This document is designed to help facilitate effective, two-way conversations regarding returning to work on campus and the changes that may be associated with this. These are unprecedented times and having adjusted to working from home, coming back to campus may feel strange initially and individuals may require some support. Each team member’s situation is likely to be different. Some will have more questions than others, some may be looking forward to being back on campus while others may be more cautious. When talking to your team members please take into consideration the impact of COVID-19 on their home and personal lives and how this may have an effect on their return to the campus. Having an awareness of these things may help you anticipate the questions they might have and enable you to be more prepared to provide information or answers to their questions. Listening to and understanding their views and providing support are key to a smooth transition back on to campus.

**Preparation** is key to being ready to hold an effective conversation with your team member.

**Open Questions** - An open and honest, two-way conversation is an effective approach which will enable you to ask open questions to elicit information particularly around what the individual’s concerns are. To help you with this, there are open question examples throughout this guide, for you to adapt and choose from.

- Remember to listen with an open mind and demonstrate you have heard their point of view: avoid jumping in with counter arguments.
- Use the open questions to test out any assumptions you’ve had to make in drawing up plans to return to campus.
- Remember there may be personal circumstances you are not fully aware of which you can explore with open questions. It’s important to recognise it is not the same for each person, even if they have similar circumstances.

**ADKAR** - In order to put yourself in their shoes and be approachable for them to ask questions and express concerns, we have used the ADKAR model as an approach to help you anticipate what they might need. (See final page for further explanation of ADKAR model)

- **Awareness** – Why are we asking them to work on campus and what will be different about the ways of working when they do? Prepare what they need to know first, considering both information they already have and information which is new to them.
- **Desire** – consider their individual situation and what is likely to be important to them. This may include childcare or caring arrangements and health factors or safety concerns as well as their working arrangements. Consider what reassurance they may need from you to develop their confidence to return to campus. This is about addressing their feelings and needs.
- **Knowledge** - consider the detail of what they need to know about returning to campus and how it will impact them. Work through the process of returning step by step and note down the key things for them to know at each point and where there is flexibility for them to make some decisions. Consider both what they need to know to do their job and the facilities and environment they will be working in. Plan for questions you think they may have based on what you might know about the individual and/or what you know of their circumstances. What information can you access in advance? What information might you want to signpost the staff member to?
- **Ability** – consider the practical things they will need to do differently in the new way of working including times, locations, travelling, behaviours, interactions and tasks. Consider what practical support they will need including time, resources, working with others, PPE, new procedures and access to up to date information. Consider ‘what if...’ questions they may ask you which may be a clue to their concerns.
- **Reinforcement** – consider next steps and ongoing support to help them with the return to campus.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Conversation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop Trust and check in</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Introduce the conversation and demonstrate you are coming from a place of trust and support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Ask</strong>: Would this be a good time to discuss plans for working on campus together, so I can answer questions you may have, and we can discuss what support you may need?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explain the purpose of the conversation eg ‘I wanted to talk to you about what the plans are, and how they will impact on you, and we can discuss and agree together how to make it work.’</td>
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<th>Opening</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Awareness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Ask</strong>: What’s your understanding of the plans so far? What measures are you aware of that have been put in place? What is going to be different?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Update them with the plan for returning to campus with the overall information about what this will mean for them in their role.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explain the reasons for doing this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Set out any exemptions and the reasons for these eg any staff not required to return to campus and why.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Ask</strong>: How does this seem from your perspective? Tell me, how are you feeling about this so far?</td>
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<td><strong>Desire</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Ask</strong>: What would be the positives about working back on the campus? Describe some of the benefits (potential benefits to them individually, social, wellbeing, their work, to students or other stakeholders, to reputation and financial sustainability)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Ask</strong>: What concerns do you have? Listen to their concerns without disagreeing, maintain a supportive approach and open mind.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(If needed, draw out more of their thoughts, eg <strong>Ask</strong>: How will this impact you? What other thoughts have you got? Tell me more about that? Explain to me how that might cause difficulties?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explain you want to discuss their concerns eg ‘Let's look at your thoughts and concerns together and find a way forward’ (address their concerns using the following Knowledge and Ability sections).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Only if needed, you might also add the consequences of not returning (consider consequences for the work, the students, the individual themselves and the University). If return to campus is required and not optional, you will need to state this clearly.</td>
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### Knowledge

