Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)
COVID-19 Return to Work
Operating Plan – Section 1

Version 3.0

29th July 2020

Document Location – COVID-19 Taskforce

Revision History

Date of drafting: June 2020	Date of next review: Ongoing (Live Evolving Document)

Version Number/Revision Number	Revision Date	Summary of Changes
V 1.0	--	--
V 2.0	16-7-20	Amended Procedure for Suspect/Confirmed Cases of Covid-19 and return to work process (appendix 14) Section 3 (f) page 47 - 50
	17-7-20	Amended Procedure for Suspect/Confirmed Cases of Covid-19 and return to work process (appendix 14) Section 3 f page 47-49. Return to work Appendix 14 presentation amended to reflect change to OP
V3.0	29-7-20	Amended Plan to include reference to use of Water Coolers, Soft Furnishings (Medical Unit only removal) and use of Waste Bags (staff), Amended procedure for Suspect/Confirmed Case of C-19 – to contact Manager or LWR.
Section 1 Amendments:	16-12-20	Amended plan to include reference to updated link for Remote working policy which was also updated with reference to SWPS for Remote Working

Approvals

Revision Number	Consultation Date	Names of Parties in Consultation	Summary of Changes
	July 2020	COVID-19 Taskforce	

This document will be reviewed and, as necessary, amended by the Institute on an ongoing basis. All amendments shall be recorded on the revision history section above.

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Section 1

What is Coronavirus
and
Key Control Measures

a. What is Coronavirus COVID-19

Coronavirus Disease 2019 or COVID-19 is a virus that poses a public health risk to all citizens. The pandemic which has arisen has implications for all workplaces as it can present a health risk to workers and other persons at a place of work, in DkIT's case, students and visitors. As the country tries to navigate its way back from lockdown, the provision of certain public health measures is necessary to reduce the risk of spread of the virus. These measures are of course in addition to the normal routine occupational health and safety measures in use currently. Managing the risk of spread in the workplace is vitally important in relation to the health of Institute staff and students but is also important as part of the country's general efforts to control the spread and protect the most vulnerable in our society.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 can cause illness ranging from mild to severe. In some cases, it can unfortunately be fatal. It can take anything from 2 days to 14 days for symptoms of Coronavirus to appear. They can be similar to the symptoms of cold and flu.

Common symptoms of Coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature – 38 degrees Celsius or above)
- a cough – this can be any kind of cough, not just dry
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.

Other symptoms may include a sore throat, loss of smell and taste. Some people infected with the virus (asymptomatic) have experienced no symptoms at all.

For the complete list of symptoms please refer to the HSE website www.hse.ie

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 disease is spread from a person in fluid and in droplets scattered from the nose and/or mouth of an infected person when the person with the virus coughs, sneezes or speaks. The fluid or droplets land on objects and surfaces around the infected person. Other people then contaminate their hands by touching these objects or surfaces and bring the virus into contact with their eyes, nose or mouth by touching them with their now contaminated hands. The virus can also spread if droplets from an infected person land directly on the mucous membranes of the eye, nose or mouth or a person standing close to them.

As little is known about this new virus, it is not known how long the virus survives on surfaces in different varying conditions. The period of survival may vary under different conditions such as the type of surface, temperature, humidity etc. Studies seem to indicate that it can persist on surfaces for hours and even up to several days in the absence of effective cleaning.

While people are most likely to pass on the infection when they have symptoms, current medical information suggests that some infected people spread the virus to others prior to developing or displaying symptoms themselves. This is why it is essential to maintain good hand hygiene and good cough and sneeze etiquette. (See Steps employees should follow to ensure protection Section 4 of this document).

Key Control Measures

The following are key control measures required for managing the spread of the virus.

Hand Hygiene:
Ensuring that everyone is washing their hands regularly thoroughly and that sufficient facilities are provided and maintained to allow this to happen.

Social Distancing:
Ensuring workers maintain a 2-metre separate insofar as possible while working, and when using toilets, canteens, common areas, etc. Also to promote social distancing when travelling to and from work (public transports, trains, cars etc) and in their daily lives, in order to limit exposure.

Cough Etiquette / Respiratory Hygiene:
Ensuring people cough/sneeze into sleeve or elbow, always cover up and dispose of tissues.
Cleaning:
Ensuring that all frequently touched objects and surfaces are regularly cleaned.

Attendance on Campus/Symptoms of Infection:
Staff should only attend work when they are symptom free. If anyone is displaying a fever (temperature), cough, shortness of breath, breathing difficulties, loss of taste and/or smell they should remain at home and self-isolate and not attend campus for 14 days. They should contact their GP promptly for further advice.

Staff should refer to the Institute's Sick Leave Policy and as amended Sick Leave Policy May 2020 Appendix 1 or links as follows:
https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/sickness_absence_management_policy_01_sep_2018_0.pdf
https://www.dkit.ie/system/files/sick_leave_policy_may_2020_to_include_covid_19.pdf
for instructions with regard to advising of sickness etc in regard to COVID-19. Any staff member living with someone who is self-isolating or waiting on a COVID-19 test must restrict their movements for 14 days. Note that studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Staff should only return to work where they have completed the Return to Campus Staff Induction training programme which can be accessed at Appendix 2 and completed the Pre-Return to Campus Work form Appendix 3 which can also be accessed at this link https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/forms

This should be completed a minimum of three days prior to the return to work date.

Remote Working Policy
The Institute has developed a Remote Working Policy Appendix 4 accessible also on this link https://www.dkit.ie/human-resource/policies-procedures and all staff should make themselves aware of its contents. Staff should work from home where possible and as agreed with their manager and/or if they have been identified as falling within At Risk/High

Risk category https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html#high-risk
Staff should also refer to the Safe Working Practice Sheet (Temporarily working from Home) Appendix 5 and Appendix 19 Guidance in relation to working arrangements and temporary assisgnments.

Health / High Risk Category of Staff:
Staff who have been identified as within the At Risk or High Risk category as defined by the HSE https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html#high-risk may be asked to work remotely if it is deemed there is a heightened risk from attending work and it is feasible to do so. If it is not feasible, extra control measures may be put in place in their work environment to accommodate them.

Travel:
Persons returning to the island of Ireland should refer to national advice issued by the HSE/Department of Foreign Affairs.
The above mentioned control measures are elaborated on throughout this document and all individuals need to take personal responsibility to advise their manager of any symptoms immediately.