**RSU079 - Reopening of RSU Secure Environment in Colby House for Researchers**

**Introduction**

The Research Support Unit (RSU) Secure Environment in Colby House closed on the 16 March 2020 due to the lockdown imposed due to Covid-19. The purpose of this document is to outline the return to Colby House for researchers. The document will include:

* Justification for researchers returning to Colby House
* Colby House Guidelines
* Researcher attendance at Colby House
* Guidelines for researchers in RSU Secure Environment
* Researcher seating arrangements
* Booking visits to the Secure Environment
* Personal responsibility
* Maintaining the opening of the Secure Environment
* Annex A: RSU Secure Environment Booking Request Form

An internal NISRA risk assessment has been completed, and we have identified ways in which to offer a safe but limited return to opening. Please note, universities and other organisations must carry out risk assessments before allowing staff to work off site – please contact your own HR department for further information on this. Prior to coming to Colby House, it is the researcher’s responsibility to have completed a risk assessment with their organisation.

**Justification for researchers returning to Colby House**

There are activities that cannot be performed while researchers are unable to access the RSU Secure environment. The continued closure of the Secure Environment has led to and will continue to lead to delays for NILS and ADR NI research projects for QUB and UU researchers. As such, researchers require access to the RSU Secure Environment to carry out analysis on NILS and ADR NI projects.

When accessing the Secure Environment, researchers will be able to carry out the following:

* Conduct analysis of new and existing projects;
* Create intermediate/final outputs; and
* Submit outputs for SDC checks.

**Colby House Guidelines**

The primary goal in managing Colby House during the current emergency is to minimise the risk of infection to all staff and researchers on site. All researchers returning to Colby House will be expected to adhere to all guidelines issued by the Facilities Management (FM) Team. As the response to the pandemic develops, on site protocols and procedures will be reviewed and revised in accordance with extant guidance at the time of any review.

RSU researchers are only allowed on site if they are deemed fit and well. In keeping with current guidance, if a researcher or any of their close contacts is suspected of having COVID-19, showing symptoms of COVID-19, awaiting COVID-19 test results or have recently tested positive for COVID-19, and are currently isolating under the ‘track and trace’ scheme; they will be asked to stay away from the workplace. Researchers must notify RSU if they have recently attended Colby and have tested positive. RSU also recommend that those who are in either vulnerable or extremely vulnerable people categories reconsider their visit

**Researcher attendance at Colby House**

Researchers must notarrive at Colby House without the prior authorisation of RSU.

Researchers must enter Colby House through the main front entrance. If researchers are cycling, they may use the cycle dock at the front of the building.

Upon arrival, researchers should report to and wait at the reception desk. Researchers must always adhere to hygiene protocols.

Researchers must not use those facility areas or toilets that are taped off and temporarily closed and must restrict their movement around the building to an absolute minimum.

RSU staff will collect researchers from reception. RSU Staff will escort researchers to the Secure Environment.

**Guidelines for researchers in RSU Secure Environment**

When in the Secure Environment, researchers will be expected to comply with the following:

* Enter and leave the Secure Environment using the first door opposite the kitchen entrance;
* Limit the amount of talking in the Secure Environment and around Colby House;
* No moving of chairs, keyboards, mice, stationery between desks/workspaces;
* Researchers can use the facilities on the ground floor and need to comply with the building rules when using them (wipe clean after use etc.) This includes use of the toilet and kitchen;
* As there are restrictions on the sharing of stationery, researchers will be asked to bring in their own pens during this time. Paper can be provided and will be stored in the researcher’s folders between visits;
* Researchers can email in any documents in advance and once cleared by RSU, they will be transferred into the relevant project folders on the network;
* RSU will only be clearing electronic outputs from researchers;
* Windows will be open, weather permitting; and
* The usual rules governing the use of the RSU Secure Environment will continue to apply.

Once tasks have been completed, RSU researchers should exit the building immediately via the most direct route to the main entrance.

**Booking visits to the Secure Environment**

Researchers should request access to the Secure Environment via email to the RSU mailbox at least 24 hours before attending Colby House using the form in Annex A. However, to facilitate possible password resets and/or ingest of code or other materials, we would recommend your request arrives with us no later than 48 hours in advance and earlier if possible. Researchers will be informed as soon as possible if there is availability.

