

Guidelines for Limited Work on Campus

To support the return of on-
campus employees during
COVID-19

July
2020

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This document is intended to be used as a guide to assist Faculties and Divisions in developing plans to have their employees return to campus/sites. This guide applies to the office activities involving faculty, student services, administration and operations.

An additional guide will be available for planning activities and events on campus/sites.

A separate framework has been developed for face-to-face instruction and for research activities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak and the variety of planning initiatives that are taking place across the campus, a series of guiding principles have been developed. The following principles are intended to enable cohesive planning across the campus based on the same fundamental values and understanding of the current COVID-19 challenges now and moving forward:

- a. All of our decisions are based firmly on continuing to support the safety and well-being of our students, employees, and broader community.
- b. Follow the advice and direction of BC's Public Health Office, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skill and Training, and WorkSafeBC (COVID-19 and returning to safe operation guidelines).
- c. When understanding the various options available, take a risk-based approach and use the current reality along with the set of assumptions to help guide the decision making.
- d. Decisions will be driven by student centred, high-quality education and support services.
- e. The University will provide as much certainty as possible to students and staff by making and communicating decisions as early as possible.

With the above principles in mind, this phased return to campus will be done in a conservative manner. We continue to encourage as much remote work as possible, recognizing the various strains put on employees with this COVID-19 outbreak (such as effectiveness, mental health, physical health, caregiving...).

SCOPE

The scope of these guidelines is for employees returning to campus performing:

- Office work for
 - Faculty
 - Student Services
 - Administration
 - Operations

Includes students working for a Faculty or Division.

Out of scope for these guidelines are employees returning to campus performing services:

- Face-to-face service with students (library, registration, cafeteria, residence, gym...)
- Facilities maintenance work (buildings, equipment, landscaping)
- VIU sanctioned events or external parties using VIU facilities -For this type of work please see the “Return to Campus Events/Activities” guidelines

RESPONSIBILITIES

Dean/Directors

- Understand and communicate the guidelines, the process and the safety plan
- Review and approve the intake plan and the associated safety plan
- Ensure the necessary supplies and support is available to develop and implement the plans
- Ensure the plan is being executed as per plan

Managers

- Understand and communicate the guidelines, the process and the safety plan
- Develop and implement the intake plan and the associated safety plan
- Identify and secure the necessary supplies and support to develop and implement the plans
- Execute the plan

Employees

- Understand the process and the safety plan
- Engage and execute the plan

PHASED APPROACH

The return to campus for employees will take a phased approach that mirrors the BC Restart plan.

BC’s Restart Phases

VIU’s Return to Campus Plan



Essential work that needed to continue on campus



Remain in Phase 1



3A – July/August

- Instructors to prep for fall delivery
- Employees phased

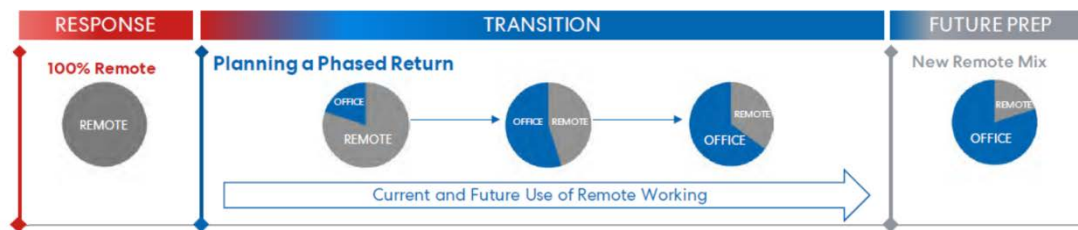
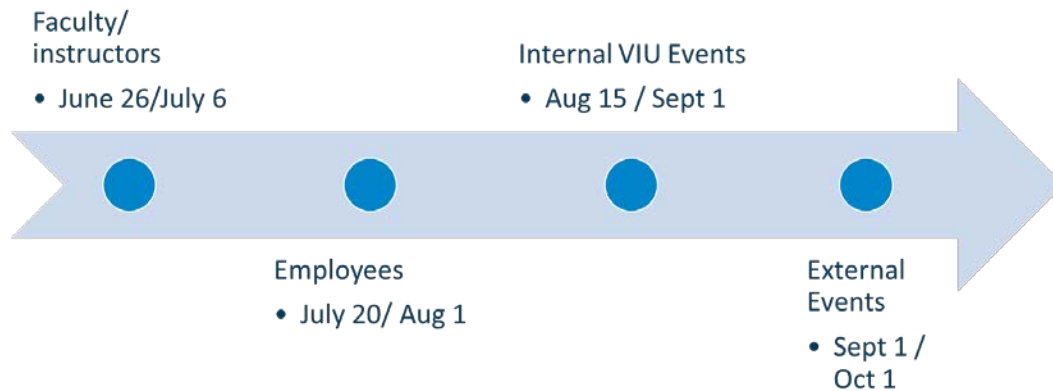
3b – September/October

