Safety Department Report – **January – April 2021**

**Biological News**

**Our COVID-19 guidance can be found** [**here**](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/laboratory-safety/biological-safety/covid-19-guidance/)**. This is updated regularly as more information becomes available. This includes COVID Policy, guidance, risk assessment forms and checklists.**

These have been reviewed in light of the new variant of SARS-CoV-2, which appears to have a higher transmission rate. No additional controls have been identified; we are confident the measures we havein place are fit for purpose. The controls include:

* Washing your hands regularly and for 20 seconds, or applying alcohol-based hand gel sanitiser.
* Wearing a face covering according to your departmental safety instructions.
* Staying 2 metres apart from people you do not live with. Some departments have implemented a 1+m social distance AND additional precautions such as the use of face coverings, face visors, etc. Plese refer to your departmental safety protocols for further details.
* Checking in using [the QR codes](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/laboratory-safety/biological-safety/covid-19-guidance/keeping-you-safe---general-advice-for-everyone/testing-and-contact-tracing/tracing/).
* When using shared equipment, cleaning them before and after use. This includes desks, shared keyboards, kettles, laboratory equipment

Departments should review their COVID risk assessments on their return to Campus in January and make sure their safety arrangements are fully implemented across their space.

Students and staff who are required to attend campus during the lockdown should [book weekly tests](https://commsandpublicaffairsall.newsweaver.com/9toyphkuvf/12fb3gbxipeeoqjyswvlb3/external?email=true&a=5&p=6342367&t=3683153). If you receive a positive test result, if you don’t have a fever after your isolation period and you feel well, you can return to campus. There is no need for you to obtain another test result at this point- if you did take a test, the test result is quite likely to be positive as non-infectius viral particles and viral RNA fragments are likey to remain in your system, and they will be detected by the sensitive PCR testing technique employed to conduct the COVID tests. Following a positive test result, you don’t need to take another test for 90 days, unless you develop new COVID-19 symptoms.

Please remember to contact the [CCT Hub](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/occupational-health/covid-19-contact-tracing-hub/) if you develop COVID symptoms or receive a COVID positive test result, event if you are working remotely.

**Laboratory News**

**LabODS registry**

We are currently in the process of registering with the new UK version of the LabODS registry, for import and use of ozone depleting substances. This is expected to take a few weeks. Until this process is completed, it will not be possible to purchase ozone depleting substances for laboratory use. Please factor this delay into any ongoing work plans.

**Radiation News**

**Laser Pointer Safety Poster**

Posters supporting the ongoing laser pointer safety campaign are still available. Posters should be displayed in teaching spaces and on safety notice boards. The posters point to the detailed safety guidance available on the Safety Department’s [Laser Pointer Safety Webpage](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-by-topic/laboratory-safety/laser-safety/laser-pointer-safety/), where further posters can be downloaded for local printing in A3 format. Posters are also available in 16:9 format for screen use.

Requests for posters should be made to the College Radiation Protection Manager.

**Radiation Protection Supervisor Training**

Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) training is being provided via MS Teams during the current Covid-19 restrictions. The next training course for new and existing RPSs will be provided on the 12th of February (1100 - 1230).  Training requests should be made via the [**LDC website**](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/staff-development/safety-training/safety-courses-/radiation-protection-supervisor-training/).

**Relocation of radioactive sources and radiation generators to the White City Campus.**

With construction work continuing apace, some buildings are either completed or nearing completion at the College’s White City Campus. As a result, researchers from a number of departments are beginning to relocate to the site. If research groups that have radioactive sources or radiation generators are relocating, it is important that they contact the radiation protection team in the Safety Department as soon as possible.

Before work involving ionising radiations can resume, it will need to be ensured that it is registered and that any existing risk assessments are reviewed. Depending on the nature of the work, there may also be environmental permitting issues that need to be addressed before radioactive substances can be used at the campus.

More information can be found [**here**](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/safety/internal/ionising-radiation/guidance-notes/Work-Registration-%28RP-002%29_RM_-JF-Technical-Review-15.10.2019.pdf).

**College Safety Forum**

**December 2020**

The first ever remote College Safety Forum took place on 14 December via Teams Events. Despite a technical error from a nameless member of the Safety team, the event went well, and we heard from Jonathan Ryan on the Fire Warden Initiative, Eifion Nightingale about winning a Healthy and Safety Provost Award, Claire O’Brien & Chris Allan with Occupational Health updates, Ross Manson on the Laser Pointer Safety campaign, and of course, Julia Cotton in her leaving speech to the College. You can access a video recording of the event on the [College Safety Forum page](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/safety/safety-events/college-safety-forum/) on the Safety website – you will need to sign in (maybe more than once!) to access this. You can also view the presentations delivered at the Forum. With the current uncertainty as to when staff will be allowed back on site, a date for the summer CSF has not yet been decided, but please let d.hickey@imperial.ac.uk know if you want to be sent an invite when it has been finalised, and do not currently receive notification of the Forums.

**Safety Department News**

**Audrey Plaquin-Chan**

We’re sorry to announce that Audrey will be leaving the Safety Department at Imperial College to become a Health and Safety Manager with Kings College London. Audrey has been with Imperial for 10 years in total, and 5 years in the Audit team. For obvious reasons she quickly picked up the nickname “Aud-itor”! Audrey has contributed vastly to improving safety procedures and practices within the College, and her expertise will be sorely missed. Her last official day with us will be on Friday 12 March.