



COVID-19 GUIDE FOR SUPERVISORS RETURNING STAFF TO THE WORKPLACE

Over the past few weeks, we have been adapting to new ways of working as we responded to the challenges posed by COVID-19. The commitment, willingness and flexibility of staff in ensuring we could continue to deliver our services to students, staff and partners as we transitioned to alternative working arrangements has been outstanding.

As UniSA now prepares for staff to return to on campus activities, we have developed this guide to assist managers in planning for staff to gradually return to our campuses with appropriate measures in place to minimise the risk of a potential second wave of infection and to reduce the impact on staff and students.

You will be familiar with the resources on our [COVID 19 webpage](#). We ask that supervisors continue to consider the advice provided and access the resources to support their teams as they return to the workplace. The University has developed a set of Principles that you can refer to for further guidance and additional support can be accessed from the People, Talent and Culture WHS Consultants and Business Partnership teams as well as FM Assist.

Principles to support the return to campus

The following principles have been developed to support the planning for staff and students returning to campus.

1. The health and well-being of our staff and students are of paramount concern and our planning will take into account both the potential for a second wave of infection and the impact of transitioning staff back off campus, by actioning all reasonable precautions to guard against the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among our University community.
2. We will take a staged approach to returning to on-campus activities to provide opportunity to assess the impact of larger gatherings and to enable us to respond appropriately, minimising where we can the impact of transition for staff and students.
3. As the University progressively resumes on campus activities, supervisors and staff will ensure they enact appropriate social distancing and working arrangements at all times in accordance with the University's social distancing protocol.
4. Our approach to returning to on campus activities will recognise the specific needs of those members of the University community who may be particularly vulnerable to the impact of contracting COVID-19.
5. Staff who have their supervisor's approval, may continue to work from home, or an alternative location, and will review their agreed plan with their supervisor at regular intervals, to ensure they have appropriately considered the work task and health and safety requirements and that they are regularly connecting with their colleagues, team members, direct reports, supervisors and students.



6. Staff and students will share responsibility for the safe use of University facilities, ensuring they abide by social distancing protocols and support necessary hygiene practices and cleaning protocols as locally advised and managed.
7. The University will ensure that staff are communicated with regularly throughout the staged return and that support through this transition, and for their ongoing development and personal wellbeing, will continue to be a priority.

Specific requirements for implementing safe working, such as management of laboratories, studios, workshops, core animal facility etc, will be issued through the relevant area of the University (e.g. ISTS for technical advice, SAS and SEU for the detailed approach to restoring student services on campus) but all plans will adhere to these core principles.

1. What are the first steps I should be thinking about in managing my team's return to the workplace ?

- a) Familiarise yourself with the [Pandemic Recovery Plan: Roadmap](#) (Roadmap) which sets out the various stages in support of our return to campus-based operations.
- b) Establish a clear plan based on your staff profile, their duties and the priority of return to campus as aligned with the Roadmap. The relevant stages are summarised below:

Stage 1: May 18 – June 12, 2020

- Those staff who should return:
 - those required to be present to support revision sessions during SWOT-VAC
 - staff undertaking research fieldwork/research that cannot be undertaken remotely/requires human contact and permitted by the Dean / Director Research using approved preparedness framework
 - staff whose roles are essential to be on campus, such as supervisors and team leaders who need to support teams transitioning back to the work place
 - staff who have signaled their physical and mental wellbeing will be enhanced by returning to campus.

Stage 2: June 15 – July 24, 2020

- Begin planning for the majority of staff to return to campus. In this stage, the following staff should be returning to campus:
 - those staff required to deliver tutorials, workshops, demonstration /practical classes on campus
 - those required to be present to support revision sessions during SWOT-VAC
 - staff undertaking research fieldwork/research that cannot be undertaken remotely/requires human contact and permitted by the Dean/Director Research.

Staff in high risk groups can continue to work from home. This includes staff who are:

- are over 70 years of age
- are over 60 years of age who are immunocompromised
- identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander who are over 50 years of age and immunocompromised
- have medically certified chronic medical conditions



- are pregnant and on the advice of their treating medical practitioner have been advised to limit their contact with people.

Stage 3: July 27, 2020 onwards

- By this stage, we need to be ready to return all staff to the workplace.
- all staff to return to work on campus unless they have formal approval to work from home
- staff in high risk groups return to campus
- research fieldwork SA wide to be conducted with permission of the Dean/Director Research
- research requiring human contact via permission of Dean/Director Research.

