Physical Distancing Assessments

Assessments need to be developed to calculate the number of users a space can maintain safely using the appropriate physical distance requirements recommended by Universities Australia and NSW Health to reduce potential community transmission of COVID-19.

Assessments should be completed by department heads to ensure that local operational requirements are taken into consideration. To assist with assessments the following elements should be considered:

- **Number of people** to occupy the space at any one time, particularly interactions that may be required.
- **Rostering** of occupants into the space or to use equipment, particularly if there is a high demand for the space or equipment there may need to be a rotation of people or reduction in numbers to allow safe access.
- **Cleaning** requirements of equipment in between occupants of the space, including cleaning protocols for equipment that may be loaned to people. Refer to COVID-19 Cleaning Factsheet.
- **Disability** requirements of the occupants within the office space.

**Distances** that should be used for assessments include:

- Less than **1.5 metres passing distance** may be required for spaces with more than one person, particularly around ends of workstation rows and corridors.
- **1.5m workstation seating arrangements**, thus leaving every second workstation vacant. Desk sizes should be measured to ensure any changes in desk size still equates to a minimum 1.5m spacing between people (from all sides). The University typically has been using 1.8m wide desks, hopefully making this easier.
- **4 square metres** for spaces with more than one person in the same area.
- Other agreed options to be developed under consultation with the occupants.

Below is an **example** of the physical distancing that has been implemented within an office workplace:

![Diagram of office space with physical distancing markings](image)

This assessment was based on the following space requirements:

- Every second workstation is vacant to allow for 1.5m physical distancing throughout the staffing allocation. This is based on a desk size of 1500mm x 750mm.
- Kitchen areas are take-away based areas only. No fixed seating is to be used within the kitchen areas.
- Meeting rooms are zoned based on 4m square allocation for an extended time frame over 15 minutes.
This space is on a multi-day roster to cater for the reduced number of workstations available. Occupants are consulted in rosters to enable reduced office capacity and Work from Home arrangements.

In areas of high face to face interaction such as reception areas, floor spacing indicators may need to be installed on the floor to maintain 1.5 metre distancing.

The assessment for a space has been calculated for meeting rooms, and signage has been placed on the entry way to show the maximum number of persons allowed. Actual occupancy may be less due to the nature of activities in the room and variation of layout to maintain 1.5m separations.

Below is an example of MQ authorised signage that has been posted across campus locations.

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**Work Health & Safety**

For further information and support about COVID-19 safety or other Work Health & Safety requirements, including related signage, please contact your local Health & Safety Advisor or email: whs@mq.edu.au

**Be Risk aware, be COVIDSafe**

Please note that due to the regular changes in advice from State and Federal Governments, including NSW Health, this guidance will be reviewed and modified as the need requires.

Useful information and resources about COVID-19, including our COVIDSafe Plan and Return to Campus Plan, can be found on the Macquarie University website Coronavirus page: https://www.mq.edu.au/about/coronavirus-faqs

Please ensure that you stay up to date with the latest changes or contact the COVIDSafe Coordinator (grant.whitehorn@mq.edu.au) for updates on Government Guidelines, Public Health Orders, physical distancing, events and gatherings, hygiene practices, notifications or other COVIDSafe requirements.