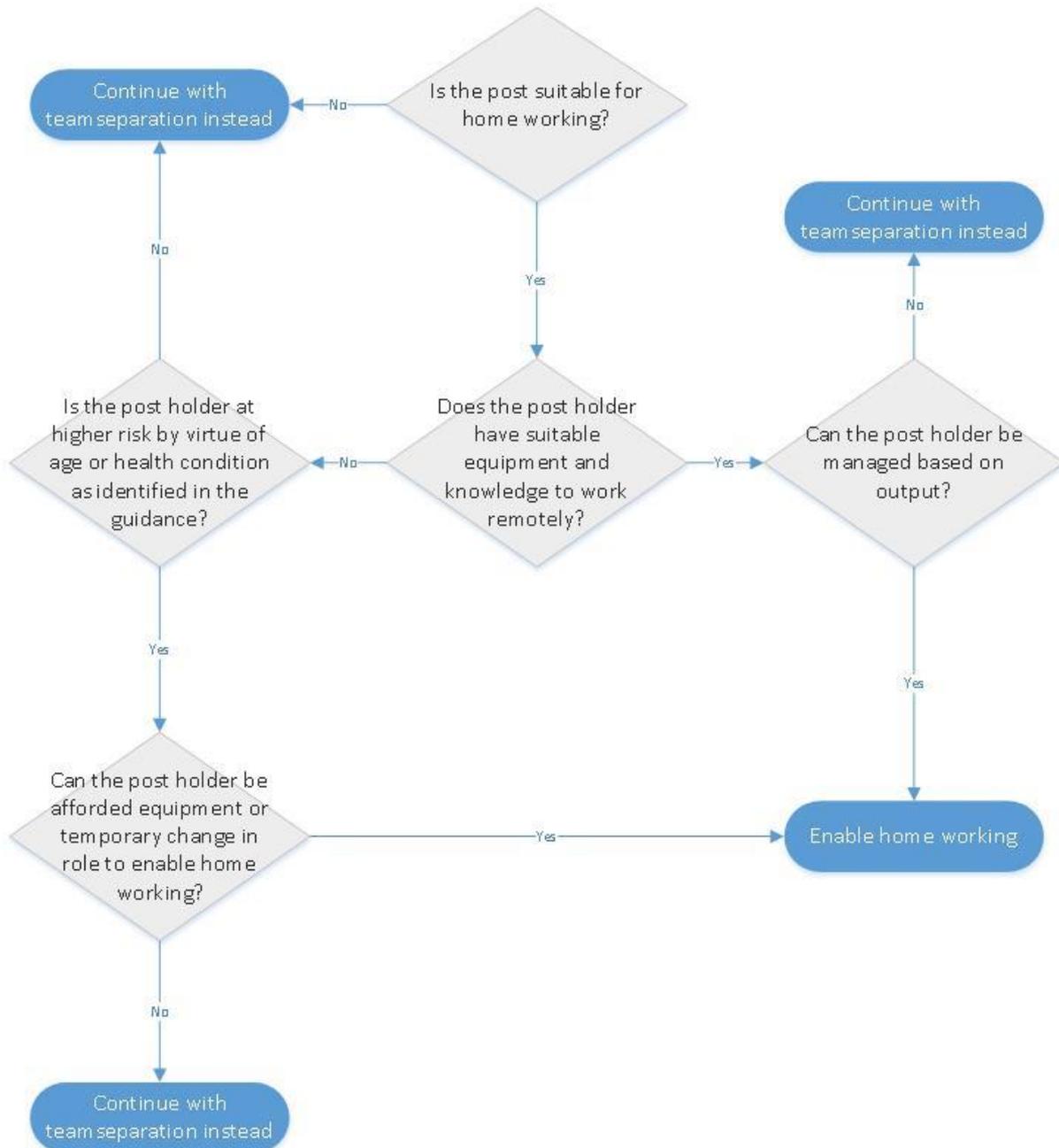
There will however be some teams and individuals for whom home working is more challenging, for example some professional service roles. The starting point therefore is that not all individuals or teams will be able to do so currently for a number of reasons, not least of which is the need for them to be physically on campus to carry out their role. Where working from home is not feasible currently then the use of team separation should be implemented to reduce the risk of whole team infection at the same time – this might mean locating staff in different areas of the department/office to allow for social distancing and/or relocating members of the team to a different location.

- Team separation should be considered for the following:
 - Those who cannot work from home for whatever reason currently.
 - Those who prefer to physically stay on site.
 - Those who have mental health conditions who may benefit from being with others.

In certain circumstances, it may be possible for those identified as vulnerable due to age or health condition to be allocated alternative work but if the work cannot be avoided, then a risk assessment should be carried out to ensure suitable PPE (personal protective equipment) is provided to protect the user against health and safety risks at work. A full risk assessment should be undertaken – please note the flowchart below:



Risk Assessment Process



4. Principles of working from home

Staff working from home are continuing to work and deliver the outputs required in their role. Although some adaptations may be required, Heads and Directors of Department/Institute will be able to provide advice in relation to individual workload responsibilities and the types of activities staff can focus on whilst temporarily working at home. The intention will be to ensure fair treatment and consistency of approach and to provide a framework for reporting and monitoring in line with departmental/university requirements. This will include a requirement for all staff to keep in regular contact with their manager by email and/or telephone. All staff should ensure their manager is provided with up-to-date contact details.

