

Risk Assessment

Summary

Reference: RA002855/1

Sign-off Status: Authorised

Date Created:	16/02/2021	Confidential?	No
Assessment Title:	COVID-19 Secure Workplace Risk Assessment for Centre of the Cell (CotC)		
Assessment Outline:	The QMUL master COVID-19 Secure risk assessment template has been utilised to ensure the Centre of the Cell local risk assessment and safe systems of work are suitable and sufficient in order to comply with government guidance, and to ensure Queen Mary University of London continues to be a COVID-19 Secure workplace. The Centre of the Cell has a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practical level by taking preventative measures. This risk assessment covers these control measures in the context of COVID-19.		
Area Responsible (for management of risks)		Location of Risks: All main campuses	
Division, School, Faculty, Institute:	SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND DENTISTRY	Campus:	Whitechapel Campus
Department:	BLIZARD INSTITUTE	Building/Area:	Blizard Building and Centre of the Cell
Group/Unit:	CENTRE OF THE CELL	Sub Area:	ALL Sub Areas
Further Location Information:	Neuron Pod and STEM Pod, access points, walkways and reception areas in the Perrin Lecture Theatre foyer.		
CountryLabel:			
Assessment Start Date:	16/02/2021	Review or End Date:	16/02/2022
Relevant Attachments:	<p>Description of attachments:</p> <p>Location of non-electronic documents:</p> <p>QMUL COVID-19 SECURE Guidance - http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/covid-19-secure-guidance/</p>		
Assessor(s):	Casey, Holly		
Approver(s):	NATALIE MCCLOSKEY		
Signed Off:	NATALIE MCCLOSKEY (22/02/2021 16:55)		

PEOPLE AT RISK (from the Activities covered by this Risk Assessment)

CATEGORY
Employees
Undergraduates
Members of the Public
Visitors
Young Persons

1. The Workplace

Description of Activity:

The workplace includes but is not limited to the Blizzard Neuron Pod and STEM Pod, access points, walkways and reception areas in the Perrin Lecture Theatre at the Whitechapel Campus.

Hazard 1. COVID-19 virus exposure and transmission in the workplace

The virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature).

If it is transmitted from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease and it is regarded as a high hazard.

Uncontrolled Risk:
E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

Limit visitors to the workplace by avoid inviting non-essential visitors to site.

Ongoing action for staff:

Where CotC staff still work from home, they continue to follow the remote working safety measures at <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/coronavirus/guidance-for-staff/>.

CotC staff returning to campus have completed their COVID-19 health assessment and had a conversation with their line manager. Where required, they've had OH or GP assessment. They've read and understood the Queen Mary COVID Code <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/coronavirus/guidance-for-staff/5-essential-steps-for-staff-returning-to-campus/>.

Meetings should be held on a viable online platform. Where face to face meetings are essential and online meetings cannot occur, they should be held in Neuron Pod, with attendees at separate tables and ventilation system operating. Surfaces should be wiped down before and after meeting. Meeting should be kept as short as possible, hand sanitiser supplied and used, and pens/objects should not be shared. QMUL COVID-19 Face to Face Meeting Protocol to be followed (<http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/covid-19-secure-procedures/>)

Those who are essential on site are following the social distancing guidelines laid out by the

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable

Risk Assessment

government and QMUL policy (i.e. keeping 2 meters apart).

One-way system has been added to all areas that access is permitted.

Number signage of maximum occupancy for individual rooms placed on entrance as a reminder to staff.

Action for visitors:

One group bubble maximum per delivery session.

Delivery frequency reduced: Only one Pod in use at a time, unless two groups from the same school bubble are in attendance. Initial maximum of 3 delivery sessions per day, across both Pods

Shop to remain closed. Students to keep personal belongings on them throughout visit

Capacity of STEM Pod is 1 class bubble + 2 presenters

Capacity of Neuron Pod is 1 class bubble + 2 presenters

Social distancing

CotC and other QMUL Staff onsite must adhere to social distancing measures, following and adhering to signage within the Blizard Building complex. CotC and other QMUL Staff will remain socially distant from students/school children and visitors but those within the visitor bubble group do not need to observe social distancing.

Social distancing means keeping 2 metres apart or, where this is not viable keeping 1 meter plus extra mitigation actions line with the COVID Hierarchy of Control - <http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/covid-19-secure-procedures/> including wearing a face covering.

