UNBC UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

COVID-19

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR RESUMPTION OF FACE-TO-FACE SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS

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May 2020

Statement of Purpose

This document is intended to support program and departments with re-entry and re-opening planning to reduce or minimize the risk to the health and safety of faculty, staff and students while COVID-19 remains present. This guide is applicable whether UNBC owns, rents, leases, or is co-located with other entities. The current pandemic presents several different challenges and changes in processes and systems. We are adapting to a “new normal for now” system of operations and must prepare our faculty, staff, students, researchers, partners/contractors and facilities accordingly. UNBC is guided in its planning by directions from the Provincial Health Authority, WorkSafe BC, Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST), Research Universities' Council of British Columbia (RUCBC). These guidelines and principles are to ensure the academic and operational continuity during COVID-19.

Guiding Principles

Our approach to on-campus working and learning will be a careful phasing-in of a very limited number of courses and services that require face-to-face instruction or delivery such as the use of classrooms, labs, and essential retail or service areas etc. It is likely that we will be required to maintain physical distancing until at least the end of the cold and flu season (March/April 2021).

- The health and wellbeing of faculty, staff, researchers and students is paramount above all other considerations
- UNBC is committed to the continued delivery of a quality educational experience for our students regardless of the learning delivery model
- UNBC will provide as much certainty as possible to faculty, staff and students by making and communicating decisions as early as possible with consideration to issues of accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion in all those decisions
- UNBC will continue to support faculty, staff and students to successfully work and study both remotely and on campus as appropriate
- UNBC will continue to use remote, asynchronous delivery of its programs with very limited pre-approved in-person learning and essential on campus services
- UNBC acknowledges that international students returning to or entering Canada will need to self-isolate for 14 days and we will endeavor to support these students through this period
- UNBC will acknowledge and adjust the increase or decrease of on campus activities in accordance with the public health office restrictions and WorkSafe BC protocols
- Research activity both on and off campus will be supported to every extent possible while maintaining social distancing requirements

UNBC will need to review and determine the priority of who should return to campus while considering that adequate first aid, cleaning and other supplies meet WorkSafe BC requirements to ensure a safe work environment and to mitigate the risk of UNBC having a confirmed case of COVID-19 on campus.

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Re-entry and re-opening will be used throughout this document. They are not synonymous.

• Re-entry refers to going back onto campus to set the conditions for faculty, staff and researchers to return to work and open the doors to clients.

• Re-opening refers to doors being opened to the public and the resumption of business operations.

Scope

The face-to-face activities that are included in this framework are those that take place on campus in classrooms, laboratories, clinics, lecture theatres and offices etc. They do not include practicum or placements that occur with other external agencies, who would be responsible for demonstrating to UNBC their own compliance methods. Nor does it apply to field activities that have an existing risk assessment and safe work procedure process in place. Those assessments have been updated to include the mitigation of COVID-19 specific requirements.

A Phased and Scaled Approach

Re-entry must adopt a phased and scaled approach as a gradual return serves to keep the risk low and manageable. This guide describes a five-phase approach:

1. Confirming Safety – ensuring safety for people within the space they will occupy

2. Restoration of Essential Services – to enable occupants to return

3. Communication – with internal and external stakeholders

4. Reintegration – physically into the space, with new procedures and

5. Re-Opening for Business – welcome clients / customers into the space.

Scaling the approach means that not all departments, programs, personnel, and services need to be reactivated at the same time. Deliberate, gradual re-entry can be adjusted to avoid disruption as the pandemic goes through successive “waves” and allows time for personnel to adjust to new conditions, including returning to measures that are more restrictive should the direction from the public health office require.

Re-opening takes time, there is no one-size-fits-all model; therefore, a careful evaluation must be conducted prior to commencing on-site re-entry and re-opening activities. We must take our time and be deliberate about how we slowly resume on campus operations.

New Normal for Now

The COVID-19 pandemic will not be over until there is a vaccine and it has been widely distributed with the overwhelming majority of the population immunized. Public Health Orders and restrictions will remain in place for a long time. These restrictions will be lessened over time, with the distinct possibility that they may be reinstated if there is a second wave of COVID-

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19. The circumstances of re-entry and re-opening planning are the “new normal for now” not the “new normal”; that will come after we eradicate COVID-19.

