

Generic Risk Assessment for Prevention of Exposure to COVID-19 at ISIS

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1 Introduction

This updated document aims to describe the implementation of the STFC 'COVID-19 Health and Safety Requirements' guideline published on 5th May 2020 [1]. It covers the return to level L3 where about 30% occupancy of the site is expected.

On 11th May 2020, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) prepared guidance for laboratories and research facilities entitled 'Working safely during COVID-19 in labs and research facilities' [2]. This government guidance was addressed to employers, employees and the self-employed. The current version of this guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>.

This document is based on both guidance [1] and [2], and its objective is to inform all ISIS staff, contractors and visitors, how COVID-19 is managed in ISIS.

Social distancing, washing hands and cleaning work areas and, if needed, the use of Plexiglas barriers (where possible) are still the main COVID-19 control measures. However, in those circumstances where the 2m rule will not be possible to follow, guidance about what PPE has to be used and how to use it and how to control these exceptional cases is provided.

This document now explains under what circumstances a vulnerable person will be allowed to work on-site and how to put in place the control measures in a case by case basis, following the guidance provided by STFC SHE [1] and HR [3].

Please apply DISTANCE, TIME and SHIELDING to minimise the risk of exposure at all times rather than the use of PPE.

2 Scope

This document, and specific measures derived from it for mitigating exposure to COVID-19, must be applied in addition to those controls already recorded for any task related Risk Assessment.

This document applies to any ISIS task or activity carried out by ISIS and STFC staff, contractors and visitors in any ISIS building or workplace (for example workshops, laboratories, staircases, corridors, coffee lounges, toilets and meeting rooms) until further notice.

This generic risk assessment (RA) should be supported by a specific Building RA and Task RA and method statement (MS) for each building, task and work package.

This document is complementary to any documents issued by STFC SHE Group [1] or by RAL Estates to control risks such as site access control and usage of common RAL spaces.

This document covers L3 conditions.

3 Responsibilities

The Division Heads, with their Group Leaders' support, will ensure that the control measures given in this document are included in any RA from 24th March 2020 until further notice.

The Division Heads will ensure the required resources to implement these control measures are available.

The Division Heads and Group Leaders will assign the persons needed to ensure that these controls are followed by all workers. They will approve all the tasks and the related risk assessments (if a new COVID-19 version is needed).

ISIS Safety Officer (and Deputy) will provide support to Division Heads, Group Leaders, Building Supervisors and Task Supervisors on any of the H&S aspects mentioned in this document. They will also provide the content of the 'ISIS Generic COVID-19' training to the Group Leaders. This training is required for any people working in any ISIS building.

The Building Supervisor will submit a COVID-19 building-related risk assessment to the Division Head for approval. The building risk assessment will describe the people movement (following as much as possible the 'one-way' rule), the access and exit doors, the common areas access and the gel sanitiser points (if needed). The Building Supervisor will approve the time allocation for each task, ensuring that the occupancy in the building is not exceeded at any time. **No task will start until these control measures are in place.**

The Task Supervisor will ensure that the control measures described in this document and in the specific risk assessment (if needed) are in place for tasks before they start (as guidance see [1] Appendix 1).

The checklists given in Appendix 8 & 9 of the STFC SHE guidance [1] can be used as an aide-memoir for Group Leaders, Building Supervisor and Task Supervisor.

There is an area readiness sign off-process to ensure that the task can start safely.

4 What are the hazards?

In making this assessment we have used the latest Government information as set out on the gov.uk web site as well as the UKRI policies. In setting out the work practices and method statements we have followed all the present government guidelines or added additional safeguards to protect and minimise the risk to staff.

4.1 Who might be harmed and how?

If an individual has tested positive for COVID-19 the nature and duration of any immunity after recovery is unknown. Until further information comes to light about reinfection rates and immunity, and antibody testing becomes widely available, this assessment will assume **that any person can be infected.**

There are two main routes by which people can spread COVID-19:

Infection can be spread to people who are nearby (within 2 metres) through droplets which could be released and inhaled into the lungs, predominantly through sneezing and coughing.