Movement between locations

Action for staff:

Movement around buildings and between sites is restricted via access control.

Risk Assessment

Action for visitors:

The waiting area in the reception will not be used, groups will be directed immediately to their booked Pod on arrival, a staff member will be waiting at Blizzard reception.

Visiting group to line up outside and be led in when Centre of the Cell staff are ready. In case of rain/poor weather students will arrange themselves in the reception area.

On exit, visiting groups will be debriefed in the Pods and led directly out of the building.

Students to be accompanied at all times by two members of staff – one in front and one in the rear to ensure compliance maintaining social distancing at all times.

Follow the one way from the reception and over the bridge.

Liaise with Blizzard reception staff to ensure no clashes with students entering the Perrin Lecture Theatre.

No lunch space will be provided until further notice.

No food or drinks will be allowed on site, unless there is a medical or health need.

Any visitors unable to use the stairs or who require supervision by a carer are permitted to use the Blizzard building lift to the first floor bridge.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Centre of the Cell staff to wear visor or face covering / mask when escorting the group through Blizzard shared space i.e. reception, hallways etc and during learning delivery.

All visitors over the age of 11 must wear a face covering / mask when accompanied through shared

Risk Assessment

areas such as walkways and corridors, unless exempt for medical reasons.

Face coverings to be worn in all indoor spaces where 2 metres social distancing cannot be achieved, as well as in all corridors, stairwells, toilets and lifts.

Covid-proofing science shows and workshops

No elements of physical interaction with visiting groups while delivering activities on site.

Centre of the Cell and other QMUL staff must maintain social distancing at all times
Feedback forms will no longer be distributed onsite, these will be sent online.

COVID-19 checks for visitors

Prior to arrival schools will be contacted to ensure no visitor attends should they, or a member of their household, have symptoms of COVID-19 or have had symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days. The symptoms include a new and persistent cough, fever, and loss of smell and/or taste. For further information on COVID-19 symptoms please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

CotC will provide a form for groups to bring filled in that confirms no person in the group, or any person from their household has displayed symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 14 days. (the form will be electronic where it is possible for the visitor to fill in).

Contact tracing procedure -

Ongoing Action: If someone is ill with suspected COVID-19 symptoms whilst on campus during a visit, the process at <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/coronavirus/what-to-do-if-someone-presents-with-symptoms/> is followed.

Call security on extension 3333 (020 7882 3333 from

Risk Assessment

a mobile), explain the nature of the medical emergency and clearly tell security that the person has Covid-19 symptoms.
 Remain 2 metres away from the person at all times and ensure other people also stay 2 meters away from the person.
 Isolate person and arrange for safe transport to place of residence (Security to provide mask and gloves).
 If a visitor receives a positive test result for Covid-19 after being physically present on a CoC visit, they must immediately notify the CoC staff member responsible for their visit. That staff member must then alert QMUL through the staffhealth@qmul.ac.uk email address

Hazard 2. Variant Coronavirus

Variant SARS-CoV-2 has increased transmission rate (from late Dec 2020 / early Jan 2021).

Uncontrolled Risk:
E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

During lockdown announcement by the government in response to variant SARS-CoV-2, access to on-campus services and facilities (including COTC) is limited to: -

- a) people living on campus;
- b) people studying and teaching in exempt subjects;
- c) people who cannot reasonably work or study remotely, either because they require access to on-campus services and facilities, or because they would not otherwise have access to a safe, healthy and suitable working or studying environment;
- d) people who feel their mental health and wellbeing will be better served by being on campus
- e) people overseeing and supporting essential services and facilities for the above groups;
- f) people overseeing and supporting campus safety and operations.

Re-assessment of staff coming onto campus during this time has been completed. Only COTC staff who cannot reasonably complete their work from home will go onto campus, and only for the period of time required to carry out that work.

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable

2. Travel to and from work

Description of

Travel to and from work, campus and building access and egress.

Risk Assessment

Activity:

Hazard 1. COVID-19 virus exposure and transmission coming to and from work

The virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature).

If it is transmitted from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease and it is regarded as a high hazard.

Uncontrolled Risk:

E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

Handwashing facilities and/or hand sanitiser have been provided at entry/exit points to the Blizard and within visitor accessible toilets.

