

**School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice**  
**Current COVID-19 Plan for Postgraduate Programmes**  
**Autumn 2020**

**Introduction**

This document provides the current plan for student return to campus with the School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice at UCD, for the Autumn 2020 trimester. Note that these plans are subject to change as national health requirements, university plans, and other factors shift. While the evolving COVID-19 situation is difficult to predict and plan for, it is our hope that, by providing students with as much information as we can, they will be more able to plan for the forthcoming academic year, and in particular the Autumn trimester.

The School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice's plan is based on three key goals: safety; quality; and agility. Firstly we aim to protect student and staff health as much as we are able, given the current situation. Second, we are aiming to provide as high-quality learning experience as possible, despite the limitations in place. Third, we have designed our plan so that, if need be, we can shift to being entirely online with as minimal disruption as possible. The plan includes a mix of on-campus and online delivery with the intention of providing a framework that enables students to have as good a learning experience as possible, depending upon the programme in which they are enrolled and the changing nature of circumstances.

Staff who are responsible for specific programmes in which you are enrolled will contact you with more specific details of the delivery of teaching.

Finally, please be aware that this document only applies to the modules and programmes delivered by the School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice. If you have questions about other modules and programmes you should contact relevant Schools.

**Classroom policy**

UCD's policy on masks follows that coming from the Department of Higher Education which is that masks must be worn at all times where 2m social distancing cannot be maintained. Among other times, this will likely be necessary during entering/leaving classrooms. It is the School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice's expectation that masks will also be worn at all times in the classroom, unless the module coordinator specifically states otherwise. There are students and staff in high risk groups and wearing your mask in the classroom helps protect their health as well as your own. We hope that people will be considerate of that and wear masks in classrooms even when social distancing is possible. If a student or staff member feels unsafe, they should leave the classroom immediately. Even in cases where the module coordinator specifically states that masks are not required to be worn for part or all of a class, it is an individual student's absolute right to wear one without any requirement for justification.

UCD's approach is that students and staff are personally responsible for cleaning whatever classroom spaces they use themselves. As such, in addition to bringing your mask to campus, you should plan on bringing cleaning materials to wipe down your desk space before the start of class.

If you feel unwell at all ***you should not come to campus***. As detailed below, you can avail of any on campus teaching online, therefore you should stay at home and follow national guidelines.

### **While on campus**

Social distancing is to be maintained whenever feasible while on campus. When this is not feasible, masks are to be worn. In addition, many buildings and rooms will be operating one-way systems. Please keep these in mind while waiting to enter a classroom, spending time on campus between activities, and so forth. In particular, certain ways in which you interact with staff will need to be changed. For example, since it will be necessary to clear one class out of the room quickly so that the next group can move in, clean their sitting places, and start on time, we ask you to wait until outside of the classroom to ask the lecturer questions (and don't forget to keep the 2m social distancing even then). Given the potential for congestion, this may mean that it might be best to simply ask questions via email (when an online meeting can be easily set up).

### **Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice and staff offices**

Due to the small spaces, it is impossible to maintain social distancing in our office spaces. All meetings with staff, therefore should be conducted online unless absolutely impossible to do so. In addition to setting up appointments, all staff will have regularly scheduled online office hours. If you have a question, email [dominic.shellard@ucd.ie](mailto:dominic.shellard@ucd.ie) (for postgraduates) or [sp-sw-sj@ucd.ie](mailto:sp-sw-sj@ucd.ie) (for undergraduates) and we will answer the question by email or, if you prefer, by phone/video chat. We will also be establishing regular online chat times closer to the start of term.

### **Taught Masters Programmes**

#### *Inductions*

You will be notified by e-mail of your programme's induction session. These are normally held in the week before the start of teaching semester (week commencing 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020) and will be online.

#### *Classes*

Classes for taught Masters programmes will be delivered by a blended model of online teaching with some sessions conducted face to face. Face to face sessions will be listed on your timetable and priority has been given to core modules and skills when determining face to face delivery. Note that there are currently no plans for online delivery in the Spring term. Arrangements for that trimester will depend on evolving public health and UCD guidance. You will be notified of relevant developments by your programme director. Further, while students may have option modules available from other Schools, we cannot guarantee anything regarding the ability to take those courses online. Thus, in order to take the full course load online, this may restrict the options you choose. All face to face classes will be recorded and uploaded to Brightspace for students unable to attend in person for any reason.

#### *Assessments*

Assessments may be completed online and/or in the classroom (with provision made for those who cannot be there in person). Details for individual modules will be provided at the start of term.

#### *Expectations*

UCD's expectation is that students will take advantage of as much of the on-campus experience as possible. That said, the School of Social Policy, Social Work and Social Justice recognizes that we are facing exceptional circumstances student facing a variety of challenges including: meeting the financial cost of living in Dublin; the need to care for others; and being away from family (especially if they are overseas). Thus, our approach seeks to deal with these and other students needs so that everyone can, as much as possible, participate in a high-quality educational experience.

*Calendar (subject to changes)*

Week of Term Lectures/Tutorials

1 (21 September) All classes

2 All classes

3 All classes

4 All classes

5 All classes

6 (26 October) Reading Week

7 All classes

8 All classes

9 All classes

10 All classes

11 All classes

12 (7 December) Lecture at instructor's discretion. This will be announced at start of term.

Exam Period: 14 -23 December

If you have further questions, please email [dominic.shellard@ucd.ie](mailto:dominic.shellard@ucd.ie) and we will do our best to answer your questions.

Professor Jim Campbell

Head of School

August 2020