In order to maintain social distancing requirements and reduce exposure to the hazard of contracting COVID-19 various control measures can be implemented including the eliminating the risk of exposure, substitutions made for equipment and processes, engineering of barriers to assist with the control of space and the administrative of education, training and orientation around health and safety measures.

Stage 1 – June 1, 2020 and will last for at least 8 weeks

During this stage, faculty, staff and researchers who are able to effectively work from home will continue to do so.

Only those faculty, staff and researchers who are not already on campus but need to be in order to do their jobs, will return, as long as physical distancing measures can be guaranteed. These employees will be notified by their supervisor as their department return plans are put in place.

Faculty, staff and researchers with medical conditions, those who live with or care for immune-compromised individuals, or who may require medical accommodations should contact the Director of Health & Wellbeing to discuss concerns and options.

On-campus instructional opportunities will be for students in those programs or courses for which the use of labs or equipment has been considered essential or their Program warrants as such.

Stage 2 – **September 2020 Semester**

The majority of classes are being delivered by alternative means.

There will be a gradual (and tightly managed) return of some more employees and students to campus to provide essential face-to-face service areas such as an expansion to computer workstations, library services, student enrollment services, international office and other student focused services as required.

Faculty, staff and researchers with medical conditions, those who live with or care for immune-compromised individuals, or who may require medical accommodations should contact the Director of Health & Wellbeing to discuss concerns and options.

The only on-campus instructional opportunities will be for students in those programs or courses for which the use of labs or equipment has been considered essential or their Program warrants as such.

Employees who need to be on campus to perform the duties of their jobs will come back to areas where we are able to maintain physical distancing and proper cleaning standards. Occasional visits to campus to pick up and drop off materials or hold small meetings will be scheduled through each department or program to avoid close contact and ensure safety.

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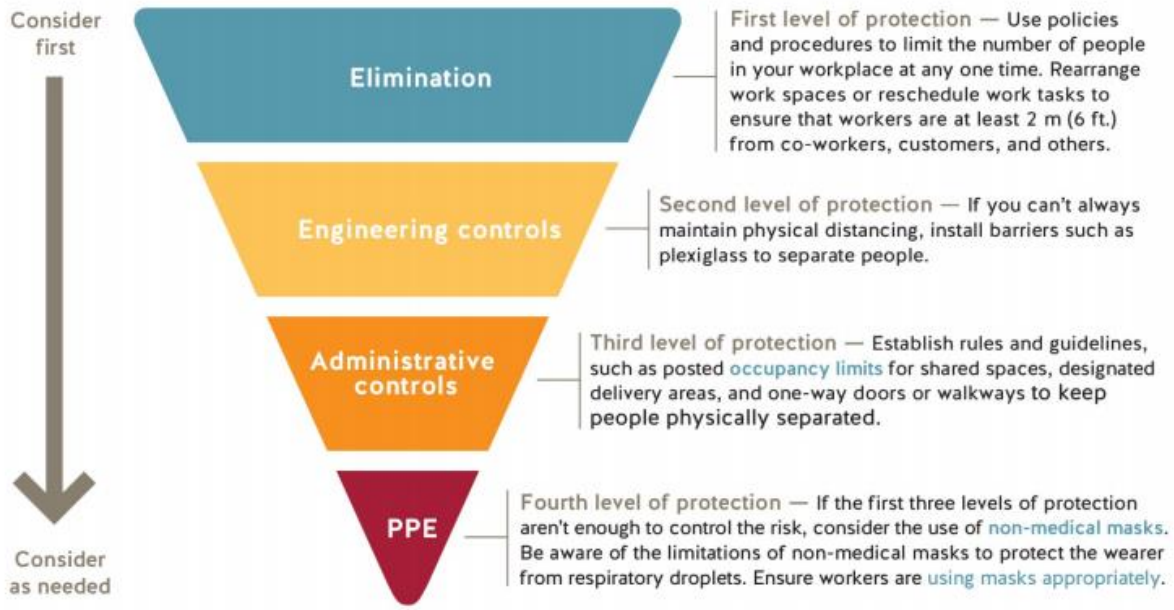
Mental Health and Wellness

It is important that everyone recognize the heightened anxiety or mental health struggles our community may be experiencing during this pandemic. The emotional, social, physical and financial disruptions in combination with 24/7 media and fear and uncertainty surrounding this pandemic continue to take a toll on faculty, staff, researchers and students well-being. As more people return to campus and operations resume, the thoughts, feelings and conditions worsen. Please be patient and kind. We are here to support you. The university has many resources available to you and your families. Visit UNBC Health and Wellbeing or contact the Director of Health & Wellbeing.

