Principles of Access for Desk-Based Research & Write-up Space

1. The government's Return to Work Safety Protocol directs that office-based work should continue to be carried out at home where practicable and the University encourages and will facilitate researchers to do so to the maximum extent possible. It is acknowledged, however, that this arrangement is not suitable in all cases and that access to campus is an essential requirement for some desk-based research.

2. All staff and research students entering the campus must continue to adhere to Government guidelines and University requirements outlined [here] and [here].

3. The University has enabled, through the RBCT, pilot access to laboratories and University facilities where this is essential for the research. Desk-based research and research write-up was not included in this pilot. This document aims to set out the principles to be used by Heads of School/Directors of RICU in developing their plans for reopening encompassing all research activities within the School/RICU. This will be undertaken under the oversight of the [CBCT process].

4. Capacity within spaces occupied by desk-based researchers and write-up areas will be substantially reduced under social distancing guidelines. Heads of Schools/Directors of RICUs must establish in dialogue with B&E the maximum occupancy within each space in line with current social distancing guidelines which may change over time.

5. A first step would be to review the total research cohort (staff and research students (doctoral and masters)) to use these spaces. Consultation with the group and PIs to identify those who require campus access to avoid a detrimental impact on research progress. Where the numbers of people requiring access is greater than capacity, development of rotas to facilitate maximum number of people while maintaining social distancing is recommended.
   a. Consideration can be given to extending working day to 8am-10pm
   b. Developing rosters within this time, either splitting groups across days or early/late shift each day.
   c. Where rosters are employed, researchers should be grouped in pods to minimise interaction between the pods i.e. the same people are in the room at the same time together with no cross over.
   d. Researchers who have access should go to their workspaces when they enter the building and remain in these areas in as much as possible.

6. Groups which may require particular consideration include:
   a. Researchers where their ability to work from home is limited due to a poor home working environment e.g. poor broadband, lack of physical space for home working, etc.
   b. Researchers working on projects where access to research facilities is essential for delivering on the project
   c. International researchers

7. Even for researchers who can work remotely, some limited time on campus may contribute to their wellbeing and overall research engagement and interaction

8. Local research leadership to prioritise access aligned with these criteria and enable through staggered access.

9. Local research leadership need to assure University of compliance with national guidelines in relation to social distancing, PPE etc.

10. Local research leadership will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the guidelines and ensuring safe operation of research facilities including:

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a. Comprehensive compliance signage and directional & floor markings should be put in place, in addition to one-way people traffic systems, where possible.
b. Appropriate numbers of sanitising stations will be required to ensure compliance.
c. Appropriate PPE and sanitising consumables should be available in advance of labs being put into use.
d. Occupancy levels should be significantly reduced to ensure compliance.
e. Twice-daily cleaning of all workspaces is essential and always between users.
f. Accurate recording of access is required for the purpose of future contact tracing if required.
g. All research students must have completed the online student induction module and self-declaration (which can be found [here](#)) before returning to campus as well as following local protocols. Local leadership must ensure that supervisors have received confirmation of completion before access is granted. Students should retain a copy of the confirmation email on their phone as they may be required to show this while on campus.
h. Regular monitoring and checking on the ground to make sure all procedures and protocols are being complied with.

11. All protocols and compliance plans must adhere to [UCC Return to Campus](#) requirements, [Health and Safety Policy](#) and the Government's [Return to Work Safely Protocol.](#)

12. Access for individuals with ['at-risk'](#) status will require consideration in the context of HSE guidance.

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