* Researchers can book a full day or a 2.5-hour morning or afternoon slot (except for Mondays) although there is no guarantee that they will get them. Slots/days will be allocated fairly amongst researchers. We understand that a number of researchers are working against deadlines and are keen to resume work and we will do our best to ensure everyone has fair and equal access.
* Researchers are asked to continue to use the booking form and to give at least 24 hours’ notice when booking a slot/day. However, 48 hours’ notice is recommended so RSU can ensure there is time for password resets/ copying files into folders etc.
* Researchers will be allocated a seat on arrival by the person on room duty.
* Researchers booking full days will be required to take lunch at the same time as staff on duty in the room. As such, the room will be closed for an hour over lunch between 12:30-1:30pm or as agreed with the supervisory staff

The Booking Request Form also allows researchers to specify if they need their password reset as IT will not always be on the premises to do resets on the day. Researchers are encouraged to prepare in advance and write as much code as possible at home to reduce their time spent in Colby House. The Booking Request Form also allows researchers to request for code or other documents to be cleared and left in their project folders.

Researchers should only come in to do the necessary work and should leave as soon as it is finished.

If researchers wish to cancel a session, please give as much notice as possible (minimum of 1 working day) so someone else can take the slot. If cancellations are repeatedly made within 1 day of the booking, or if researchers are consistently late/do not show up for bookings, then booking privileges may be revoked until normal service resumes. Given the limited availability of access, and that staff are coming in voluntarily to provide supervision, it is unfair to everyone if the booking system is abused.

**Personal responsibility**

There is extra cleaning of shared surfaces routinely carried out by FM throughout Colby House as part of the existing protocol. However, as more staff return to Colby, staff and researchers are asked to take personal responsibility for cleaning after themselves.

The Secure Environment will be cleaned to the same frequency as prior to lockdown. As with the rest of the building there will be increased cleaning of high usage touch points e.g. door handles. Researchers will have to wipe down surfaces or shared equipment including the keyboard, mice, desk and washable surfaces of the chair they have been allocated.

Wipes, sanitizer, gloves and blue roll will be provided in the RSU Secure Environment as well as a bin which will be emptied by the cleaning staff. Researchers are recommended to wipe surfaces after use with the wipes and use sanitiser/wash hands as appropriate. It is also recommended that researchers wipe surfaces before use too and hand sanitiser should be used after entering the room and after touching shared surfaces.

In common with other business areas within Colby House, all staff and researchers will be encouraged to comply with this protocol.

**Annex A: RSU Secure Environment Researcher Booking Request Form**

To access the RSU Secure Environment a researcher must complete and submit this form to NISRA RSU. The guidance ‘Reopening of RSU Secure Environment in Colby House for Researchers’ should be read in advance of completing this form.

**Researcher Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Project Number: ­­­­­­­ ­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Please confirm the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *I, or any of my close contacts, are not suspected of having COVID-19, showing symptoms of COVID-19, awaiting COVID-19 test results, or have recently tested positive for COVID-19.* |  |
| *I am not in vulnerable or extremely vulnerable people categories.* |  |

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Please indicate in the table below the session(s) you wish to book.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date**  **(DD/MM/YY)** | | **Full day (10am-4pm)**  **(the room will be closed for an hour over lunch)** | **Half day** |  |
|  |  |
| **Morning Session**  **(10am – 12.30pm)** | **Afternoon Session**  **(1.30pm-4pm)** |
| **Monday** | |  | CLOSED | CLOSED | CLOSED |
| **Tuesday** | |  |  |  |  |
| **Wednesday** | |  |  |  |  |
| **Thursday** | |  |  |  |  |
| **Friday** | |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Do you require your password to be reset in advance of attending the RSU Secure Environment? | YES  NO |
| Please provide details of any code or other files that you wish to be added to your project folder in advance of your visit to the RSU Secure Environment. |  |
| Please provide the name of the software you intend to use while in the RSU Secure Environment. |  |
| If your booking is to use the ONS SRS, please indicate if you have accessed this before within the NISRA secure environment and the date of last access. | YES  NO  Date of last access \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Please provide any additional information for NISRA RSU. |  |

**Notes**

* Please submit this form to [rsu@nisra.gov.uk](mailto:rsu@nisra.gov.uk) at least 24 hours in advance of your requested booking slot. You will be informed as soon as possible if you have been allocated a time slot to attend.
* Please note that RSU will endeavour to accommodate your booking, however this may not always be possible.
* If you need to cancel a booking, please email [rsu@nisra.gov.uk](mailto:rsu@nisra.gov.uk) with as much notice as possible (1 working day minimum) so that your session can be reallocated.
* **Please note, if you or anyone in your household develops symptoms associated with COVID-19, or you can no longer consent to the health statements above, DO NOT attend your session.** Please notify NISRA RSU at your earliest convenience.

Please type or sign your name below to complete your booking request. In doing so you are confirming that you have read, understood and will adhere to the guidance associated with accessing the RSU Secure Environment and are content to access Colby House at your own risk.

**Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**