Composites UK
Trade Association

Maintaining safe operations through COVID-19 and Restart Good Practice

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Scope of the document

This advisory document has been compiled from government guidance. It is not intended to be used as a definitive guide as the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation changes daily and Government policy changes in response, but reflects good practice at the time of publication.

Each employer is singly responsible for remaining fully informed about current best practice and always exercising judgment in its workers' interests and welfare before adopting guidance in its own business. You should ensure that you keep everyone updated on actions being taken to reduce risks of exposure in your workplace. It is advisable to document the date of any such actions and the Government guidance it relates to. In this way you will protect the business against legal scrutiny once the pandemic is over.

COVID-19 Risk Assessment

Like all risk management, a risk assessment should be carried out before you decide to continue or restart production. This template can be used for dealing with the current Covid-19 situation in the workplace. It is not likely to cover all scenarios and each employer should consider their own unique circumstances. An example risk assessment, given at the back of this document, merely gives examples of risks and measures that could be adopted.

Where it is not possible to follow the social distancing guidelines in full in relation to a particular activity, you should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to continue to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between staff.

Further advice: https://www.hseni.gov.uk/publications/example-covid-19-risk-assessment-template

Maintaining safe operations through COVID-19 and Restart Good Practice

Employers should take every possible step to facilitate their employees working from home. If your employees cannot work from home then they can come in to work, provided they are well and no one in their household is self-isolating. The onsite checklist for safe working will aid in this process.

Employers who have staff in their offices or onsite should ensure that employees are able to follow Public Health England guidelines including, where possible, maintaining a 2 metre distance from others, and washing their hands with soap and water often for at least 20 seconds (or using hand sanitiser gel if soap and water is not available).

Download and display this notice in your workplace to show you have followed this guidance.

Reopening your business

If you're reopening all or part of your business after a period of closure, we suggest that you work through some key points to ensure safe operations. The building reoccupation checklist will help in this activity.

There are a range of issues and tasks you will need to consider as part of the process of opening up your business. Every step should be carefully considered and fully documented. A Risk Assessment should be completed.

- Plan how you are intending to operate in the short, medium and longer term
- What are the key operations needed in the initial opening and then operating phase?
- As part of these plans you should consider a phased return.

Staff will need to be reassured that measures have been implemented to protect them as they come back into work. If they are coming off furlough then utilise their [return to work after furlough letter](#) to explain the new working arrangements. If they have been working from home then they will need the same assurances if you now require them to return to their place of work.

It might help to implement some form of [Code of Conduct](#) (a 'contract' between employer and employees) which will set out what the business will do to protect employees (such as cleaning, hygiene and distancing) and what employees can do to help employers.

The 5 key steps to working safely are:

1. Carry out a COVID-19 [risk assessment](#)
2. Develop cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedures
3. Help people to [work from home where possible](#)
4. Maintain 2m social distancing, where possible
5. Where people cannot be 2m apart, manage transmission risk

Social Distancing

The advice on social distancing measures applies to everyone and should be followed wherever possible. It is important to run your operating environment ensuring that all staff can work whilst also maintaining social isolation guidelines – maintaining a 2m separation from colleagues and others at all times, including time on the shop floor, in recreation areas, bathrooms, in briefing meetings and when entering and exiting the premises. Staff should work side by side or facing away from each other rather than face-to-face if possible. Screens can be introduced where necessary to protect staff. This will help reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

Some of the strategies that could be adopted include:

- Use of visual reminders around the work place about keeping distance, washing hands etc
- Encourage staff not to use public transport if at all possible
- Work at alternate desks spaces that are 2m apart – do not desk-share
- Where possible admin staff should work from home. If this is not possible then split your teams so a complete team isn't in at any one time – this will ensure teams can continue to operate if one member becomes ill.
- [Stagger shift patterns](#) so that production teams don't meet
  - Where possible, assign different teams to different machines to lower the opportunity for COVID-19 to be transmitted via surfaces.
  - Increase cleaning regimes on equipment/machinery you will be using
- Stagger break times to reduce staff in communal areas
- Mark out spaces in communal areas e.g. canteen, smoking area to enable social distancing
- Implement one person use of toilet and shower areas at any one time
- Update first aid policy - consider social distancing/need to administer first aid
- Update fire evacuation procedure to enable social distancing
- Appropriate PPE for the job: [A guide to PPE during COVID-19](#)
- Production lines could be rearranged to keep staff 2 metres apart
- Diverting plant walkways to outdoor routes or introduce one-way walkways
- Limit visitors to your site
  - Delivery/collection drivers should only enter buildings that are absolutely necessary – you must allow them access to toilets and hand washing facilities

Further advice: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

Further advice: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe

Further advice: https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/covid-19-advice-for-first-aiders/

Cleaning and sanitisation

It is no great surprise that a regular cleaning routine is one of the simplest yet most effective ways to improve hygiene and prevent the spread of COVID-19 as well as other germs and infections.