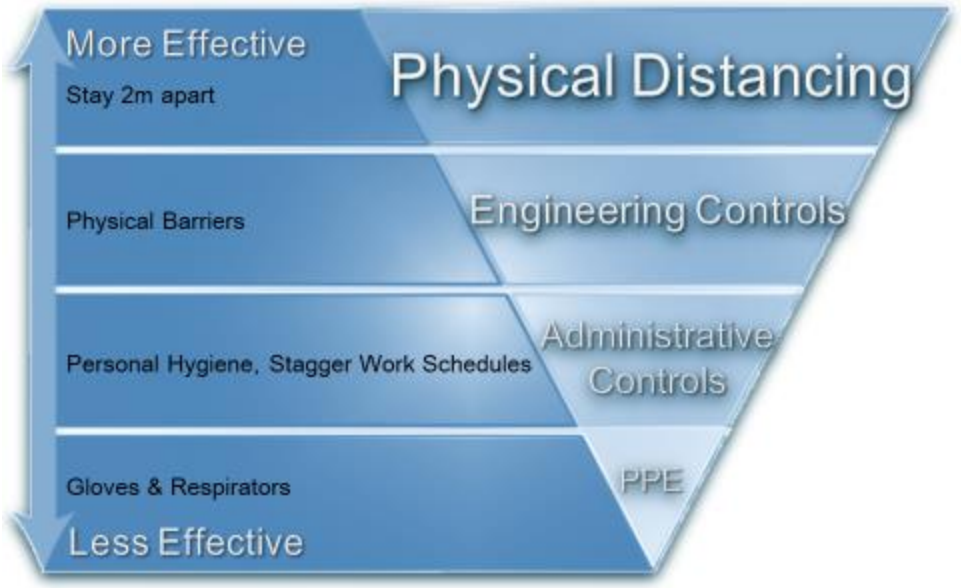
Reducing the Risk of Transmission

To reduce the risk of the virus spreading through droplets in the air, implement protocols to protect against your identified risks. Different protocols offer different levels of protection. Wherever possible, use the protocol that offers the highest level of protection. Consider controls from additional levels if the first level is not practicable or does not completely control the risk. You might likely need to incorporate controls from various levels to address the risk at your workplace.



Physical distancing

This can be maintained by only having critical workers return to on campus work and activities. In person meetings should be turned into video meetings or phone calls where possible. Staggered hours or days of work will encourage off peak time commutes to help reduce physical interactions on transit. This figure outlines the examples of general COVID-19 transmission prevention guidelines, which are based on current provincial and federal requirements.



Engineering controls

Plexiglass can be installed between customer interface locations; physical infrastructure such as ropes, floor dots, and pylons can be used to delineate spaces; de-activation of every second workstation or computer location. Changes to building ventilation rates to increase indoor air ventilation.

Administrative controls

Reminders for faculty, staff, researchers and students regarding frequent hand washing; orientation as to nearest wash room and hand sanitizer locations; daily reminders for regular disinfection; minimize exchange of cash by encouraging the use of debit and credit machines and retail and cashier space; frequent and visible signage to encourage and remind about social distancing, hand washing, etc. Limit frequency of trips or visits to other areas of campus, whenever possible.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

In some areas and for certain roles it will be impossible to maintain the 2m social distancing requirements. E.g. movement of heavy machinery or equipment, staff providing health care within clinic settings or rendering first aid. In those instances, the use of personal protective equipment (such as gloves, facemasks, respirators) should be mandatory. The proper procedures for the safe use, removal, disposal and cleaning of this PPE should be provided to all faculty, staff, researchers and students using them.

Risk Assessment / Hazard Identification

The purpose of the hazard identification and risk assessment in the exposure control plan is to pre-identify critical tasks/work activities occurring in an area so that the risks relating to those tasks can be mitigated.