Advice given to ensure handwashing occurs upon arrival on site.

Consistent signage is displayed throughout the building(s) as a reminder.

Entry to restricted parts of the building is by swipe access therefore eliminating need to use touchpads etc.

Ensure sufficient car parking and secure bicycle facilities to help people avoid public transport where possible. - Ongoing action - CotC manager to facilitate requests for car parking at Mile End or bicycle parking at Whitechapel for CotC staff with Estates and Facilities.

Ongoing review action - CotC manager to identify staggered arrival and departure times for visitors groups and to avoid any 'peak' Blizard staff entry times or student Perrin lecture access / egress times to reduce crowding into and out of the building.

Ongoing review action- CotC manager to identify any arising congestion points and liaise with Estates and Facilities and Blizard Institute Management to investigate any further possible access / egress points to the building.

Ongoing action - Staff should store away personal belongings in their office areas, not in the pods or reception areas.

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable

Risk Assessment

3. Emergency or incident response situation (e.g. fire evacuation)

Description of Activity:

Fire safety evacuation, emergency first aid request and local first aid provision.

Hazard 1. COVID-19 virus exposure and transmission during an emergency or incident response situation (e.g. fi

The virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature).

If it is transmitted from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease and it is regarded as a high hazard.

Uncontrolled Risk:
E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

The Blizard Institute emergency response and incident policies in place. Reporting mechanisms in place.

CotC to follow the Blizard Institute HSD COVID-19 Emergency Evacuation Procedure.

Staff involved in the provision of assistance to others (e.g. First Aiders) should follow HSD COVID-19 First Aid Procedure and ensure correct sanitisation measures immediately after attending an incident. Ongoing action - where appropriate, CotC staff to complete first aid awareness online course <http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/training/online-learning/>

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable

4. Contractors

Description of Activity:

Essential contractors allowed on QMUL campuses and in QMUL buildings.

Hazard 1. COVID-19 virus exposure and transmission from visitors and contractors

The virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on

Uncontrolled Risk:
E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

Only essential contractors allowed in the building.

Promote policy of continuing to encourage visits via remote connection/working where this is an option.

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable

Risk Assessment

surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature).

If it is transmitted from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease and it is regarded as a high hazard.

Effective management of contractors on campus.

Records of visitors and contractors maintained.

Where visits are required, guidance on social distancing and hygiene should be explained to visitors on arrival and times on campus kept to a minimum. Signing in process should use their own pens, there should not be avoidable sharing of equipment, and refreshments will not be offered on campus apart from by COVID-secure caterers.

Schedules for essential services and contractor visits revised to reduce interaction and overlap.

List clear documented local procedure in place for essential visitors and contractors.

Ongoing action: Initial contact tracing procedure revised and issued to QMUL in Sep2020. If a contractor presents with COVID-19 symptoms whilst on campus or displays symptoms after a campus visit, the process at <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/coronavirus/what-to-do-if-someone-presents-with-symptoms/> is followed including the CotC manager or host immediately notifying staffhealth@qmul.ac.uk

Visitor communication arrangements made COVID-Secure to ensure social distancing and hygiene (e.g. signing in process using own pens at reception areas, avoiding transfer of paper records by using electronic forms).

5. Inadequate or insufficient environmental cleaning

Description of Activity:

CotC cleaning regime.

Hazard 1. COVID-19 virus exposure and transmission from inadequate or insufficient environmental cleaning

Risk Assessment

The virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature).

If it is transmitted from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease and it is regarded as a high hazard.

Uncontrolled Risk:

E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

Vigorous cleaning regime implemented incorporating HSD virus survival information and cleaning / decontamination guidance. Including frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, such as door handles and handrails. EAF provide this twice a day on a normal working day cleaning regime in common circulation areas and toilets.

Ongoing action - CotC staff to ensure cleaning process for in use equipment and surfaces (e.g. in Pods) with antiviral wipes and/or antiviral cleaning agents (these can be obtained from EAF helpdesk). If equipment cannot be washed or wiped down, assess if it practical that such machines / equipment can have protection around or isolated for 72 hours after use which will ensure significant viral degradation before next use.

