

ANNEX A: MPLS Pilot PGR Return to on-site working Operational Protocol V1.3

1. *When a University building or relevant research-based facility/site becomes available in whole or in part for non-COVID19 research work** then the relevant DGS and supervisors should be briefed on the policy operating within the building/labs, e.g. which spaces are opening, mode of operation, health and safety expectations.
2. The Department, via the DGS, Supervisor or Academic Administrative team as appropriate, should ascertain from each student:
 - (i) if they wish to return to on-site work at this stage as part of the pilot;
 - (ii) if they wish to take part in the pilot - confirmation that they are able to travel back, or safely commute, to Oxford in line with Governance guidance;
 - (iii) if accommodation is available.

Note that even if returning to Oxford is not possible, the student would need to be contacted in this way, to enable the correct management of their eventual appropriate and timely return to on-site working. Contact with students should make clear that if at any point they feel they are pressured to return then they should contact their DGS to discuss the issue confidentially. Alternatively, they may contact Professor Michael Bonsall michael.bonsall@zoo.ox.ac.uk who is the Associate Head of Education for MPLS if they have concerns.

3. If a student wishes to return to on-site work, they should then discuss this with their supervisor**. This may include:
 - (i) where applicable, reviewing risk assessments that are in place and identifying any further risk assessment requirements to be undertaken for approval by DSO/ASO and HoD;
 - (ii) discussion and agreement of expected working pattern and how these may be modified over time;
 - (iii) exploration of any expectations they have or that have been communicated to them.

If the supervisor supports the return of the student to on-site working and the student still wishes to return in the light of the discussion under 3(i), (ii) & (iii) above, then the supervisor should:

- (iv) explain to the student the building / facility operating policy (e.g. guidance about routes of access and re-induction to new ways of working);
 - (v) confirm to the DGS and departmental academic administration that they support the return to on-site working for this student, and where applicable that all risk assessments have been undertaken and made available in writing to the student and understood by the student.
4. The departmental academic administration should inform the MPLS Graduate School office about student return and its basis (e.g., from which date, the degree of laboratory access they will have). A light touch Graduate School monitoring process will be trialled with pilot departments.

5. It should be made clear to the student that they can withdraw consent for their return at any time either by letting their supervisor or DGS know. The student does not need to give a reason if they do not want to.
6. Supervisors are encouraged to comment on the process, particularly during the first 2 – 3 weeks, and to offer suggestions for improvements that could be applied in other parts of the department or to subsequent building openings.
7. Students should continue to record work undertaken and the impact of the pandemic on their research in their logs, in case they need to apply for extensions or suspensions at a later date.

*In the MPLS Division some labs have remained open because they are conducting COVID19-related research. That research would need to take priority over other work where necessary and may mean that a particular laboratory or resource is already at maximum capacity.

*** If a student wishes to return to lab work, but ongoing COVID19 research means that laboratory space normally used by students to conduct their research is inaccessible, then prior to the discussion under (3) above the supervisor should have determined in discussion with colleagues **and** the HoD (or designated deputy) what alternative space is available. In such cases, the discussion under (3) above would be held in respect of the alternative work space(s) and should in addition include how the student will be supported in their work in this space.*