Review the resources provided to support the University's response to COVID-19. These include the FAQs and other information which can be found on the University's [COVID-19 webpage](#), the [COVID-19 FAQs for Staff](#) and [COVID-19 Key Employment Principles](#). These resources remain available to support you in your management role and are regularly updated.

- c) Consult with your staff on your planned approach for their return to the workplace and coordinate staggered times for the return of staff to the work area to assist with the set-up of work stations and to reduce the likelihood of congestion in the work area.
- d) Staggered start, finish and break times should be considered to avoid staff having to use public transport in peak hours and large groups accessing communal eating spaces at the same time. The span of hours that staff can be required to attend the workplace are 7am to 7pm.
- e) Identify any information technology support your team may need to reconnect to the network and consult with the ISTS Helpdesk as required.
- f) Prior to staff returning to the workplace, take the opportunity to review work tasks with the staff to identify any modifications required to reduce physical contact with others.
- g) Establish a tracking sheet to record when staff return to campus and retain this record for WHS purposes.
- h) As we return to the workplace, it is important to consider how to move equipment safely. Some items such as chairs and computer screens can be awkward to return. Please review the available resources, such as trolleys, to support staff in returning to the workplace. Consult with your staff how equipment will be returned and coordinate any support that may be required. Your WHS Consultant can assist with guidance on manual handling considerations.
- i) Once back in your usual workspace you can use the WHS 45 online [Workstation Self-Assessment checklist](#) to guide the set-up of your computer and workspace. Further [help](#) is available if needed.
- j) Consider and remain informed about the wellbeing of each member of your team. Maintain accessible and regular communication channels with your staff members who may be working across different locations within the University and/or remotely.

2. What measures do I need to put in place to maintain social distancing in the workplace ?

We are asking supervisors to continue to take all reasonably practicable measures to uphold and reinforce the requirements of social distancing to reduce the potential and rate of the virus spreading within the University community. Our [Social Distancing](#) protocols can support you and your team to understand what is required.



The Facilities Management Unit have provided access to the [FMU Floor Plans](#) to assist you in assessing the appropriate social distancing requirements relative to work spaces. The [Social Distancing](#) checklist provided by SafeWork SA also provides useful information on how to measure out a workplace to ensure staff are appropriately distanced. Useful considerations include to:

- a) review work spaces and work stations to identify the number of staff that can be appropriately accommodated at one person per 4 square metres, with 1.5 m distance between staff. Staff can continue to share offices and work in pods or open plan where the appropriate distancing of 1.5 metres between staff can be achieved and staff have 4 square metres of space. This includes the desk area.
- b) note where staff cannot be accommodated at one person per 4 square metres, staff are to continue to work from home where possible, during Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Roadmap.
- c) review access to communal spaces such as lunchrooms, meeting rooms and other shared spaces, with consideration of the number of staff that can be appropriately accommodated in the space and whether there is a need for markings to indicate appropriate movement flow through the area. Social distancing of 1.5 metres between individuals within these spaces is required.
- d) review the use and availability of hot desks. These should be avoided during Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Roadmap. They should only be used where cleaning equipment is supplied to wipe down all surfaces before and after each use. Telephone headsets are not to be shared.
- e) note the requirements for gatherings of no more than 10 people. This applies to meetings, academic tuition and events. From 15 June 2020, gatherings may increase to no more than 20 people. This may require reconsideration of tuition arrangements, alternative meeting arrangements and re-scheduling or re-arranging planned activities. Face to face meetings should be short to reduce physical contact with others or be offered through, for example, zoom.
- f) take the opportunity to reconsider work arrangements and continue to connect with each other through Zoom, Slack, Skype and other forms of online communication during stages 1 and 2 of our Roadmap and to reduce travel to and from campuses in public vehicles for inter campus meetings. Staff should not travel in groups in vehicles to meetings.
- g) reinforce with staff the need to observe social distancing protocols throughout the campus, including individual workspaces, stairwells, lifts, and communal spaces and by observing the publicised capacity limits for meeting rooms.

Safe Work SA have provided some useful resources to consider [risk assessments](#) and they have also developed a [Physical Distancing Measures checklist](#) that you may find useful.

3. What do I do if a staff member wishes to continue to work from home and not return to the workplace?
 - a) The University's preference is that all staff return to campus by July 27, 2020. Staff being present on campus is important to provide the best possible service to students and to continue to strengthen our collegial and collaborative culture. There may be specific considerations for some staff that prevent them from returning to the workplace, for example medical considerations or caring responsibilities. Each situation needs to be considered according to the circumstances at hand and with reference to the return to campus principles. Your local [PTC Business Partner](#) can assist you if you require further support in these matters.