Control measures during cleaning implemented for CotC staff (including appropriate PPE and where to dispose of waste) as per COVID-19 Decontamination Guidance / COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfection of Surfaces and Spaces Procedure on the HSD website or determined by a further local risk assessment if necessary.

Handwashing facilities and / or hand sanitiser have been provided in the Blizzard building complex.

Hand sanitiser installed outside entry to Pods.

Stocks of liquid soap (in toilets) and sanitiser are checked and maintained daily by EAF.

All visiting students, staff and explainers will be required to use (provided) hand sanitiser on entry and exit from Pods.

The importance of hygiene and handwashing procedure has been communicated across CotC.

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable

Risk Assessment

These will be reinforced weekly in team meetings.

All staff to ensure they clear workspaces and remove belongings from the work area when they leave.

Frequent cleaning in areas where social distancing cannot be implemented and in areas regularly used for meetings.

<http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/covid-19-secure-procedures/>

Pods will be cleaned before and after each session and usage, using anti-bacterial spray and wipes, including door handles, touchtables etc

All kits to be cleaned before and after each session, if used.

Once a week deep clean scheduled with Estates for both Pods.

Cleaning after a known or suspected case of COVID-19 must follow the specific guidance issued by PHE.

6. Handling goods, materials and other deliveries on and off campus

Description of Activity:	All deliveries to and from campuses and internal movements of goods within campuses.
--------------------------	--

Risk Assessment

Hazard 1. COVID-19 virus transmission through handling goods, materials and other deliveries on and off campus

The virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature).

If it is transmitted from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease and it is regarded as a high hazard.

Uncontrolled Risk:
E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

Restriction on non-business deliveries to CotC

Communication to staff that non-business deliveries will not be accepted.

To reduce the handling of packages staff must collect parcels directly from the post room and wash their hands before and after collecting the parcels.

Staff should wipe down the outside of the parcel with 70% ethanol wipes. Handle with gloves, especially when opening parcels containing samples.

Increased handwashing encouraged with handwashing facilities / hand sanitisers for staff handling deliveries.

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable

7. Work related travel

Description of Activity:

Travel for work i.e. on a university activity to non-QMUL locations.

Risk Assessment

Hazard 1. COVID-19 virus exposure and transmission through work related travel

The virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature).

If it is transmitted from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease and it is regarded as a high hazard.

Uncontrolled Risk:
E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

Travel for work to other non-QMUL locations avoided unless essential. When essential, it should be approved by line manager, and current national and international travel restrictions must be followed <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Where this travel is essential for business, a risk assessment should be completed. The template at <http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/risk-assessment/> to be utilised and authorised by CotC Manager / Lead where this is applicable.

Measures noted in COVID-19 Travel to and from Work Procedure including the mandatory wearing of face coverings on public transport in the UK applies to CotC staff.

<http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/covid-19-secure-procedures/>

When visiting a school or other non-QMUL place, a copy of their risk assessment should be reviewed ahead of the trip, and should be adhered to at all times.

With Existing Controls:

C - Medium / Moderate

8. Infrastructure and maintenance

Description of Activity:

Maintaining infrastructure and facilities to ensure COVID-19 Secure and other H&S risks are managed and reduced to a negligible level.

Risk Assessment

Hazard 1. Infrastructure and maintenance health & safety issues arising from buildings that have been fully or

The virus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on such things as the surface type, its moisture content and temperature).

If it is transmitted from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease and it is regarded as a high hazard.

Uncontrolled Risk:

E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

Vigorous cleaning regime implemented by Facilities incorporating HSD virus survival information and decontamination guidance.

QMUL EAF site management plan (particularly cleaning, ventilation, maintenance and security functions) incorporates COVID-19 secure measures - documents at <http://qm-web.estates.qmul.ac.uk/covid-19/>

Blizard Building - building assurance provided to re-open for use as per EAF document Covid -19 Building Level Assurance (23-9-20 and updated regularly)

Building compliance assurance checks on HVAC, Water hygiene, Fire Safety / Emergency Lighting systems and any statutory inspections that may have lapsed since remote working commenced (e.g. LOLER).

Blizard Building - building assurance provided to re-open for use as per EAF document Covid -19 Building Level Assurance (23-9-20 and updated regularly)

Action: Areas will need to consider restarting and testing specialist equipment which may have been unused for a longer than usual period of time.
*CotC manager to identify any such equipment and apply necessary start up measure.

