# Oriental Institute: Returning to on-site working Autumn 2021

This guidance updates that issued in 2020, and incorporates material from the University’s *Return to On-Site Working: Guidance for Departments on COVID-Secure Working in University Buildings* version 19.0 (23 August 2021).

The following guidance sets out the principles, procedures and rules that will help to make the Oriental Institute a safe place to work, and safeguard your health and that of your colleagues. Please read the guidance and if you have any questions or suggestions speak to Thomas Hall thomas.hall@orinst.ox.ac.uk.

## Looking after each other

Supporting all the more detailed rules are the basic standards of thoughtful and considerate behaviour that we would apply anyway.

***Consideration for others*** – regarding the health and safety of other users of the building, for example by sanitizing your hands and shared surfaces, and wearing a face covering when appropriate; recognizing that people have different levels of risk from Covid

***Patience*** – being prepared to wait, for example to let someone pass, or for a room to become empty

***Flexibility*** – some ways of working will have had to change, and others may as the situation develops.

***Support*** – help each other to do the right things, being aware of and reporting risks

The Faculty’s highest priority is ensuring the health and safety of its staff and students, and we all have a part to play in this.

## Safe working principles

1. **Both staff and students will normally be working on-site** from October 2021, except where special arrangements have been agreed.
2. **No-one with symptoms of COVID-19 should come to the building:**  If you are suffering from COVID-19 symptoms, or if anyone in your household is self-isolating, you should not come to work on-site. If you start to feel unwell with possible COVID-19 symptoms while in the building you should leave and go home immediately. Anyone with symptoms should arrange a test through the University Early Alert testing service, inform the Head of Administration and Finance (Thomas Hall) on easresults@orinst.ox.ac.uk, and follow government guidance on self-isolation. Even if a test is negative, staff should not return to site until they are symptom free.
3. **Wash or sanitise hands regularly:** Maintaining good personal hygiene continues to be important. Sanitiser stations remain in place throughout the building for increased hand hygiene. This is particularly important when you have touched surfaces which others will also have touched (eg door handles).
4. **Use face coverings:** In line with the University’s [Face coverings guidance](https://www.ox.ac.uk/coronavirus/health/face-coverings), face coverings are no longer mandatory, but the wearing of face coverings inside University buildings is encouraged. This is particularly so for communal areas, during in-person teaching of larger groups (face coverings will not be expected in smaller group teaching), in the library, and any less well-ventilated areas. Staff, students and visitors are also welcome to wear face coverings if they wish in any setting, and we ask everyone to be sensitive to the concerns of fellow users of the building.
5. **Social distancing:** Social distancing rules have been removed, but again we ask everyone to be considerate of colleagues and their personal space.
6. **Ventilation**: maximise fresh air in spaces, especially where people spend extended periods of time. Opening windows, doors, and vents helps to introduce fresh air into those spaces that have no mechanical ventilation. If they cannot be kept open, then windows or doors can be opened before, during and after use to encourage replacement of air. NB: office doors will often be open – do not assume that means that you can go in without being invited by the occupant.

## Cases or Suspected Cases of COVID-19

**In the event of a suspected or confirmed case:** Follow the flowchart at the end of this guidance if you suspect you have, or have tested positive for, COVID-19. Do not come to work on-site. Report this to your line manager and the Head of Administration and Finance (Thomas Hall) on easresults@orinst.ox.ac.uk as soon as possible.

Thomas Hall is the Single Point of Contact for notifications from individuals or from the University’s testing service if there is a COVID-19 case, with Trudi Pinkerton as deputy.

If you have been in contact with someone who suspects they may have COVID-19, be extra vigilant with hygiene measures until that person has been tested. If the case is confirmed you should be contacted by Public Health England if you are considered a “contact”. In the work context, this is defined as ‘a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes’.

If someone in the building tests positive, office occupants will be informed and extra cleaning may be arranged in the relevant desk space and other areas that the person was using.

## Public and Shared areas

Specific arrangements have generally been removed in favour of ‘normal use’. However, it is good practice, and a courtesy to fellow users, to continue to follow this guidance:

**Entrance and exit:** Both the main front door and the side door at the bottom of the ramp[[1]](#footnote-1) may be used to enter or exit the building. Give priority to those exiting. Do not gather closely as you wait to come in, but wait for those in front of you to pass through, using the access control in the normal way.

Please go straight to and from the room or office where you are working, to avoid a gathering of people in the public or common areas of the building.

**Corridors and stairs:** The corridors in the building are generally wide with good visibility. Keep to the left, and be sensitive when passing someone in the corridor or on the stairs to give as much room as possible. If in doubt, use a pass-and-wait system by stepping to one side to allow others to pass while maximising the distance between you.