- b) Inevitably these exceptional circumstances impact our staff members in their personal lives. Supervisors are asked to have regard to the wellbeing and caring commitments of their team members and where possible consider allowing team members to access their available paid leave if they require additional time to attend to personal matters during this challenging period. The University's Employee Assistance Program via Human Psychology remains available to all staff and their families via phone and online consultations. They can be reached on **1300 277 924**.
- c) Flexible working arrangements can be negotiated where it is possible to accommodate a mutually agreeable plan and where there is no adverse impact on other team members or work activities. These arrangements must be formally documented with a clear review date included and placed on an employee's personal file. If working from home is a feature of flexible working, the staff member must complete an updated [COVID-19 Pandemic - Working from Home Arrangement](#) and [WHS29 Workstation Self-Assessment](#) and obtain their supervisor's approval.
- d) You may wish to consider the [Flexible Work Arrangements Procedure](#) in determining whether you will support these arrangements. Such decisions should be based on a risk assessment considering work requirements, any medical advice from the staff member's treating medical practitioner and other information provided by the employee.
- e) When we initiated the working from home arrangements for staff, staff were provided with University property to facilitate this arrangement. From July 27, 2020, staff are required to return to the workplace and all University equipment returned. If staff are approved to remain working from home, they may need to use their University equipment. This will need to be considered in the context of whether the staff member is continuing to work principally from home or on campus and ensuring that staff are not moving University owned technical or office equipment regularly such as screens, PCs or chairs. New working from home approvals will need to be lodged where a staff member will continue working from home.

In our COVID-19 [Managing Alternative Working Arrangements for Staff](#) guide, we provided advice to support supervisors in assessing whether a staff member could work effectively and safely from home. The considerations remain relevant to assist managers in negotiating flexible working arrangements to work from home. In summary these included:

Capability

- What are the duties and tasks of the staff members within my team? Can the staff member continue to deliver their full set of tasks remotely?
- Does the staff member have the necessary personal equipment and support to perform their duties?
- What arrangements will be needed to provide consistent direction and support for the staff member ?

Capacity

- Does the staff member have access at their home to the necessary environment to effectively perform their duties and that is compliant with the University's health and safety standard regarding workspaces (see the forms: [COVID-19 Pandemic - Working from Home Arrangement](#) and [WHS29 Workstation Self-Assessment](#)). Line managers need to be comfortable that where staff members are working from home that they are doing so in a safe environment.



- Does the staff member have caring responsibilities that need to be considered in the context of a working from home arrangement?
- Can the staff member provide the necessary technical connections to maintain their working from home arrangements?

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Connectivity

- Does the staff member have any other limitations (for example essential interactions with other staff or business processes) that would make working from home particularly challenging?
- How will effective connection between the staff member and colleagues, their direct reports and others be maintained?

Having considered these matters as far as possible, these factors should form part of the discussion with the relevant staff member to determine the appropriateness of establishing a working from home arrangement.

4. Due to their personal circumstances, a member of my team is unable to meet their usual working arrangement, what options are available?

Staff members have been asked to work in different ways over the past weeks and there may be occasions where team members are not able to work the same hours or days as usual due to caring responsibilities or medical considerations.

- a) Where a staff member indicates that they are unable to continue to fulfill their current working commitments their supervisor should discuss with the staff member their personal circumstances and identify what options may exist for alternative arrangements. Inviting the staff member to suggest what would work for them to remain as engaged and productive as possible is an advisable starting point for discussion and considering whether that can feasibly be accommodated whilst having minimum impact on the productivity and effectiveness of the overall team is important. Supervisors are asked to familiarise themselves with the [Flexible Work Arrangements Procedure](#) so they are equipped to discuss this with staff members where these situations arise. Supervisors may also find it beneficial to ask their staff to review the Procedure as an initial step in working towards a suitable solution. Your local [PTC Business Partner](#) can assist you if you require further support in these matters.
- b) Options to explore include:
 - **Adjusting the hours during the day the staff member undertakes their work:** A staff member can request to change their hours of work to meet their personal circumstances, that may enable them to take different combinations of leave and work (e.g. work half day/half day off; work one day/one day off etc.) and for professional staff, alter the customary hours of work (between 8.30am and 5.00pm) to carry out work within the broader span of ordinary hours (7.00am to 7.00pm) Monday to Friday inclusive. For example, a staff member may ask to work one longer day followed by some shorter days to align with childcare arrangements. These requests need to be considered in light of the business needs for your area.



Any arrangements to alter the working hours must be at the request of the staff member based on their personal circumstances and will require agreement with the relevant supervisor in writing.

