

HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM GUIDANCE REGISTER		Guidance	G030
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Introduction

This guidance describes how the University will control the risk of the COVID-19 virus spreading on our campuses. This guidance is intended to describe what measures need to be taken if meetings, one-to-ones and consultations cannot take place on Microsoft Teams or by telephone.

Staff, students and visitors to the University has a role to play in helping to control the virus by staying alert and taking personal responsibility for their own behaviors and actions.

What is 'Close contact'?

The NHS definition of 'close contact' which is used for contact tracing is described below:

- if a person has face-to-face contact (within one metre), with someone else then this is close contact, including:
 - being close enough to be coughed or sneezed on
 - having a face-to-face conversation within one metre
 - having skin-to-skin physical contact, or
 - contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact
- a person is in close contact with someone if they are within 2 metres of them for more than 15 minutes (even if one or both of them are wearing PPE they are still in close contact)
- a person has been in close contact with someone if they travel in a small vehicle with them or if they have been near people in a large vehicle or plane

Where an interaction between 2 people has taken place through a Perspex (or equivalent) screen, this would not be considered as close contact, provided that there has been no other contact such as any of those indicated above.

Close contact does not include walking by someone in a corridor, or briefly sitting across a room or office from another person.

Workplace risk assessments

Responsible managers within AU, support services and academic departments have reviewed and updated their existing risk assessments in light of the virus to make sure controls remain valid, and, if necessary, have undertaken new risk assessments for COVID-19 where new ways of working and activities are required to control the spread of the virus.

Personal compliance with the risk assessment process will ensure that additional local measures taken such as changed ways of working, use of PPE, installation of screens, managed access to buildings and rooms, and queueing systems identified and implemented remain effective.

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General rules when conducting meetings

If you need to arrange a meeting always follow these staged considerations.

- Priority 1** Meeting to be conducted on Microsoft Teams (or other approved systems) or by telephone, avoid in-person meetings unless absolutely necessary.
- Priority 2** In person in an outdoor location
- Priority 3** In person in an indoor location with the necessary control measures including maintaining social distancing at least 2m apart.

Pre-meeting information

It is the meeting organiser's responsibility to check that all participants are free from COVID-19 symptoms and they are not being asked to self-isolate under the Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) guidance. This should be achieved with a reminder on the calendar or email invite or system message as required.

All attendees must ensure that they maintain social distancing requirements and do not come into close contact with each other (e.g. do not share a vehicle). By doing so, it would be unlikely that they will be requested to self-isolate under the TTP rules.

Suggest communication inclusion:

No individuals displaying any possible COVID-19 symptoms to be permitted to attend the University academic and commercial estate. All access to be facilitated on the basis that individuals are not experiencing any possible COVID-19 symptoms.

Main symptoms of COVID-19, which are:

- *new continuous cough;*
- *high temperature;*
- *loss of or change to your normal sense of smell or taste (anosmia).*

If you are displaying any possible COVID-19 symptoms, you are required to self-isolate in accordance with Welsh Government requirements. Further details are available at: <https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus>. You should to request a test and if you are a member of staff or student, inform the University of the test results. Further information regarding applying for a COVID-19 test is available at: <https://gov.wales/apply-coronavirus-test>.

Staff and students to be required to disclose any self-isolation through the [Pobl Aber People system](#) and [Student Record](#) respectively. Members of staff should also inform their Line Manager.

In line with TTP requirements, keep a temporary record of the meeting participant information for 21 days and assist NHS Wales TTP with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks.

In the university, staff and student data will be collected in a number of ways for TTP:

- Through the University's existing attendance monitoring system for all teaching activities by using their AberCard every time they enter a room or space which has a card reader.
- At hospitality outlets on campus, customer contact details, including staff and students, will be collected using a third party QR code phone app, evePASS (available in English and Welsh).

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Outdoor spaces and meeting rooms may not have card readers, therefore it is necessary to ensure records of participants at meetings are kept for at least 21 days on calendar appointments, email or system messages (such as Aladdin). The information held should only be the name of the participant, as other personal data such as contact numbers will already be held on staff and student records.

Documentation required for the meeting should be electronically on personal devices, where possible. If hard copies of documents are required, print beforehand and place in a cleanable plastic wallet. When the meeting has finished, the meeting organiser can either request the document to be disposed of or participants keep the material. Hand washing or hand sanitizing before and after the meeting is essential for all participants.