It is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (e.g. touching a door knob or shaking hands, then touching own face). Note that sweat is not contagious.

4.2 Safety Measures

Staff and contractors and their households should have had no symptoms of COVID-19 in the preceding 7 days before coming on site.

There will be a mixture of working from home and working on site as required for the department to operate effectively.

Keep 2 metres distance (minimum) at all times unless this is not feasible for a given and specific task, in which case follow the guidance given in para 4.4.3.

Good hygiene practices; cough and sneeze actions, frequent washing of hands or use of hand sanitiser.

Enhanced cleaning regimes in buildings.

Working areas ventilation issues: As it is stated in the STFC COVID-19 guidance [1] the risk of air conditioning systems spreading COVID-19 is extremely low, and that most Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems will not need adjustment.

However, in small and poor ventilation areas, and in some cases, it is recommended to consider follow a risk assessment approach such as the following:

[https://stfc365.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/ISISWorkPlanning/Shared%20Documents/Task%20Risk%20Assessments/Instrument Reduced Ventillation RA.doc?d=w8af246f06ee1482280e6d4e5106df81e&csf=1&web=1&e=FrHEiY](https://stfc365.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/ISISWorkPlanning/Shared%20Documents/Task%20Risk%20Assessments/Instrument%20Reduced%20Ventillation%20RA.doc?d=w8af246f06ee1482280e6d4e5106df81e&csf=1&web=1&e=FrHEiY)

4.3 Specific Additional Requirements

The following control measures described in this document to reduce the COVID-19 risk must be followed by all staff, contractors and visitors.

Any person showing symptoms **MUST** leave the workplace ASAP informing your LM, the Task Supervisor or any team member (using your telephone).

Management Approval is required for work packages – see approval process diagram in Teams area [4].

Work can take place at any time, however the risk assessment should consider whether it is appropriate to generate a 72 hour gap in the work schedule. Tasks where there is frequent sharing of equipment and tools may benefit from this additional control even though the cleaning of such tools should happen frequently. This assumes that work can continue at home for the rest of the working week.

4.3.1 Work organisation

Building Supervisor/Task Supervisor/Group Leader must ensure that the following:

The Risk Assessment, other than that related to COVID-19, will be in place covering all the task work including, if necessary, lone working.

No work package will start without the following conditions achieved: see sign off approval process in Teams area [4]:

The appointment of a Building Supervisor and Task Supervisor.

The building and task Risk Assessment and Method Statement shared and understood by all the team members (which must include all the control measures given in this document).

The workplace(s) and building(s) have all the requirements laid out in this document in place – areas will be signed off by the operational Division Head after review by ISIS Safety Officer (or Deputy).

The contingency plan and all the resources needed (staff and PPE) are in place (see section 5).

4.3.2 Social Distancing

You have to pay specific attention when you are organising any of the following events:

- In offices occupied by more than 1 person the occupancy level is determined by maintaining a minimum of 2m distance at all times.
- Organising tasks, the levels of occupancy of an area must ensure that the staff are able to remain 2m apart if a minimum of 2m is not possible follow the guidance in 4.3.3.
- If there is more than one team working in the same area, a shift system should be considered to minimise the occupancy in the area. Teams may split the week to reduce staff occupancy.
- Organise coffee and lunch breaks to minimise the occupancy in rest areas and enable social distancing.

Cleaning materials and labelled waste bins will be provided. Waste bins must be lined with a plastic bag so that they can be emptied without contacting the contents.

Staff should minimise moving between buildings and work areas, if possible.

The Task Supervisor should carry out a daily check that all the control measures are in place before and after the shift. If this is not the case, the task must not commence.

The Task Supervisor should report to the Building Supervisor and GL in case of any unsafe condition related to the COVID-19 risk.

If a control measure is not workable work should stop and a reassessment should be done.

