Bulletin:
Covid-19 Risk Assessment Approval Process - Update

14 September 2021

To: Heads of Department/Section, Executive Deans, HSLOs and DHSOs, Faculty Managers.

For action

This bulletin should be circulated to all staff members that undertake or are responsible for Covid-19 Risk Assessments.

Change to the requirement for higher level approval for COVID-19 risk assessments in Targeted Protection

Under Targeted Protection, from 14th September 2021, there will no longer be a requirement for the Registrar and Secretary (or their nominee) to approve the COVID-19 risk assessments, or for these to be endorsed by Workplace, Health, Safety and Wellbeing. The following documents have, therefore, been withdrawn: ***Approval process for COVID-19 Risk Assessments*** and ***COVID-19 risk assessment approval matrix.***

Departments will still be required to produce a COVID-19 risk assessment for all their activities (on and off campus) in line with the [University of Essex COVID-19 Policy Statement](#) and these will continue to be subject to approval by Head of Department/Section.

In summary:
- Departments must produce a COVID-19 risk assessment for all activities within their area, including travel off campus. Similar activities can, however, be grouped onto one risk assessment.
- For overseas travel, the requirement for the COVID-19 risk assessment is **in addition to** the normal overseas travel risk assessment process.
- For off-campus activities at another organisation, the department should establish that the correct COVID-19 controls are in place for the host organisation.
- All COVID-19 risk assessments must be approved by the Head of Department/Section (or their nominee in their absence). Approvals must be stored locally, and kept available for inspection and audit purposes.

Templates and guidance on completing the risk assessments are listed below. WHSW will also be running regular risk assessment training sessions during the Autumn Term, which can be booked through HR Organiser. Contact safety@essex.ac.uk for further support and advice.

COVID-19 Strategic Risk Assessment

All COVID-19 risk assessments should be undertaken having due regard to the [COVID-19 Strategic Risk Assessment](#) which details the principal hazards affecting the University and its activities, as well as the primary control measures which have been implemented by the University to mitigate against those hazards.

Workplace Health, Safety and Wellbeing
E-mail: safety@essex.ac.uk or fire@essex.ac.uk. Tel 01206 87 2944.
www.essex.ac.uk/health-safety

Policy

COVID-19 Risk Assessment

The [University Covid-19 Policy Statement](#) explains the measures put in place locally or departmentally to minimise the risks to students, staff, contractors, visitors and members of the public. These measures include the requirement to have in place suitable and sufficient COVID-19 risk assessments that take into account infection through air transmission or through touching surfaces and equipment. COVID-19 Risk Assessments are required for the following:

- All **University organised activities**, examples being teaching, research, fieldwork, events, gatherings, sports, travel, and visits.

- All **off-campus activities** which are deemed to be a part of University business, examples being training courses, seminars, placements, or other work or study with another organisation.

A [Template Departmental Risk Assessment and Guidance](#) is available on the staff directory, and this is the version that should be used for all such risk assessments wherever possible.

Travel in the UK

For travel within the UK, a [UK Travel (Covid) Risk Assessment](#) must be carried out in addition to any other risk assessments required for the travel/activity. The COVID-19 arrangements of the host organisation should be provided and checked before the activity takes place.

Travel Overseas

For travel overseas, an [Overseas Travel (Covid) Risk Assessment](#) must be carried out and attached to the standard Overseas Travel Risk Assessment. The COVID-19 arrangements of the host organisation should be provided and checked before the activity takes place.