The meeting organiser should ensure that steps are taken to avoid participants needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission, particularly from aerosol transmission.

Considerations for outdoors meetings

The University has a fantastic green campus that can enable outdoors meetings. The following bullet points are things to consider when arranging an outdoor meeting.

- The type of conversation that needs to take place, does the discussion relate to confidential issues, including relating to identifiable individuals. If yes, can this be achieved in the outdoor location of choice?
- A walk and talk must maintain at least a 2m social distance. Consider the timing and location, avoid change over times for teaching (10 to the hour to 10 past the hour).
- Where possible, taking account of participants fitness, accessibility requirements and weather forecast, meetings should take place outside. Penglais Campus has a number of walks that enables at least a 2m social distancing to be maintained and outside seating areas should be utilised wherever possible.
<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/sportscentre/about-us/health/healthy/walksoncampus/>
- If outdoor seating areas are used then participants should avoid sitting face to face but sit at angles to each other or side to side (maintaining 2m social distancing), see figure 1 – example seating arrangements.

Considerations for indoor meetings

The University has meeting rooms to utilise for in person meeting. The following areas are required to ensure control measures are in place to protect from transmission of COVID.

- Ensure the room has the capacity to enable at least 2m social distance for all participants in the meeting.
- Avoid arranging in person meetings that start and/or finish during teaching change overs (10 to the hour and 10 past)
- Keep the meetings to short durations. If the meeting is over an hour, ensure participants take a break outside to get fresh air and remove their face coverings.
- Wear face coverings as required in the Use of Face Covering Guidance.
- Open windows to increase ventilation.
- Each participant to bring their own pens, paper, drink. Do not share equipment.

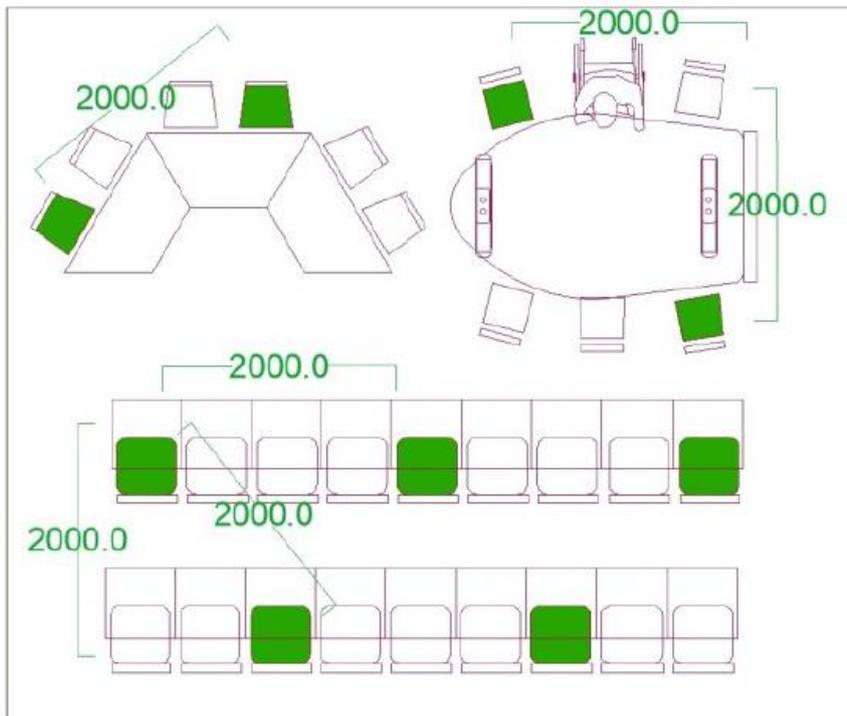
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- Each participant is to sanitise their area before and after use with sanitising wipes provided – desk area, chair (arms) etc.

Hospitality locations could be utilised for meeting purposes although they are unlikely to offer 2m social distancing on each table as they may be operating on the premise that one table is for one household as required by Government guidelines.

The size of small meeting rooms and some office spaces will normally mean that it is not possible to successfully implement social distancing, and these must not be used for meeting purposes.

Figure 1 – Example seating arrangements for indoor and outdoor use.



Further Advice

G028 Use of face coverings (COVID-19)

G029 Use of Offices (COVID-19).

Welsh Government Advice:

<https://gov.wales/test-trace-protect-guidance-employers>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-08/keep-wales-safe-at-work-five-key-steps.pdf>