It is important to have hand washing/sanitising stations throughout your facilities and provide cleaning products for regular workstation cleansing.

Ensure staff understand they should wash their hands regularly for the recommended 20 seconds with soap and water - this is far more effective than sanitiser alone. Soaps do not have to be anti-bacterial in nature. Hands should always be washed when employees arrive at work; blow their nose, sneeze or cough; eat or handle food; arrive home from work.

In addition, you should ensure you have appropriate cleaning and sanitising chemicals which are effective against viruses. EN 14476 is the standard for chemical disinfectants and antiseptics effective against viruses.

Identify key 'hot spots' e.g. railings, control panels, door handles, keypads, etc and ensure these are regularly cleaned and sanitised. Cleaning every 2 hours as a minimum and at the start and end of every shift is advisable.

Identify common areas where there might be a high level of cross over, e.g. canteen areas. These areas should be regularly cleaned and cleaned between different groups of personnel. Ensure people are able to maintain 2m separation in these areas at all times.

Handling deliveries, post and packaging should be carried out according to existing risk assessments.

Consider implementing work clothes' where staff change into clothes on arrival at your facility that they only wear at the facility and can then change into travel clothes when they are ready to leave.

Note that normal PPE requirements apply during the crisis. You should review your COSHH risk assessments in case required measures e.g. FFP3 facemasks are not available.

Nominate a manager as your COVID-19 'champion' to make sure that employees are following procedures and is available to answer any questions or concerns.

Further advice: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings

What if someone becomes ill at work?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are a new, continuous cough or a high temperature. For most people, COVID-19 will be a mild infection. The full range of symptoms and NHS advice can be found here.

If becoming unwell whilst at work, the colleague must be sent home and follow the advice to self-isolate at home. If someone helps the ill person to leave site, they must wash their hands with soap

and warm water for at least 20 seconds after touching the affected individual or their belongings and then sanitise their hands.

Disposable gloves and an apron should be worn to clean an area where a person with possible or confirmed COVID-19 has been. Hands should then be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds after all PPE has been removed. Your local Public Health England Health Protection Team can advise on any additional measures that might be needed.

Further advice: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms-and-what-to-do/

RIDDOR reporting of COVID-19

You only need to make a report under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) when there is reasonable evidence that someone diagnosed with COVID-19 was likely exposed because of their work - you must report this as an exposure to a biological agent using the case of disease report. The situation is likely to be rare in the composites sector.

Further advice: https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/riddor-reporting-coronavirus.htm

Authorisation to Work

If your area of the country is in localised lockdown, it is advisable to issue your staff with a Work Authorisation Letter to show to law enforcement agencies if staff are stopped and questioned on their way to work. The letter should be addressed to the member of staff stating why they are engaged in essential work and that it is not possible to be carried out remotely at home.

Working from Home

As an employer, you have the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers as for any other workers, so need to consider this during the COVID-19 crisis period.

When someone is working from home, permanently or temporarily, as an employer you should consider:

- How will you keep in touch with them?
- What work activity will they be doing (and for how long)?
- Can it be done safely?
- Do you need to put control measures in place to protect them?

Download our short document: Tips on Managing Home Workers

As an employer you should:

- Carry out a health and safety risk assessment at the employee's home. This risk assessment should ensure that the proposed workstation's floor, ventilation, temperature, lighting, space, chair, desk and computer (or any other equipment) are suitable for the tasks required of the homeworker. Here is a template for this purpose.
- The employer is responsible for the equipment it supplies, but it is the responsibility of the employee to rectify any flaws in the home highlighted by the assessment.
- Once the home workplace is passed as safe, it is the responsibility of the homeworker to keep it that way and to take reasonable care of their health and safety.

The homeworker should:

- Act in a professional manner at all times during their normal working hours.
- Comply with all relevant organisational policies and procedures; and with reasonable instructions.