**Lifts:** More than one person may use the lift at a time, but avoid overcrowding. Use the stairs if you can.

**Toilets: F**or hygiene reasons please put the toilet lid down where applicable before flushing and ensure you wash your hands for 20 seconds.

**Kitchens:** The basement kitchen is for authorised staff only; it will re-open once building works are completed. The staff kitchen on the third floor may be used by one person at a time, but the fridge is not for general use.

**Common Room:** The common room and servery / café will re-open once building works are completed.

**Meeting rooms:** Meetings may continue to be held on-line, but the rooms are bookable with normal capacity.

**Cycle store:** The cycle store will re-open when building work is completed, for those who have registered their cycles.

## Teaching

Teaching will generally be conducted face-to-face. The University has committed to providing this for its students, unless there is a compelling reason not to in a particular case. Where individual students cannot attend in person (for example, if self-isolating) it will be the responsibility of the teacher to discuss suitable arrangements and assess any specific IT needs, asking for advice if needed.

Teaching rooms can be booked via Liz Cull in the usual way. Maximum capacities (including teacher) are:

Lecture Room 1 28

Lecture Room 2 18

Room 116 12

Room 314 16

Spalding Room 26

The Basement Seminar Room, Language Labs and Room 301 will not be available, but by the beginning of 2022 the new teaching rooms in the basement will become available. We apologise for this temporary inconvenience.

If it is required to hold a larger class than can be accommodated in the Oriental Institute, or all rooms are booked, it may be possible to book space elsewhere in the University. Please contact Thomas Hall if you might need this.

## Offices

**Windows and doors:** Keep windows and doors open if possible to maximise ventilation while the room is occupied, especially if there is more than one person in the room. Do not use desk fans, as this may spread contaminated air.

**Air conditioning**: units should not be used if there is more than one person in the room.

**Desk spaces and set up:** Some staff have taken equipment home to improve their home working environment. This means that their desks in the office may not be appropriately equipped. Please discuss any issues with IT as soon as possible. Desk fans may be used but make sure there is a supply of fresh air (eg. open window and door).

**Office cleaning stations:** Cleaning materials continue to be provided on each floor. Teams are encouraged to work in a paperless manner and sharing of equipment should be avoided wherever possible.

## Services

**Cleaning:** the cleaners will be cleaning the building twice a day, with particular emphasis on shared areas and ‘touch points’.

**IT:** As usual, raise issues or requests by emailing it-support@orinst.ox.ac.uk to ensure that in-person support is available as required.

You can continue to make an appointment, either in-person or virtual, with IT Staff.

**Reception:** Reception will be staffed between 9am and 5pm. Do not gather unnecessarily in the reception area. Please do not have personal items delivered on-site.

**Post:** The pigeon holes will be used but please avoid congestion in the Reception area, and sanitise your hands before and after handling post.

**Photocopiers & printers:** Please think twice before printing. If you do need to print, photocopy or scan something, please wait until the last user has finished, then collect your printouts/copies. If one person is already waiting to use the printer, please do not queue but return later instead. Use the cleaning supplies provided to clean the touch points on the printer as well as the stapler and hole punch if you have used these.

**Building maintenance and repairs**: Contact Trudi Pinkerton by email. Avoid going physically to the faculty office if you can.

**Library**: the Oriental Institute Library – now the ‘Bodleian Nizami Ganjavi Oriental Studies Library’ – has its own rules and procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic. Users of the Library should familiarise themselves with these.

## Other information

**In case of fire:** If the evacuation alarm sounds, individuals should leave the building without delay via the signed evacuation routes. When assembling at the fire evacuation point at the far end of Pusey Lane beyond the Pusey Street crossroad, observe social distancing at all times.

**First aid:** Kits are located on the wall to the left in the kitchen, in the cupboard in the Lodge, and behind the door in the Faculty Office. As normal, contact Louise on Reception in the first instance. If urgent assistance is required dial 999.

**Lone working safety:** Please arrange the days and times you will work on-site with your line manager and do not enter the building outside core hours of Monday to Friday, from 8am to 6pm. The wooden front doors will be locked for entry from 5.30pm.

**Other useful information:**

* Further guidance for staff is available at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/coronavirus/return-to-workplace/staff-guidance>.
* Health and protection during COVID-19 pandemic: A common framework- Keeping students and staff safe and well <https://www.ox.ac.uk/coronavirus/planning/michaelmas-2020/health>

## Further Guidance

**Meetings:** Meetings (including committee and board meetings) may be held on-line or face-to-face. Any face-to-face meetings must respect the maximum capacity of the room. Face coverings may be worn (see above).

**Feedback:** Please post any questions or comments about the measures in place, or any risks that you become aware of, to thomas.hall@orinst.ox.ac.uk. If you would rather provide feedback anonymously please email isabelle.pitt@humanities.ox.ac.uk.

1. once building works have been completed [↑](#footnote-ref-1)