Low risk – delivering a demonstration to a class where physical distancing can be maintained; employees working alone in an office with no face-to-face interactions

Medium risk – the 2m physical distancing cannot be maintained due to type of work or equipment that has to be used but other control measures such as barriers and PPE can be put in place

High risk – working with high risk individuals (COVID-19 positive patient) in healthcare setting

Safe Work Procedures must be developed to establish a consistent level of safety and performance for everyone doing the same or similar task or activity.

Guidelines for environmental changes to space to allow physical distancing

Ensure classrooms, shops, labs and offices are set to allow 2-meter physical distancing between all occupants (this may include the removal of desks and chairs, de-activation of every second work station or computer)
Determine and implement new room capacities for meetings, classrooms and lecture theatres
Implement physical barriers and infrastructure such as plexi-glass for face-to-face service areas where distancing is not possible Make use of physical infrastructure such as ropes, floor dots, and pylons to delineate spaces.
Set up physical distancing tools such as rope, tape and floor dots to delineate separation of space in communal areas where line ups may be required such as service areas and where equipment (such fax and photocopiers) are used
Ensure infection control practices and physical distancing posters are posted
Removal of all unnecessary items in reception/waiting areas such as magazines, flyers, business cards, office supplies
Have hand sanitizer available at entry and exit points to campus
Counter tops used by public should have hand sanitizer available and counters wiped frequently throughout the day
Facilities and contractors will continue with the enhanced cleaning and sanitization of frequently touched items such as railings, doors, door handles, push bars, light and elevator switches, classroom desks and service counter areas
Maximum occupancy numbers should be posted for communal areas such as kitchens, lunch or break rooms
Eliminate reusable kitchen items in communal areas (flatware, dishes, and cups) and cleaning tools (sponges, brushes, towels) and replace with single use options. Refrain from sharing, or limit the use of microwaves, kettles, fridges, and other frequently used and shared appliances or utensils
Computer keyboards for communal and/or public use should be transitioned to wipe able units

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Guidelines for Supervisors of employees

If employees can effectively continue to work remotely and their work does not require on campus face-to-face activities they should continue to work from home and not return to work on campus.
If an employee has arrived from outside of Canada, or who is a contact of a confirmed case COVID-19 case, they are required to self-isolate for 14 days and monitor symptoms
UNBC recognizes that not all employees will be able to return to on campus work due to being immuno-compromised themselves, caring for a household member that is immuno-compromised or having limited childcare opportunities.
Advise staff to stay home if they feel unwell in any way
All individuals need to be able to self-monitor prior to being physically present on any of UNBC campuses. They are also expected to know what to do in the event they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or require additional self-isolation based on current public health guidelines
Individuals who are symptomatic and/or are required to self-isolate or be in quarantine are prohibited from being physically present on UNBC property. An individual will not be negatively impacted in the event they are required to self-isolate and/or be in quarantine.
Where possible ensure work areas (classrooms, labs, offices) are set up to allow 2 meter physical distancing
Where possible avoid the sharing of equipment
Review tool/equipment cleaning/disinfecting procedures at end of job/task
Remind all persons about personal hygiene expectations (hand washing, cough/sneeze etiquette, etc.)
Consider the adoption of staggered hours or days of the week to facilitate fewer individuals are within the same pre-COVID workspace especially in shared and open office spaces
Identify communal areas such as lunch, break and meeting rooms, configure them to accommodate appropriate physical distancing and ensure the maximum occupancy number is posted
Eliminate reusable kitchen items in communal areas (flatware, dishes, and cups) and cleaning tools (sponges, brushes, towels) and replace with single use options.
Check-in with your employees daily, whether they are working on site or remotely
Computer keyboards that are used by numerous employees in front facing service areas should be transitioned to wipe able units
Ensure that faculty, staff and researchers returning to on campus activity or work are familiarized with the safe work measures put in place.
Ensure that you monitor faculty, staff and researchers to ensure the safe work procedures are being followed
Continually monitor the work and activity in your program, unit or department to identify any changes that may need to be made to the exposure control plan
Ensure your faculty, staff and researchers know that they can raise any safety concerns through their supervisor, the safety office or a member of the Joint Health and Safety Committee

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Guidelines for face-to-face classroom or laboratory instruction