4.3.3 When social distancing is not feasible

In some circumstances 2m social distancing will not be possible; under this circumstance 2 different situations are considered and apply to a team of two (see paragraphs a. and b. below). In such cases as well as following the guidance below, STFC COVID-19 guidance [1] Appendix 4 & 5 should be read.

In all the cases everyone involved in the task must to be trained on how to put PPE on and remove it safely. In the event of having to change gloves in case of contamination, damage or after touching the face, it is important to sanitise after removal and before putting on a new pair if it is not possible to wash the hands immediately.

A dedicated labelled bin must be used to dispose of all the PPE used.

a. Short task 15mins or less

When the close distance task takes no more than 15 minutes, the 2 workers must:

If they are working face-to-face: use a face visor & splash resistant surgical mask type IIR

If they are not working face-to-face: splash resistant surgical mask type IIR

Also, if they are constantly sharing tools: use nitrile gloves

b. Mid & Long-time task (15 – 60mins)

If the task takes more than 15 minutes but no more than 60 minutes, **a third person should monitor** that all the PPE has been used correctly at all times and assist them if they need any support.

The 2 workers must:

Use a face visor & splash resistant surgical mask type IIR

Also, if they are sharing tools: use nitrile gloves

If the task is expected to **take more than 60 minutes and less than 2 hours**, a 15 minute break after 60 minutes should be taken and consideration should be given to changing PPE or continuing dependent of the task and its length. As above third person must also be present.

In any other situation, the support from the ISIS Safety Officer (or Deputy) must be requested.

4.3.4 Vulnerable worker on-site

If a vulnerable staff is essential to take on an approved task, the Group Leader must follow the HR 'Guidance on managing the return to work of Covid 19 vulnerable staff and carers' [3] to implement a suitable and personalised risk assessment and to maximise social distancing for that member of staff. If Group Leader needs any assistance on this subject, ask for support to the ISIS Safety Officer (or Deputy).

4.3.5 General use of specific equipment

All equipment such as personal dosimeters (RADOS), lone Oysta Pearl units and the hand-foot radiation contamination monitors must have appropriate cleaning products next to them and these must be used before and after use of the equipment. A cleaning reminder poster (before and after usage) will be placed in a visible way next to this equipment.

Avoid the sharing of vehicles (vans, forklift and similar). All the body contact surfaces should be cleaned before and after use, keeping a record of who has used the vehicle.

4.3.6 Building access/egress control and movement

Before any task can commence, all the required building signage should be in place (on access/egress doors, corridors, workplace, lifts, toilets and coffee lounges).

Signage will decrease the risk of staff passing unnecessarily, even in the case of building evacuation. However if in immediate danger exit through the nearest door.

A sign on the entrance to a work area should indicate that work is taking place in the area and who to contact and their mobile number. Agreement from your Building Supervisor and Task Supervisor of the area you want to enter should be sought before entering an area you have not been assigned to.

If possible, all building corridors and staircases will be signed as one-way. However, in some circumstances, it could be accepted to use them as two-ways. In all the cases, your behaviour using corridors and staircases must be as follows:

Adhere to building signage.

Do not loiter, walk through corridors and staircases without stopping.

Do not maintain any conversation at all.

When you are accessing a corridor or staircase check if it is occupied, if possible, allow the other person to leave the corridor or staircase keeping the social distancing at all times.

In two-way corridors and staircases, avoid passing other people whenever possible.

If possible, move to an area that gives more room to pass (for example by backing up in shorter corridors, or waiting at wider points).

If it is necessary to pass a person in a corridor or staircase, you should do so quickly, maximise the space between you and pass facing away from each other.

4.3.6.1 Required signage:

The access & egress doors

The staircase to go up & down

The way in each corridor

Avoiding the use of lifts

The occupancy in toilets and coffee lounges

The type of the signage should be the same in all ISIS buildings.

Put a 2 metre reference marker on the floor or on the wall to alert people to the 2 metre rule.