- Employees phased
- Internal VIU activities/events
- External activities/events on VIU campus/sites



Larger gatherings
(Convocation, sports, theatre...)

A closer look at the dates associated with Phase 3 A and B for VIU. The date on the left is when the intake process begins and the date to the right is when employees or events may be allowed to return to campus



The return of employees for each faculty/division is not expected to be 100% of employees back to campus on August 1, it is expect it to be phased over several months. This will allow for adjustment to your worksite safety plans as you phase your employees back. Note: the end of phase 3, which may not be until 2021, does not mean you have to have 100% of your employees back to campus. It may not be until phase 4 that you see everyone returning, and even then the “new normal” may look different than pre COVID and you may have some employees working from home in various capacities.

PROCESS

Keeping the above responsibilities in mind, each Faculty/Division should review the information outlined in each of the 5 steps below in order to effectively develop and implement a return to campus plan for your employees.



Step 1: Faculty / Division Intake

Step one involves the Dean / Directors working with their managers to:

- a) Review this guideline document
- b) Using the guideline, fill out the Intake Form (HR_Excluded Drive), this form lays out which employees will be returning when, where and what work they will be doing.

Note: the guideline outlines various considerations that must be taken into account when drafting a plan for employees returning to campus. In this step you are not required to complete the safety planning for all these considerations but just to take them into account when completing the intake form. Step 3 will require you to complete the safety planning, which may require some adjustments to the intake once completed.

Step 2: OCC Review

Step two involves the OCC – RTCWG to review the intake plan submitted by each Faculty / Division. The approval will be based a set of established criteria.

Each plan will be entered into a master list in order to track the development and implementation of the plan.

Step 3: Worksite Safety Plan

Step three is the development of the office worksite safety plan. The COVID-19 safety plan framework follows an 8-step process to effectively develop worksite safety plan.

1. Review the COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan
2. Complete the Risk Assessment template
3. Review and/ develop safe work procedures
4. Complete teaching space plan - checklist
5. Complete People Management checklist
6. Identify Facility access/cleaning plans required
7. Complete required training
8. Ensure oversight and Compliance

Health and Safety Services will be available to assist and support the development of the safety plan. The complete COVID-19 safety framework can be found on the HR_Excluded Drive.

Step 4: H&S review of the safety Plan

Step four requires the safety plan to be review by the Health & Safety team to ensure it meets the WorkSafeBC protocols. Upon completion Health & Safety will return the plan with a compliance checklist. See Appendix C

Step 5: Dean / Director Sign-Off

Step five requires the Safety plan be signed off by the Dean or Director and returned to Health & Safety team. The signed plan is posted on the website (WorkSafeBC requirement) as well a distributed to the VIU Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee.

GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines for developing your return to campus intake plan for your employees

CONSERVATIVE APPROACH

Here is a more comprehensive description and scenarios of what we mean when we say *“We continue to encourage as much remote work as possible, recognizing the various strains put on employees with this COVID-19 outbreak (such as effectiveness, mental health, physical health, caregiving...)”*

Four types of employees to consider when drafting who and what work should or should not return to campus

1. Those employees that want to come back to campus
 - mental/stress, home office setup/ergonomics, technology
2. Those employees that you (the manager) want to come back to campus
 - productivity, confidential information, team required, mental and physical needs based on accommodations requested
 - the above should have strong rationale, from how it is done now remotely
3. Those employees that need to continue to work remotely
 - vulnerable (themselves or their family)
4. Those employees that you (the manager) want to continue to work remotely
 - this should be the balance of those not in the above that are comfortable and productive working remotely
 - these are individuals that we would encourage as much as possible to work remotely

Ask yourself the following questions as you determine which group they would fall into.

