



Guidelines for Returning to Campus for 2021/22 academic year

Introduction

In line with the Discretionary Framework [A Safe Return to On-Site Further and Higher Education and Research](#) which the HE sector agreed with government, the University is preparing for a return to campus with increased on-site activity and in-person teaching. The clear intention stated in the document is for a **'predominately on-site learning experience for students and learners'** for the year **2021/22**. The document also highlights that both teaching and research are essential activities within higher education.

Ongoing uncertainty about the roll-out of the vaccination programme and the rise in cases linked to the Delta variant means that the University within this framework is planning for a number of scenarios (Best case, medium case, worst case) as agreed by Council in June.

The purpose of this guidance note is to give help to Heads/Managers to manage the situation in their schools and departments. **There is no one plan that will fit every area**, each area should prepare what is most appropriate for them with the parameters outlined in this communication. Public Health guidelines will continue to inform the decisions across the University. The health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students is paramount.

Main Points

- In general, all academic staff, technical and support staff needed for in-person teaching should be preparing to return for on-campus activity for the Michaelmas Term.
- All staff who are timetabled for in-person activity (teaching, tuition, lab set up etc.,) should make themselves available.
- Schools are best placed to judge where individual exceptions from this rule can and should be made and will have flexibility to manage the return to campus in this regard.
- There is no one size fits all and individual Schools need to ensure that their **'Resumption of Activity on Campus plan'** is updated to reflect the current health guidelines. These plans were developed last year with input and guidance from College Health and Safety and are still valid today.
- Restrictions, in terms of numbers, will depend on what guidance is received regarding social distancing and other health mitigation measures and 'Resumption of Activity on Campus' plans should be updated accordingly as soon as this guidance will be issued by government. No date has been given yet by the Department when to expect this guidance.



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- Large lectures above 150 will continue to be online. For lectures between 50 and 150 schools have discretion as to whether they should be in person or online.
- Schools and departments are asked to **continue to communicate with their staff** in relation to these guidelines and the evolving situation regarding the return for on-campus activity and teaching.
- As part of the Resumption of Activity on Campus plans, every area needs to have a designated COVID19 co-ordinator.
- All Staff in an area should be made aware of where the plan is held and should make themselves aware of the plan for their own area.
- For many Professional Services staff, a form of hybrid working may be appropriate, in line with University needs. An 'Interim Hybrid Working Policy' is currently being developed. Until that policy has been approved by the University, all those that can work from home should continue to do so.
- Those professional services staff who are required on campus during Michaelmas Term should do so under the remit of the School/Area's Resumption of Activity On Campus Plan, in pods on rotated days.
- The [COVID-19 Information Hub](#) has all the updated information and advice. This page is constantly being updated and will always have the latest information as well as FAQ's.
- Schools and Areas who have staff in at-risk groups should contact HR to have the staff member medically assessed as to whether they are high-risk or very high-risk to establish what if any accommodations are required. To arrange this, please email employee.relations@tcd.ie.
- HR will support Schools and other units to deal with challenging queries as they arise.

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