

Risk Assessment for individuals considered to have an increased vulnerability if exposed to a respiratory infection

During the coronavirus pandemic University staff and students considered to be vulnerable if exposed to a respiratory infection will have been identified through completion of the Individual Covid risk assessments.

From 1 April 2022 the UK government removed the specific legal restrictions for managing Covid-19 risks and moved the Covid response to a “Living with Covid-19” phase ([COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/covid-19-response)). In this phase of the COVID-19 response the plan is to manage COVID-19 like other respiratory illnesses, while protecting people most vulnerable to infection. Further guidance is available [Living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19).

Although this change has removed the Covid-19 specific legal restrictions, the risks of respiratory infection spread within a workplace remains, not just for Covid-19 but for other respiratory infections circulating in the community. There is still a legal requirement to complete health and safety risk assessments taking into consideration the risks of communicable disease in the workplace. The risks to workers need to be assessed and appropriate measures put in place to protect those who are more vulnerable. Further details on workplace risk assessment is available here - [University Health Workplace Risk Assessment / Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – Advice for workplaces \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/workplace-risk-assessment/coronavirus-covid-19/). Risk assessment should help identify individuals who have an increased vulnerability so appropriate measures can be put in place at work.

If you consider yourself to be at increased vulnerability if exposed to a respiratory infection please complete Part 1 of the self-assessment – see below, and then arrange to discuss and complete Part 2 with your Line Manager / Supervisor and / or HR Adviser. If there are any ongoing health-related concerns, and further medical advice is required, please complete a referral to occupational health using the Occupational Health [Management Referral form](#).

Any risks associated with pregnancy should be assessed via the [Pregnancy risk assessment](#).

General advice

All staff / students are advised to review the Stay Safe Cambridge Uni web page, which provides advice and information on vaccination, health and support information: <https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus/stay-safe-cambridge-uni>

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as Covid-19 or flu-like symptoms and have not undertaken a Covid-19 test, please refer to section 2.3.1 Staff illnesses [Preventing Communicable Disease Transmission and creating a Healthy Workplace](#)

The University continues to encourage all staff/students to get [vaccinated for COVID-19](#) and to receive any booster vaccines when due.

Information for staff / students working in Clinical Areas (in addition to the above)

University staff / students who work in third party premises should:

- Refer to local risk assessment processes and assessments of the risks of respiratory diseases, including COVID-19 for your host Trust / regional placement.
- Ensure you are familiar with any enhanced infection prevention measures and use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) if relevant to your work area and role within your designated placement.

Part 1 - Self-Assessment: to be completed by individual

Name:			
Job Title:			
Department:			
INDIVIDUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT	Tick answer		
	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
Are you at a higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from a respiratory infection, including COVID-19? See below:			
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a blood cancer (such as leukaemia or lymphoma) • a weakened immune system due to a treatment (such as steroid medicine, biological therapy (sometimes called immunotherapy), chemotherapy or radiotherapy) • an organ or bone marrow transplant • a condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections • a condition or treatment your specialist advises makes you eligible for a third primary dose of the COVID-19 vaccine • are 70 or older • are considered obese (a BMI of 40 or above) https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/ 			
Do you have a health condition for which you have been offered or are you eligible for new treatments for COVID-19? See below:			
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Down's syndrome • certain types of cancer or have received treatment for certain types of cancer • sickle cell disease • certain conditions affecting their blood • chronic kidney disease (CKD) stage 4 or 5 • severe liver disease • an organ transplant • certain autoimmune or inflammatory conditions (such as rheumatoid arthritis or inflammatory bowel disease) • HIV or AIDS who have a weakened immune system • inherited or acquired conditions affecting their immune system • rare neurological conditions: multiple sclerosis, motor neurone disease, Huntington's disease or myasthenia gravis 			
Have you received all the recommended UK vaccinations and Covid Vaccinations to protect you against respiratory infections? NHS vaccinations and when to have them - NHS (www.nhs.uk) If you have not received these vaccinations and there is no medical reason why you should not have these, it is recommended that you contact your General Practitioner to discuss further.			

WORK ACTIVITIES ASSESSMENT	Tick answer	
	Yes	No
Does your work involve high risk activities where you could be exposed to infection at work – e.g., working directly with known COVID or Tuberculosis positive individuals or with the virus and / or other respiratory pathogens within a containment level three facility / laboratory setting.		
Does your work involve medium risk activities – e.g. high number of different face-to-face contacts - e.g. job roles with frequent contact with the public, face to face teaching with large groups, etc.		
Does your work involve low risk activities – e.g. work in an office space or laboratory that has had a Healthy Workplace Risk Assessment completed with good ventilation		

Part 2 Outcome of assessment - to be completed by line manager in discussion with individual.

Individual identified as vulnerable if exposed to a respiratory infection	Please specify: Yes / No
Work activities assessment	Please specify: high / medium / low

Risk Rating		
Work activity	Self-assessment indicates Vulnerable worker	Self-assessment indicates not a Vulnerable worker
High risk	Refer to OH – using management referral form	Overall risk if exposed to respiratory infection is low, no requirement for any additional adjustments or controls
Medium risk	Review Healthy Workplace Risk Assessment with individual to consider whether any additional control measures are required	Overall risk if exposed to respiratory infection is low, no requirement for any additional adjustments or controls
Low risk	Overall risk if exposed to respiratory infection is low, no requirement for any additional adjustments or controls	Overall risk if exposed to respiratory infection is low, no requirement for any additional adjustments or controls

Additional adjustments / controls (in addition to those indicated in the Healthy Workplace Assessment) could include:

Work from home / hybrid working – if this can be accommodated
Amend work hours to use public transport outside of peak periods
Adapt / modify work activities / role to reduce close contact with other people
Eliminate hot desking
Minimise close interaction with people and, when possible, maintain >2m distance from people
Use of respiratory protective equipment (RPE) e.g. fit tested FFP2/3 face mask as an additional control measure if advised by a clinician such as GP, specialist or occupational health
Provision of CO2 monitor to assess work area
Referral to Staff Counselling Centre for psychological support for any staff member concerned about their mental health and their ongoing vulnerability to respiratory infections.

OH referral indicated:	Yes / No
Agreed adjustments at work:	
Name of Line Manager	
Date of Assessment	
Signature of Line Manager	
Signature of Individual	

A copy of this completed risk assessment form should be retained by the individual and their line manager and / or stored in the individual's departmental HR file – to be agreed at local level.