- **Managing leave arrangements:** If a staff member is unable to fulfill their usual working commitments because of current circumstances, for example if the staff member has caring responsibilities that impact their availability, then the supervisor can explore the option of the staff member taking accrued paid leave to cover that absence from work. Depending on the circumstances, a staff member may be able to access [Family Responsibility Leave](#), [Carer's leave](#) or [Recreation Leave](#). If this is not possible supervisors should consult with their local [PTC Business Partner](#).
 - **Reduction in fraction:** Where a staff member is unable to fulfill their usual working commitments and does not have accrued paid leave available to them, supervisors could explore the options of entering into a temporary flexible work arrangement reducing the staff member's employment fraction. The requirements regarding applications for, approval of and recording of fraction reductions are explained in the [Flexible Work Arrangements Procedure](#).
- c) For any flexible work arrangement request, supervisors are asked to consider the business implications of agreeing with the staff member their proposed varied working conditions. For a guide on matters to consider in determining whether a flexible work arrangement can be accommodated, line managers can refer to Appendices A and B of the [Flexible Work Arrangements Procedure](#).
- d) It is also important that supervisors consider the health and safety of their staff members in discussing flexible work arrangements and that no arrangements are agreed which potentially impact a staff member's health and safety, such as agreements for an excessive number of hours to be worked in a 24 hour period, or where arrangements for one staff member adversely impact the workload of other team members. Supervisors also need to consider the equity of alternative and flexible arrangements agreed across their teams and should consider sharing with staff the criteria on which decisions have been made.

5 What do I do if I have a staff member who is being tested for COVID-19, a member of my team has been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 or a member of my team has been diagnosed as having COVID-19?

In all these circumstances, you should advise the staff member they must self-isolate until they have completed the self-isolation period and the outcome of any testing that has been undertaken is known. The University has developed a [set of principles and approach](#) that constitute a reporting protocol ([Protocol](#)) for responding to these situations. To ensure staff receive the advice and support they need and that the University can take the appropriate actions in response, please ensure you familiarise yourself with this important Protocol. Immediate notification should be to the ptc@unisa.edu.au inbox. PTC will then arrange for the appropriate next steps to be activated.

You should explore whether the staff member can undertake meaningful work from home during



self-isolation, assuming they are well enough to work. In the event they are unable to undertake meaningful work from home, the University has established an Exceptional Special Leave with Pay provision that the staff member may be eligible for and an application can be made via the [myHR](#) portal.

If a member of your team becomes unwell during this time and is unable to work, they will be eligible to access their personal leave.

For further information regarding leave available to staff, please visit the frequently updated [COVID-19 FAQs for Staff](#).

In the event a staff member advises you that they have been diagnosed with COVID-19, please act quickly to notify ptc@unisa.edu.au inbox (which is regularly monitored) and refer to the [Protocol](#) to ensure an appropriate response and support is provided to the staff member and the required follow up actions and reporting are completed. **Remember to observe the confidentiality of the staff member's details.**

6 What do I need to consider if my team is split between campus based work and [working remotely due to social distancing requirements up to July 27, 2020?](#)

As we transition back to campus, there will be teams that may currently be split between working remotely and on campus. The [Supervisor's Toolkit](#) available on the PTC intranet includes advice for leading from a distance, managing virtual teams and leading virtual meetings. These tools will continue to be relevant while we are managing teams across different locations.

Some things to consider include:

- a) implementing rosters or schedules specifying when particular team members will be working on campus.
- b) reviewing staff schedules to limit travel time and the need to transport significant pieces of equipment between the University campus and the staff member's home
- c) Updating the [COVID-19 Pandemic - Working from Home Arrangement](#) to reflect the specific days when the staff member will be on campus and at home.
- d) **Reviews: Regularly assessing the capacity and effectiveness of the working from home arrangements:** Remote working arrangements may require adjustment along the way as more members of the team return to campus. Supervisors are asked to regularly review their operations to identify whether the alternative arrangement is enabling the critical operations of their team to be achieved and what adjustments may be necessary to allow for improved effectiveness. Regular catch ups with your team members to assess how they are feeling about the arrangements and any adjustments required will maintain consultation and ensure line managers are informed about the impact on their staff.
- e) **Communication:** To ensure that your team's work is completed effectively, and to maintain the culture, engagement and cohesiveness of the team, it is important to continue to stay in regular contact with staff working remotely. This is even more important when you have part of your team on campus and others working from home, so that neither group feels excluded from key information and exchanges. The [COVID-19 Workplace Alterations Guide](#) provided ideas for connecting teams socially and virtually and these remain pertinent during this transition period.