Place signs on the main access of buildings and work areas, reminding individuals of general control measures:

<https://www.safetysignsupplies.co.uk/search/infection/signage-for-social-distancing/product/564755/pcomposite-social-distancing-measures-sign-for-retail-and-business-withnbspwarni~68281.html?gh=true>



4.4 Individual actions for all staff

All staff will log in and out of the work areas with the task supervisor and call the MCR when arriving on site and leaving site – this will to enable contact tracking.

If you feel any COVID-19 symptoms, you must leave the workplace ASAP informing your LM, the Task Supervisor or any team member (using your telephone).

Minimise the use of public transport, maintain social distancing during the journey and wash your hands when you arrive at the site.

Park your car at the closest bay to your workplace possible and spread parking out over the car park using alternating bays.

Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds – follow hand washing instructions present in washrooms. How often you wash your hands will depend on the items that you have been handling and/or if you have interacted with anybody. At least, every time you are entering and leaving your workplace, before eating and drinking, and between tasks.

Use hand sanitiser gels (70% Ethanol) if soap and water are not readily available, but wash hands with soap and water at the earliest opportunity.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or the inside of your elbow (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.

Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.

Minimise touching your face with hands – if you do so, use a clean tissue.

Minimise contact time with others (no longer than 15 minutes) and ensure you maintain 2 metres or more from any person.

Minimise the sharing of tools; wear gloves if it is not possible to avoid this. If you cannot use gloves, clean all the handhold surfaces of the tool or machine before and after you use it.

At the end of each shift, clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and door handles (use normal household disinfectant).

For cleaning your tools and surfaces in the workplace use disinfectant spray applying it on a cloth (unplug electrical equipment before use).

Leave all the working areas used by you (workshop, laboratory, toilets, coffee area and building) in a clean condition as you expect to find them at the beginning of the shift.

When you arrive home, wash your hands and face and remove all your working clothes.

4.5 Visiting a local supplier

(Local supplier means the visit can be accomplished in a day)

If you need to visit a local supplier or manufacturer:

- i. Ask your Division Head for the visit permission.
- ii. Ask for the COVID-19 risk assessment in the supplier premises: this must include the building and the task involved during the visit.
- iii. Ensure that the supplier risk assessments include measures to reduce the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19.
- iv. Confirm if you need to use any individual protections.
- v. Ask for a briefing before the visit to cover all the foreseeable risks related to the visit and their contingency arrangements.
- vi. Ask for the name and surname of people you will visit.
- vii. Prepare the visit in such a way that your time spends on the supplier premises will be the minimum required and you will meet the minimum number of people.
- viii. If possible, avoid both using public transport and sharing a car.

5 Contingency Plan. What to do if...?

The Alarm Investigation Team (AIT) is formed by a member of MCR and a nominated member from the task team. Their role is to investigate the activation of the fire alarm system and report back through the normal channels.

5.1.1 A fire alarm goes off

Stop your work and leave the building in a safe manner.

Call RAL Security 2222 or 01235 778888.

Go to the fire assembly point maintaining social distancing at all times.

If needed, the Task Supervisor will take a roll call of the team.

The AIT will investigate the cause of the alarm.

Wait for the DO / RAL Security instructions and confirm any risk in the area.

The Task Supervisor should submit the fire alarm incident report on SHE Assure.

5.1.2 A team member has COVID-19 symptoms and stays at home for self-isolation
The affected person with COVID-19 symptoms should (see flowchart in Appendix 3):

Leave or do not enter site.

Contact NHS and follow NHS instructions (<https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>)

Inform your line manager, GL and Division Head. Identify where you have been working and who you have been in close contact with over the past 7 days.

Some examples of close contact in a work environment are:

- Close face to face contact (under 1 metre) for any length of time – including talking to them or coughing on them, without the use of additional PPE/RPE.
- Being 1 to 2 metres of each other for more than 15 minutes, without the use of additional PPE/RPE.
- Sharing tools, equipment, and work areas without additional precautions such as thorough and regular hand washing, use of gloves, cleaning down contact surfaces.