Action: List any additional areas with restricted access for maintenance staff.
*None at present in CotC areas.

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable

9. Psychological well-being of staff

Description of

Ensuring staff and students good mental health is maintained and concerns are addressed in a proactive and understanding manner.

Risk Assessment

Activity:

Hazard 1. Psychological wellbeing of staff returning to campus / continuing to work from home

A reduction in un-managed good mental health.

Uncontrolled Risk:

D - High / Significant

Existing Control Measures

Provision of clear, consistent and regular communications around Covid-19 and the ways of working from the CotC Lead and Manager. Principal's communications highlighted to staff and any change in policies and procedures in team meetings.

Ongoing engagement with staff to monitor and understand any unforeseen impact of changes to working environments.

Communications / checklists for staff completed prior to returning to site, especially around new procedures for arrival at work. Staff directed to Queen Mary Coronavirus update and guidance website, communication plans, guides (e.g. 9 steps for managers, 5 steps for staff) and the Queen Mary Covid Code.

Awareness and focus on the importance of mental health at times of uncertainty with regular provision of Mental Health information, guidance on wellbeing for those still working remotely and maintaining connections with colleagues working on site.

Continued access to occupational health services and mental health first aid provision.

<http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/about-us/>
<https://www.qmul.ac.uk/coronavirus/guidance-for-staff/returning-to-campus/>

Provision of clear, consistent and regular communications around Covid-19 and the ways of working from the Principal - regular updates ongoing.

With Existing Controls:

C - Medium / Moderate

Risk Assessment

10. CotC outreach

Description of Activity:

Considerations for staff who need to carry out work within schools and informal education centres

Hazard 1. COVID-19, virus exposure and transmission on outreach

The virus is spread in minute droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on surface type, moisture content and temperature).

Person to person transfer is possible as the virus is highly contagious. Currently there is no vaccine or effective treatment. In some cases the virus can cause extreme ill health or death. As a result, the potential to contract COVID-19 is very high. Therefore control measures must be introduced to reduce the risk of infection to staff in the workplace (and wider community).

Uncontrolled Risk:
D - High / Significant

Existing Control Measures

Within schools/education centres:

Centre of the Cell staff to request risk assessment prior to visit.

Centre of the Cell staff to adhere to policies outlined in the risk assessment

After visits:

Ensure equipment and kit is effectively cleaned following each visit

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable

11. Visitor incident response situation (e.g. feeling unwell)

Description of Activity:

Considerations for actions if a student visitor is to fall unwell

Risk Assessment

Hazard 1. COVID-19 virus exposure and transmission during a student visitor incident (fainting, falling unwell)

The virus is spread in minute droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking and breathing. The virus can be transferred to the hands and from there to surfaces. It can survive on surfaces for a period after transfer (depending on surface type, moisture content and temperature).

Person to person transfer is possible as the virus is highly contagious. Currently there is no vaccine or effective treatment. In some cases the virus can cause extreme ill health or death. As a result, the potential to contract COVID-19 is very high. Therefore control measures must be introduced to reduce the risk of infection to staff in the workplace (and wider community).

Uncontrolled Risk:

E - Very High

Existing Control Measures

If there is a student health/medical incident, unrelated to COVID-19, student should leave pod with member of school staff.

If incident is minor (e.g. low blood sugar) then student, directed by member of CotC staff, to be given access to toilets and to be allowed to sit in the reception area until ready to rejoin the pod session.

If student vomits in the pod, session to be stopped early and all students to be escorted out of Blizzard as soon as possible. If student has been removed from pod prior to vomiting, then ill student allowed to await end of pod session in bathroom or reception area.

In the case of an emergency procedure: one staff member should administer/offer emergency first aid while the other calls 999. A staff member should notify on-campus security on 3333 to let them know there is an incident, and to help guide paramedics to the Pod. The CotC office should also be notified if possible, so that additional staff can come and assist. If a serious incident occurs in the Pod, the show should be stopped, and the other students escorted outside as quickly as possible.

Should any visitor develop symptoms of COVID-19 during training then the visit should be halted. All persons who have been in the pod, including CotC staff, must also follow Government isolation guidelines to prevent the further spread of the disease including CotC staff leading the session.

No further shows that day.

With Existing Controls:

B - Low / Tolerable