- Are they showing signs of stress, have they verbally requested to return to campus?
- Are they ergonomically set up at home to work safely (workspace set up), have they asked for accommodations because of their home office setup?

- Are they meeting your expectations in terms of productivity?
- Do they have the technology to perform the work remotely (laptop, software, internet connection)?
- Have they expressed concern or stress about the possibility of returning to campus because they are vulnerable, or they have vulnerable people in the household and would prefer to work from home?

For employees in group 1 and 2, determine how they should be phased back onto campus in a safe manner. These safety guidelines are discussed next.

For employees in group 3 and 4, continue to encourage them to work remotely.

WORKSAFE BC

This guideline, the process and the safety plan framework all follow the WorkSafeBC guidelines.

The following is from the BC's Restart Plan.

“B.C.’s restart will be a careful, step-by-step process to ensure all of our combined efforts and sacrifices are not squandered.

For the different organizational sectors to move forward, they will be asked to develop enhanced protocols aligned with the Public Health and Safety Guidelines. A cross-ministry committee of deputy ministers will monitor the process and ensure overall alignment with the Public Health and Safety Guidelines and WorkSafeBC. The Provincial Health Officer will continue to provide input and advice as needed throughout the review process.”

For this return to campus for employee guidelines, the WorkSafeBC sector enhanced protocols focus is “Offices: Protocols for returning to operation”. [WorksafeBC Link](#)

PLANNING THE SAFE RETURN OF FACULTY AND STAFF

Establish Office Capacity:

(see <https://perkinswill.com/road-map-for-return/> See page 12-14 for guidance)

Capacity MUST BE DETERMINED before any return to campus is allowed

- 6ft distancing
- Floor maximum capacity
- Scheduling options

Is the current physical separation of workspaces adequate? If not, what changes are needed to the physical layout?

Are Plexiglas screens or other physical separation equipment required?

Common/Gathering Areas

Consider common/gathering areas, such as:

- Staff lunchroom
- Shared photocopier area
- Storage rooms
- Reception areas
- Meeting rooms

Include all common areas in the plan to return. Are any measures needed to promote physical distancing in these spaces? Capacity needs to be defined for each space.

Consider whether all common or gathering areas in the workplace will be open, or whether some will remain closed.

Plan the Employee Return Approach

(see <https://perkinswill.com/road-map-for-return/> See page 15-19 for guidance)

Options if physical distancing is not feasible:

- Continue work from home 100%
- Assigned days in a week (e.g., every Monday, Tuesday and alternating Friday)
- Non-overlapping shifts
- Staggering work hours
- 4:10 rotation (4 days work/10 days home rotational schedule)
- Repurposing office space not in use (may require coordination with Facilities and other areas)

Even with shifts or staggering work hours, maximum capacity with distancing per floor should not be exceeded. Sharing desks should be avoided.

Contingency/Continuity Planning

Consider who is in the office at the same time. Continuity planning should be considered for critical positions and tasks.

- Avoid having key authorization personnel in the office at the same time or have one working remotely 100%
- Ensure you have staff that can perform key tasks on both shifts or working remotely

Given the volatility of this situation, ensure you have contingency plans for returning to work remotely scenario on short notice.

Intermittent Access to Campus for Employees

If an employee is only on campus/office for a short period (< day). Have them follow the short visit protocol.

BUILDING PLAN AND CLEANING

Overall building plan and cleaning plans are being managed by Facilities. These will be aligned with the return to campus plans.

These building and cleaning plans will include:

- Safe building access
- Designated entry and exit points
- Traffic flow within building
- Elevators
- Stairwells
- Washrooms
- Signage
- Cleaning schedule

COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION

The success of this phased return to campus for employees will be to ensure an overarching communication and education strategy.

Communication on the process and plans to employees.

Education to the Deans/Directors/Managers on the process and their responsibilities.

Education to the employees on their responsibilities and expectations on returning to campus.

Communication - Web page, Facebook and email

Education - "Manage Here" session for Directors / Managers