With the support of ISIS Senior Management, the Facility Safety team will make a judgement on the need to instruct others to leave site, initiate a specific work area deep clean or close a work area down for 72 hours.

This decision is informed by building occupancy records, RAMS and discussions with task supervisors, the individual no longer on site and members of the team.

Where the situation is complex, individual(s) maybe asked to leave site temporarily as a precaution until a decision is made. This is not an indicator of the likelihood of infection.

DH will report to Bronze Team (coronavirusresponse@stfc.ac.uk).

5.1.3 There is an incident requiring first aid

Stop your work and help your colleague, if possible, maintaining social distancing at all times. Use face mask, face visor and gloves if physical contact is unavoidable.

If needed, call the MCR (x6789 or 01235 44 6789) for first aider assistance.

Inform the Task Supervisor.

The Task Supervisor will inform LM, GL and DH involved.

5.1.4 A control measure is not in place or cannot be followed

Stop any team task in the area affected.

Inform the Task Supervisor.

The Task Supervisor will inform LM, GL and DH involved.

Wait until the control measure is back in place, or the task procedure has changed achieving the same safety level.

6 Training and tool box talks

A dedicated ISIS Generic COVID-19 training session (tool box talk) provided by the GL or task supervisor, about the control measures should be completed by all the people involved (staff and contractors) in complex or new work.

All the pre work training sessions and briefings should be done using ZOOM or by phone, only in very specific circumstances should face-to-face training be allowed.

A daily briefing (5-10 minutes) is good practice to ensure that all the team members are aware of the control measures and they do not have any further questions. Any concerns should be raised so they can be addressed.

7 References

[1] STFC COVID-19 Health and Safety Requirements. Resumption of activity on STFC sites at Alert Level 3. Julie Black, 17 June 2020.

https://staff.she.stfc.ac.uk/Pages/STFC_COVID19_Requirements.pdf

[2] Working safely during COVID-19 in labs and research facilities. COVID-19 secure guidance for employers, employees and the self-employed. 12 August 2020

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5eb9752086650c2799a57ac5/working-safely-during-covid-19-labs-research-facilities-200812.pdf>

[3] Guidance on managing the return to work of Covid 19 vulnerable staff and carers.

<https://staff.stfc.ac.uk/she/Coronavirus/recovery/news/Pages/Guidance-20200624.aspx>

[4] ISIS Access Approval Routes – Flow chart diagram.

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/file/555C8821-DFC5-426E-A334-A6AEA564B3B8?tenantId=3f66361c-a87e-4158-8f61-99e82db3cac8&fileType=vstx&objectUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fstfc365.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FISISBusinessContinuityTeam%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FPhase%202%20tasks%2FISIS_Access_Approval_Routes.vstx&baseUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fstfc365.sharepoint.com%2Fsites%2FISISBusinessContinuityTeam&serviceName=teams&threadId=19:719a42de90e746aaaf221f0d7420975c@thread.skype&groupId=01f8e247-06a0-43f4-84b5-a65fbecc6aee

[5] Stay at Home guidance for households: current guidelines illustrated.

<https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/stay-at-home-guidance-illustration/>

Appendix 1: Note about PPE

a. Facemasks and face visors

Read STFC SHE guidance [1] Appendix 4 (Selection of PPE and RPE for COVID-19 Mitigation) and Appendix 5 (Donning and Doffing - putting on and removing PPE and RPE).

Read paragraph 4.3.3. of this document if the social distancing rule cannot be followed.

If you need any further clarification about PPE, **the support from the ISIS Safety Officer (or Deputy) must be requested.**

b. Lab gloves

Read STFC SHE guidance [1] Appendix 4 (Selection of PPE and RPE for COVID-19 Mitigation) and Appendix 5 (Donning and Doffing - putting on and removing PPE and RPE).

Not to be used as a substitute for handwashing.