Identify for yourself and students the nearest handwashing station
Ensure infection control practices and social distancing posters are displayed
Advise students to stay home if sick, develop and communicate accommodations for students that may be in isolation/quarantine.
Promote no eating during classes and labs
If a student has arrived from outside of Canada, or who is a contact of a confirmed case COVID-19 case, they are required to self-isolate for 14 days and monitor symptoms
Frequently remind students to avoid face touching during class and to wash hands before and after class (and during when possible).
Ensure that the classroom or lab is set up to allow 2-metre physical distancing between all occupants, unless control measures have been put in place.
For any class-provided tools/equipment – if possible ensure students have their own dedicated items.
Develop and post sanitization procedures for all shared equipment and common classroom touchpoints
Instruct students on how to safely use, remove, dispose/clean (as applicable) any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that may be required for the class. *Note: PPE (gloves, respirators, face shields, etc.) should only be recommended/required for pandemic exposure control if best practices (physical distancing, hand washing) are impossible to maintain.*

Process

Effective immediately, if a department or program is considering returning faculty, staff, researchers and/or students back onto any campus they must conduct a risk assessment of their areas based on these provided guideline principles. This is in order that a return to 'on campus work' plan can be made to ensure the return to campus is completed in a safe and responsible manner that supports the health and safety of our faculty, staff, researchers and students.

Step 1 – Review the guidelines and principles

Step 2 – Complete the Exposure Control Plan document for their area following the steps outlined in these guidelines. (Contact safety@unbc.ca if further assistance is required).

Step 3 – Send the exposure control plan checklist to safety@unbc.ca for review and sign off by by the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Step 4 – Once control measures have been put in place (physical distancing elimination or substitution, engineering, administrative, PPE,) and the plan has been signed by the JOHSC it is to be communicated to your faculty, staff, researchers and students prior to their return to on campus activity, work or classes.

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Exposure Control Plan Checklist

Department/Unit/Program area: _____Room #'s _____

Person Completing the Plan: _____ Date of Completion: _____

Area Type: ☐ Individual Offices ☐ Open/shared Office Space ☐ Public Service Area

☐ Classroom ☐ Lecture Theatre ☐ Laboratory ☐ Health Clinic

Procedure/Task Hazard Identification	**Yes**	**N/A**	**Details of Control Measures Taken (E.g. Physical Distancing Eliminated, Substituted, Engineered, Administrative, PPE)**
Process in place to advise faculty, staff, researchers and students to stay home if sick and how to report COVID-19 like symptoms?			
Supporting measures or accommodation implemented for faculty, staff, researchers and students who need to be absent?			
Daily process to pre-screen (check-in) faculty, staff, researchers and students? *E.g. general wellness question prior to entering space*			
Reminders to avoid face touching and correct personal hygiene etiquette? *E.g. hand washing, sneezing, coughing*			
Operational hours reduced, employee hours or days of attendance staggered to facilitate fewer individuals are within the same pre-COVID workspace especially in shared and open office spaces			
Paper and cash transactions eliminated or reduced?			
Can minimum 2m physical distancing be maintained in this space? *E.g. barriers, floor decals, tape, de-activation of computer or workstation*			
Physical Distancing and hand hygiene posters in place?			
Maximum number of persons in space determined?			
If large shared space/communal areas have faculty, staff, researchers and students been provided instruction as to where to spend their break time?			

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Have faculty, staff, researchers and students been notified of nearest hand washing sink location? Where is it?			
Removal of all unnecessary items such as magazines, flyers, office supplies been completed?			
If an open public reception area is there a hand santization unit?			
If communal computers have keyboards been switched to wipeable units?			
Common touch points, tools, equipment that need to be shared identified? *E.g. fax machine, printer, lab equipment*			
Sanitization and cleaning of shared tools and equipment procedures prepared? *E.g. cleaning of plexi-glass barrier, wiping of shared printer controls*			
Faculty, staff, researchers and students have been given instructions for the safe and correct use of any provided personal protective equipment?			
Process developed to advise faculty, staff, researchers and students that control measures need to be adhered to and how it will be dealt with if not followed?			
Walk through class or large office areas regularly to ensure physical distancing methods are still in place *E.g. signage, decals etc*			

Approval of Exposure Control Plan

Signature of Supervisor / Manager / Director:	**Date:**
JOHSC Review Name and Comments:	**Date Reviewed:**

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