

COVID 19 ADJUSTMENTS PROTOCOL

1. **Context.** This document describes the processes (Risk Assessment) and information management strategies (Adjustment Register and bulletins) that the School will employ to manage teaching, research and physical interaction in the Covid 19 era¹. This process has the following steps:

- a. **Examines** the hazards and risk activity² that operating in the Covid 19 era poses.
- b. Considers **direction** from Government, the Public Health community, a range of scientific disciplines and from the University (PO, Estates, EHSS etc).
- c. Considers the **expectations** of the School community and society more widely.
- d. Prioritises **essential outputs**; the conduct of research and delivery of medical education.
- e. Produces a list of '**adjustments**'. These are '*Mitigating Measures*'; behavioural or physical measures that allow the desired activity to be conducted by reducing the damaging outcome in either impact³ or probability⁴.
- f. **Communicates** what the adjustments are; bulletins, advice, signage etc

2. **Tools of the Trade:**

a. **Risk Assessment.** Given the unique nature of this event the RA is unusual. In most cases the RA scores impact and probability but in the case of Covid 19 the 'impact' on the individual who catches Covid 19 is dependent on their own physiology and health and not measures the school can affect. Accordingly, for the risks of catching Covid 19 all the mitigations are those which reduce the probability of catching the infection not lessening the impact on anyone who is subject to that infection. No attempt has been made to score these probabilities as all the mitigations are designed to reduce probability and the compound nature of layering mitigations generates a compound reduction. The RA has 6 sections:

(1) Universal Mitigating measures. Protocols applicable to all, for example not attending work if unwell. This avoids repetition of measures like handwashing appearing repeatedly through the Risk Assessment.

(2) The measures designed to reduce probability of catching Covid 19 by direct transmission of virus via aerosol or droplets or by person-to-person contact.

(3) The measures designed to reduce probability of catching Covid 19 by indirect transmission of virus via 3rd party commonly touched surfaces.

¹ This phrase is used to describe the period from the end of lockdown until adjustments for Covid 19 are no longer a significant concern

² The hazard is the virus. The Risk Event is what the virus can do; make people ill if they catch it. The Risk Activity(s) are those actions that expose individuals to the hazard.

³ The effect that's manifest if the risk activity occurs and harm is caused. Measured in 'damage' terms; injury / cost / reputation. A scale is required (Low / medium / high / very high or 1 to 5)

⁴ The chances that the hazard will occur with normal mitigating measures in place. Described as 'odds,' the higher the odds the higher the score.

(4) The measures designed to reduce the probability and impact of service delivery failure.

(5) The measures designed to reduce the probability and impact of reputational damage.

(6) The measures designed to reduce the probability and impact of non-Covid related health risks associated with home working.⁵

b. **Adjustments list.** The things that will be done differently to minimise the probability or impact of the Risk Event occurring⁶. Adjustments are always nuanced. Attempting to mitigate against physical and conceptual risks and meeting the organisation's priorities may generate frictions. For example; closing the building reduces the risk of infection but increases the risk that the organisation fails in its mission to deliver research and teaching and poses substantial financial risk

c. **Bulletins and Information portal.** The list of adjustments is unlikely to be in a readable format so the bulletin(s) translate this into themed advice, eg protocols for using the kitchen. The bulletin should explain the underlying rationale and the adjustments in plain language.

3. **Risk interplay.** The adjustments required to minimise the probability of contracting Covid 19 will be generally at odds with the risks to service delivery. For example; shutting the school minimises the chances of contracting the virus but generate new risks in that the School will be unable to deliver service. Failure to deliver service is a reputational risk, but so would a Covid 19 hotspot.

4. **Decision making.** The School's Ops Gp therefore:

- a. Keeps abreast of the direction set
- b. Samples the community to understand concerns
- c. Maintains a priority list
- d. Considers risk reduction strategies for physical, service delivery and reputational risks.

Synthesises all these to generate a coordinated and balanced approach

e. Records this on an Adjustment register; behaviour, procedures, layout and infrastructure. There are 2 kinds of adjustments; the ones set to the School, which may need local detail, and School of Medicine specific (for example clinical Skills teaching).

f. Communicates the adjustments applied.

⁵ for example, back pain from home working on poor DSE

⁶The impact of Covid 19 infection is fairly binary but the impact of non Covid risks can be quantified.

5. **Definitions:**

a. **An adjustment** is defined as a temporary modification to how the school operates and how people are to behave. The adjustments all interact with each other and can be categorised as:

Category	Subcategory/Type	Example of adjustment (indicative only)	Escalation scale
Behavioural <i>How individuals behave / conduct themselves</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health and Safety - Government regs/guidelines - University regs/guidelines - School regs/guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good hand hygiene etc - Observing rules and guidelines - Use of kitchens 	1
Procedural <i>New processes, ways of working or information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working patterns - PPE, Testing & vaccination - Cleaning protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modification to working times/place - Shift work - Use of PPE, and testing - Cleaning shared equipment/spaces 	2
Layout <i>of offices, circulation space, teaching rooms and labs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workspace environment changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tape on floor, signage, queueing - One-way system - Spacing of desks/beds - Moving power/data ports 	3
Infrastructure <i>Physical adjustments normally made by Estates</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning system (HVAC) - Modifications that require a tradesperson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adjust air flow volumes - built barriers or other works 	4

Table 1. Adjustment categories and examples mapped to an escalation scale

b. **Government (UK and specific Scotland) definitions** must also be considered in the framework. There are several specific terms in use that are important to capture in the framework:

- (1) Shielding: the concept of completely isolating those people who are clinically extremely vulnerable. Those shielding should not leave their homes and minimise face-to-face contact.
- (2) [clinically extremely vulnerable people](#)
- (3) [clinically vulnerable people](#)
- (4) self-isolating: people who display symptoms of Covid-19 should self-isolate from others until symptoms have passed.