Can be worn to protect against contamination when sharing equipment/workstation/materials (where time-delay or cleaning is not possible).

Must be worn in case of medium/high risk of hand contamination.

When worn, change if they are contaminated and try not to touch face.

c. Hand sanitiser

Read STFC SHE guidance [1] paragraph 8f. Personal hygiene measures.

Not to be used as a substitute for handwashing.

Can be used to supplement hand washing if task is located away from handwashing facilities.

Be aware of the high alcohol content of the gel (70%), do not expose your hands to any source of heat until all the alcohol will be evaporated (a couple of minutes after the usage).

Appendix 2: Q&A if a team member has COVID-19 symptoms *(see flowchart in Appendix 3).*

a. What do I do if I, or someone I live with, have COVID-19 symptoms, or I am in a support bubble with somebody who has COVID-19 symptoms or is self-isolating?

Leave site immediately, do not come onto site, notify your Line Manager.

Contact NHS 111 and follow NHS instructions.

If you are instructed to self-isolate, inform your line manager of your working locations over the past 7 days and, if you believe you may have not applied COVID-19 safety control measures, provide a list of contacts/co-workers.

Examples include:

- Not using additional PPE/RPE while in close face to face contact (under 1 metre) for any length of time – including talking to them or coughing on them,
- Or being 1 to 2 metres of each other for more than 15 minutes, without the use of additional PPE/RPE
- Or sharing tools, equipment, and work areas without additional precautions such as thorough and regular hand washing, use of gloves, cleaning down contact surfaces.

b. What do I do if someone I have been working with has COVID-19 symptoms or is self-isolating?

Talk to your line manager if you have been working with this individual over the past 7 days and believe COVID-19 control measures have not been applied effectively.

Examples include:

- Not using additional PPE/RPE while in close face to face contact (under 1 metre) for any length of time – including talking to them or coughing on them,
- Or being 1 to 2 metres of each other for more than 15 minutes, without the use of additional PPE/RPE
- Or sharing tools, equipment, and work areas without additional precautions such as thorough and regular hand washing, use of gloves, cleaning down contact surfaces.

c. I am in a vulnerable category, what do I do if someone I work with has COVID-19 symptoms or is self-isolating?

Staff in a COVID-19 vulnerable category, are working on site under a specific risk assessment ensuring that additional controls are in place to minimise the risk.

Talk to your line manager if you have any concerns that the control measures identified in your risk assessment may not have been applied.

d. What do I do if I am contacted by NHS Test and Trace?

Follow NHS instructions and inform your line manager.

If you are instructed to self-isolate, inform your line manager of your working locations over the past 7 days and, if you believe you have been working with other individuals and not applied COVID safety control measures, provide a list of contacts/co workers.

Examples include:

- Not using additional PPE/RPE while in close face to face contact (under 1 metre) for any length of time – including talking to them or coughing on them,
- Or being 1 to 2 metres of each other for more than 15 minutes, without the use of additional PPE/RPE
- Or sharing tools, equipment, and work areas without additional precautions such as thorough and regular hand washing, use of gloves, cleaning down contact surfaces.

e. What will the Facility Safety team and Line Managers do in the event of an individual working on-site self-isolating?

The Facility Safety Team will:

With the support of ISIS Senior Management, make a judgement on the need to instruct others to leave site, initiate a specific work area deep clean or close a work area down for 72 hours.

This decision is informed by building occupancy records, RAMS, discussions with task supervisors, the individual, members of the team and any additional instruction provided by NHS Track & Trace.

Where the situation is complex, individual(s) maybe asked to leave site temporarily as a precaution until a decision is made. This is not an indicator of the likelihood of infection.

Also the Line Managers will:

Notify the appropriate Division Head and the STFC Bronze Team coronavirusresponse@stfc.ac.uk.

Report the incident in the SHE Assure reporting system. <https://sheassure.net/stfc/Portal/Portal/Index>

Appendix 3: Flowchart if a team member has COVID-19 symptoms