If contact is required at specific times during the working day, staff must ensure they are contactable at these times by email/telephone/online.

The University is currently open and continues to monitor the situation and national advice. The University will communicate with staff where this advice changes.

5. Will I receive my normal pay whilst working at home?

Yes. You will continue to receive your normal pay when you work from home and your terms and conditions of employment continue to apply. As a number of queries have been raised on this, to clarify, 'all staff' includes members of our part-time community including Associate Lecturers and Associate Link Tutors who are currently contracted to carry out work for the University. Support for our students will continue during this temporary closure period, albeit some of our delivery will be online.

6. I am a part-time member of staff and I have an outstanding pay/expenses claim. How do I process this whilst managers/staff are working at home?

If you have outstanding pay claims, please submit your claim on a Fin029/Fin004 form to your line manager for authorisation and copy in payroll_queries@chi.ac.uk.

An email confirming authorisation to payroll from your line manager will be accepted currently.

Word versions of the appropriate forms are available from payroll_queries@chi.ac.uk and should be submitted electronically.

7. I am a manager/Head/Director and a member of my team has an outstanding pay/expenses claim what should I do?

Upon receipt of the relevant claim or expenses form please email the form confirming authorisation for payment to payroll_queries@chi.ac.uk



8. Are there health and safety implications when temporarily working at home?

Most of the work staff would undertake at home is paper-based work or work carried out on a computer, and in general such work is not high risk. It is expected staff will adopt the same principles as used on campus with regard to setting up their workstation and taking breaks. You should seek further advice from your manager and/or a member of the Health and Safety Team.

9. Can I have a University laptop whilst I am working at home?

A limited stock of laptops and tablets are being prepared to support business critical requirements should these need to be used. Requests for access to these will need to be supported by Heads/Directors of Departments/Institutes as members of the senior management team, and will be prioritised.

10. What happens if I find myself in a situation where I am required to self-isolate or quarantine whilst working at home?

If you develop symptoms requiring you to self-isolate whilst working at home, please notify your manager and a member of the Human Resources team:

- Helen Girling, H.Girling@chi.ac.uk, 01243 816120
- Charlotte Meneely, C.Meneely@chi.ac.uk, 01243 816320
- Kevin Botto, K.Botto@chi.ac.uk, 01243 816047
- Elisabeth Whitaker, E.Whitaker@chi.ac.uk, 01243 816119

Please provide your name, dates and circumstances. This will help the University to closely monitor incidences and take the most appropriate actions.

11. What can managers/Heads/Directors/staff communicate about an employee with coronavirus?

Under UK data protection law, personal data concerning health is 'special category data'. This means that the University needs to ensure that any communication does not include any data about the individual who is unwell. For example, while it would be fine to let employees know that there has been a confirmed coronavirus case within its workforce, it would not be appropriate to provide any details from which the individual might be identified. Therefore, all managers/staff are required to remain discrete and to respond sensitively to the individual concerned whilst respecting the individual's privacy and UK data protection law requirements.

12. Will the University's Sickness Absence policy apply if someone has coronavirus?

Yes. The University's sickness absence policy will apply if a member of staff is unwell due to coronavirus <https://staffnet.chi.ac.uk/human-resources/content/sickness-absence-guidance>.

The sickness absence procedures indicated will adapt accordingly to take account of working at home arrangements (e.g. where meetings with managers may be required as these may be carried out online or by telephone) but it is important



employees who are unwell/have been unwell due to coronavirus report this to their manager (in the usual way they would do if they were working on campus). An employee who is following official medical guidance to self-isolate and who has flu-like symptoms may be unable to obtain a Fitness for Work note – for example, because their local GP will not see anyone with coronavirus symptoms.

Absence from work whilst working at home should be recorded in the usual way via HR self-service as sickness absence.

13. Can the University take steps to prevent an employee who has refused to self-isolate from coming onto campus or coming into contact with other employees and students?

Yes. The University must bear in mind the duties that they owe other employees or students under UK health and safety law. If the University knowingly allows an individual who has been advised to self-isolate to attend their premises or come into contact with other employees, they may be in breach of those duties, particularly where other employees and/or students are more vulnerable to infection – for example, pregnant employees, those with long-term health conditions.

14. I have booked annual leave during the period I am working from home. Although I am working from home, can I still take this period of annual leave and/or rearrange it?

Yes. You can continue to take your planned period of annual leave and/or rearrange it, as agreed with your manager. You will be able to confirm arrangements online via HR Employee self-service in the usual way. This includes any changes to annual leave commitments.

15. How long will I be required to work from home?

Unfortunately, it is not currently possible to indicate how long the current situation will apply. The University will continue to monitor all external advice and will update all staff where further advice is received.

16. Where can I find further information?

Further information can be found on-line via the University's home page:
<https://www.chi.ac.uk/student-life/support-health-wellbeing/novel-coronavirus>

Public Health England provide this data publicly and the website link is here:
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/f94c3c90da5b4e9f9a0b19484dd4bb14>)

Public Health England advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

Government Foreign Travel Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

17. Where will this document be available?

Advice on handling coronavirus at work will be updated as soon as possible after new and/or changing information is received and it will be published on the University's homepage and the Human Resources page of the Intranet.