There are some simple steps you can take to reduce the risks from display screen work:

- breaking up long spells of DSE work with rest breaks (at least 5 minutes every hour) or changes in activity
- avoiding awkward, static postures by regularly changing position
- getting up and moving or doing stretching exercises
- avoiding eye fatigue by changing focus or blinking from time to time

Stress and mental health

It is important to recognise that home working can cause [work-related stress](#) and affect people's mental health. Being away from managers and colleagues could make it difficult to get proper support. If contact is poor, workers may feel disconnected, isolated or abandoned

- Keep in regular contact through phone and online means.
- It is also important to have an emergency point of contact and to share this so people know how to get help if they need it.

Further advice: https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm

[MIND: Coronavirus and your wellbeing](#) offers additional support and advice.

Accessing government financial support

Use the [***business support finder tool***](#) to quickly and easily determine what financial support is available to you during the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent recovery phase.

Further advice: https://compositesuk.co.uk/industry-support/business-support/covid-19

Further advice: https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support

Additional downloads

[Return to work after furlough letter template](#)

[COVID-19 Return to work form](#)

[COVID-19 Testing FAQ](#)

[COVID-19 Testing record](#)

[COVID-19 Health and Safety FAQ](#)

RISK ASSESSMENT RECORD

Activity / Hazard	Spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus)				LOCATION:			
					DATE RISK ASSESSMENT RAISED:			
assessor 1:					APPROVED			
assessor 2:					REVIEW DATE:			

Persons at risk	Existing Control Measures in place	Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Additional Precautions Needed (Plus comments)	Responsibility	Date	Completed
Staff Contractors Cleaners	Hand washing facilities Gel sanitisers in any area where washing facilities not readily available Social distancing - comply with the 2m gap Use of recommended PPE Frequent cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are regularly touched				Office teams split to ensure teams can continue to operate if one member becomes ill. Staggered shift patterns so that production teams don't meet Staggered break times to reduce staff in communal areas Mark out spaces in communal areas to enable social distancing Employees should bring their own food to work No communal food brought on to site (e.g. cakes, biscuits etc) Production lines could be rearranged to keep staff 2 metres apart Diverting plant walkways to outdoor routes or introduce one-way walkways Send anyone home that becomes unwell with suspected COVID-19 Home workers to conduct DSE assessment Line managers to maintain regular contact with staff Additional communication with those working from home			
Visitors					Limit visitors on site Use digital platforms for internal and external meetings			
Drivers	Procedures in place to ensure adequate welfare facilities available to drivers				Communicate with companies we deliver to/from to ensure welfare facilities will be available for our drivers.			
		Date						
I have read and understand this risk assessment, and any associated Standard					Name (print and Sign):			
					Name (print and Sign):			
					Name (print and Sign):			

Operating Procedure(s) and Permit to Work.		Name (print and Sign):
HIGH **RISK**	Unacceptable risk, immediate action is required. Task should not proceed until remedial actions or further control measures are put in place to reduce the risk. The revised controls must be re-assessed for adequacy prior to task commencement	
MEDIUM RISK	Task should only proceed with approval from Team Leaders and advice from QHSE or Operations Manager. Where possible, the task should be changed to take account of the hazards involved or actions implemented to minimise the risks further	
LOW **RISK**	Acceptable; however, review task to see if risk can be reduced further.	

Useful links

[Composites UK COVID-19 webpage](#)

HSE Guidance

[Health and Safety Executive coronavirus guidance](#)

[HSE guidance: Social distancing, your business and in-work activities](#)

[HSE guidance: Work equipment – examinations and testing](#)

[HSE guidance: Protect home workers](#)

[HSE guidance: RIDDOR reporting of the coronavirus](#)

[HSE guidance: First Aid cover and qualifications](#)

[St Johns Ambulance: Advice for first aiders](#)

Government guidance and business support

[Working safely through Coronavirus (COVID-19)](#)

[COVID-19 Business Support Hub](#)

[Government FAQs on the coronavirus](#)

[Public Health England: Guidance for employers and businesses](#)

[Government information for NI businesses and employers](#)

[Government information for Scottish businesses](#)

[Government information for Welsh businesses](#)

Additional advice and support

[Ellis Whittam Coronavirus Advice Hub](#)

[Make UK COVID-19](#)

[Made Smarter: Maintaining manufacturing continuity through COVID-19](#)

[British Safety Council Useful information for employers](#)

[BSI: Safe working during the COVID-19 pandemic – General guidelines for organizations](#)