- f) **Team meetings:** In addition to ensuring that daily interactions are established, supervisors should maintain regular team and Unit meetings as far as possible. That will help to ensure that your team's work continues as best it can during the transition period and that social connection is maintained. The "[Thriving Toolkit](#)" contains a range of team building activities for virtual teams which can be used to increase communication and build a positive culture.
- g) **Availability:** It is important that supervisors remain accessible and available to their team members as far as reasonably possible. Keeping your calendar up to date so team members can see when you will be on and off-line, as well as letting them know of your preferred modes of communication is crucial. If your availability changes, let your team members know and where necessary direct them to another appropriate contact point for support.
- h) **Share information:** It is important that supervisors communicate **regularly** with their team as new information becomes available and that staff member enquiries relating to COVID-19 are answered in accordance with the up to date [COVID-19 FAQs for Staff](#).
- i) **Changes to arrangements:** Keep up to date records of and changes to working from home arrangements and where appropriate, share that information transparently with other team members. Share your plans for the transition of staff back to the workplace with your team.
- j) **Performance Development and Management:** It is important that staff members continue to receive performance development feedback and development opportunities as far as practicable during periods of alternative working arrangements. Supervisors should ensure that they provide feedback and support to staff members at the same level of frequency and detail as they would for a staff member working on campus. Where a line manager has concerns that a staff member's performance needs improvement, that should be addressed so that all staff are aware quickly and able to address any concerns that arise promptly. Your [PTC Business Partner](#) will be able to assist in these circumstances and will also provide advice as to how best to progress in the event formal performance management review procedures are in place.
- k) **Staff Development and Wellbeing:** The University has developed a comprehensive [Supervisor's Toolkit](#) which contains information and tools to assist managers in supervising teams adopting alternative working arrangements. The University will continue to deliver a range of development opportunities for staff and supervisors that will be advertised through UniSA Announcements and the [PTC intranet site](#).

7 How can I stay up to date regarding COVID-19 matters relevant to my team?

Supervisors can ensure they have the latest possible information to share with their staff and make appropriate work-related decisions by:

- a. Regularly checking into and familiarising themselves in detail familiar with the [COVID-19 FAQ's for Staff](#) and [COVID-19 Key Employment Principles](#). We have also added to the FAQs to support supervisors and staff in their return to the workplace.
- b. Reading all University announcements which will be communicated by email to your University email address, staff announcements, the COVID-19 Updates page and ensuring they remain connected to their supervisor and any group meetings with colleagues and peers.



- c. Regularly check the [PTC](#) page for the latest development opportunities for staff and supervisors that will continue in an alternative format.

8 What do I need to be aware of with regards to hygiene protocols?

We have all become familiar with medical advice to observe careful hygiene practices to help prevent the transmission of infection and as we return to campus it is a shared responsibility for all staff and students to continue to observe these practices.

- a) The Facilities Management Unit has increased cleaning frequency and coverage to ensure a clean and hygienic workplace and hand sanitiser and surface disinfectant is provided for staff and student use at various locations around each campus and within administration buildings.
- b) Local areas are responsible for ensuring arrangements have been made to keep the supply of hand sanitiser and cleaning products available in the workplace to support staff in keeping the area safe.
- c) Remind staff that all shared surfaces in communal spaces such as kitchen food preparation areas, prayer rooms, meeting rooms should be cleaned before and after use.
- d) Hot desks - Additional cleaning of Hot Desk areas is the responsibility of each local area. FMU will provide cleaning supplies (e.g. wipes) initially to assist in cleaning these areas and will put local areas in contact with suppliers who can provide these products on an ongoing basis. Hot desks should be discouraged unless essential to your service model. Telephone headsets should not be shared.
- e) Computer barns/pools - FMU is investigating the provision of cleaning products (e.g. wipes) where computer equipment is communally used. Our FAQs will be updated as further information becomes available.
- f) Review provisions in the communal spaces to avoid the use of shared utensils such as coffee cups, plates, cutlery. Use disposable cutlery and crockery where possible.
- g) Requests that staff avoid shared food and remove items such as shared cookie or lolly jars. Shared platters should not be provided for staff events.
- h) Appropriate hygiene practices are a shared responsibility. Encourage staff to support each other in observing appropriate protocols.
- i) If holding a face to face meeting or workshop consider social distancing requirements prior to the meeting setup, clean hard surfaces before and after the meeting and provide hand sanitiser for meeting participant use, avoid use of shared materials e.g. pens paper etc.
- j) The [Safe Work Australia Cleaning guidelines](#) provide further guidance on cleaning.