- Set out how things will work exactly, going through the detail about how it will impact on them. Include as much as is currently known, being honest about details still being considered or plans which may need to be changed.
- **Ask:** How do you think you can make this work best for you to carry out your role?
- **Ask:** What other questions or concerns do you have? What other information might you need? What else?

### Ability

- **Ask:** What support will you need to return to campus and to carry out your role? Tell me more about what you will need in place to be able to do your job?
- Share any other support, being clear about what is confirmed and what is being planned or considered. Include the measures to keep them safe.
- **Ask** them: What things will you need to do differently in this new way of working?
- Share your own thoughts about how they might need to approach their work differently, focusing on the behaviours they may need.
- **Ask:** Describe to me what else might you need to help you successfully transition back to working on campus? And what else?
- **Ask:** What other questions do you have? How well have I explained the plans?

### Reinforcement

- **Ask:** Having discussed that, what are your overall thoughts and feelings about returning to campus now we have had this conversation? (Return to the stages of ADKAR above if needed based on their answer)
- Agree next steps: when and how you will follow up or be back in touch and what they should do if they have other suggestions or questions.
- Thank them for their willingness to engage in this conversation.

### After the conversation

- Follow up what you have discussed.
- Ensure you check back in with them within their first day of returning to campus to find out how it is going and how they are feeling. Use the opportunity to address any issues or concerns and celebrate successes.
- Keep in touch – arrange or maintain regular contact, allow time for additional questions which they may have.
- Follow up on any questions which you were unable to answer.
- Keep them informed of progress, even if there is nothing to add, and inform them of any changes to plans quickly.
ADKAR

The ADKAR model of change management was devised by Prosci, a US research organisation, and is based on a study involving 900 organisations across 59 countries over a 14 year period. The model defines the essential steps to successfully manage the people dimension of change.

AWARENESS – people need to understand exactly what the change will entail and, crucially, why it is necessary. Communication is key to ensuring that everyone knows as much as possible about the drivers and aims of the change, and accepts them.

DESIRE – resistance is more likely if people feel that the change has been forced upon them. Discussing with them to develop how the change will work for them, understanding their own motivations and ensuring they understand the consequences of not changing should help.

KNOWLEDGE – provide the information so that people can adapt to the changes. Identifying the individual information needs and providing for them is key to success.

ABILITY – This not only means ensuring that they have the capacity to do things differently, but also that any psychological barriers can be overcome.

REINFORCEMENT – reinforcement will be most successful if it resonates with an individual. There should also be an ongoing system of accountability to maintain the change.

Links to further Resources

Announcement on COVID secure campus

https://www.southampton.ac.uk/blog/sussed-news/2020/07/21/covid-secure-campuses/?sussed-user=staff

Health and Safety guidance

https://sotonac.sharepoint.com/teams/HealthSafetyduringCOVID-19

Contact HR for advice

Leadership and Management Development Resources

The Leadership and Management Development SharePoint site contains a range of resources to support manager and staff development:

- Enabling Change – online resources to help managers with change and change conversations, including reading, video, eLearning and a virtual workshop.
- Maximising Contribution – online resources to help managers with all aspects of managing people including holding effective conversations, including eLearning, a video and a virtual workshop.
- More information on ADKAR You can find some really helpful free Ebooks on the different elements.

On line toolkit links

Your Development Toolkit contains lots of useful information, guides and other tools to help you consider change. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with your university details in order to access the University account.

- Driving and managing change
- Communicating change
• How to answer questions about change
• Discussing resistance to change with an individual