6. **Assumptions.** The framework is based on the following assumptions (this list be changed or enlarged):

- a. Cleaning staff are properly trained in infection control measures and contracted by Estates with liaison to the School.
- b. Teaching will be in dual delivery mode for semester 1 2020/21. This is a catch all term; some students will not be present in St Andrews, some will be quarantined due to illness or possible infection, not all teaching may be possible at a 'whole-class' scale.

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- c. Not all staff will need to return to the building at the same time. Some prioritising will be required.

7. **University priorities.** The safety of staff and students remains the university's (and the School's) main priority however the university will continue to deliver teaching and undertake research, albeit in a modified way. It is expected that the University will set pan-campus standards on dress, PPE, distancing etc.

8. **School priorities.** The School must list its priorities as this will dictate which adjustments are enacted. This priority list will be agreed by the Ops Group and published for staff and students to read. At this stage (early June) the priorities are likely to be, in order:

- a. Complete the 2019/20 academic year and assessments.
- b. Open the research labs for time-critical research.
- c. Prepare teaching materials for on-line delivery in 2020/21.
- d. Deliver the 2020/21 curriculum.

Note that there is no priority attached to staff returning to work *per se*, this will be driven by the staff required in the building to match the priorities listed above.

9. **Adjustments.** Adjustments will be categorised as essential, important or aspirational as they impact on the School's priorities. Adjustments will be escalated according to the table 1. The School will prioritise essential and important adjustments and address them from the lowest level of escalation (1) to highest level of escalation (4) in turn. The focus will be on achieving safe working and learning using the layering of low-level escalation adjustments and avoiding level 4 escalation adjustments where possible.

Escalation scale	Adjustment priority		
	Essential	Important	Aspirational
1	Green	Green	Yellow
2	Green	Green	Red
3	Green	Yellow	Red
4	Yellow	Yellow	Red

Table 2. Adjustment priorities and adjustment escalation scale showing where effort will be focussed (green = majority of effort, amber = moderate effort, red = minimal effort).

10. **Lifespan.** Adjustments will progress through a mapped life cycle with the following defined stages:

- a. Proposed adjustment
- b. Agreed/enacted adjustment
- c. Rejected proposal
- d. Retired adjustment (which may be re-enacted if necessary)

11. **Adjustments Register.** A register of adjustments will be kept recording which adjustments are proposed, enacted, rejected or retired at any one time. This will ensure that competing stakeholder needs can be managed efficiently and to avoid silo thinking/action. The Ops Group will have the final decision on adjustments. The opinion of an appropriate expert will be sought to ensure that any adjustment proposal is fit for purpose. An adjudication process will be developed to resolve any disputes. The [master adjustment register](#) can be accessed from the Handbook.

12. **Communication of adjustments.** All staff will have a view of the master adjustment register and regular [Adjustment Bulletins](#) will be published in the Handbook to keep all informed of any changes.

13. **Adjustment Coordination.** To ensure that the needs of all users are met, it is important that any changes or adjustments are coordinated both within the School and with the wider University. Responsibility for coordinating this lies with the Assistant School Manager.

14. **Key stakeholders, accountability and responsibilities.** The key stakeholders shown below are responsible for engaging with the adjustment coordinators to ensure that adjustments are made according to greatest need. Key experts will be asked to judge the appropriateness of adjustments to ensure each adjustment fulfils its purpose safely. The key stakeholder groups in the School are:

Stakeholder group	Key people/function
Research Community	DoR, DDoR, DoPGR (Res Sp Team)
Teaching Community	DoT, Prog Directors, (Teaching Sp Team)
Ops Gp	Office allocation and open plan distancing
LT team / IT central services	AV equipment/IT support
Infrastructure team	Procurement/Technician - furniture
Bute and School presidents	Key links to student body
Master's Office	Building access/relaxation of lockdown measures
Estates	Janitors, Trades
Other Schools operating in the building	Chemistry, Biology
RBS / Conference Gp Services	Café, Conference space

15. **Notes on PPE.** Setting the correct level of PPE is a multi-factorial decision:

- What does the emerging and established science say?** Noting that there is substantial conflict of opinion.
- What are others doing?** This affects the perspective of the staff and students, noting that all individuals have a differing, personal, perspective of risk.
- What is available?** No point in stipulating a specific level of PPE if these items are just not available to buy.

16. **School-specific rules.** Irrespective of any other proposal the following are over-arching rules:

- Staff and students must not attend work if they think that they are ill or have symptoms of Covid-19. Follow government guidelines on isolation times for yourself and any in your household who may have symptoms

- b. Fire doors must not be wedged open
- c. Building security and integrity must remain intact.

HC Clark
for School Manager

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Appendices:

Risk Assessment
Adjustments Register
Bulletin (not started yet)