



Teachers' Union of Ireland

Re-opening of Further Education and Training Centres Guidance for TUI members

The TUI strongly urges members to read the ETBI/SOLAS document:

Implementation Guidelines for Public Health Measures in ETB Further Education and Training Institutions (FET) available at: <https://www.etbi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/200812FETImplementationGuidelinesFinaltoissueV1.1.pdf>

Blue shading- 31st August 2020 updates
Yellow shading- 7th September 2020 updates

*** This Guidance document will be updated on a regular basis so please continue to check the website (www.tui.ie), TUI's social media and the TUI App following the initial publication**

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To whom do these guidelines apply?

These guidelines apply to all TUI members working in FET provision, comprehending:

- *Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) colleges,*
- *Dual post-primary/FET schools and centres*,*
- *Back to Education Initiative (BTEI),*
- *Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS),*
- *Adult Literacy, Numeracy, and ICT,*
- *Youthreach, Community Training Centres (CTCs),*
- *Community Education,*
- *Bridging/Foundation courses,*
- *English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL),*
- *Apprenticeship and Traineeship,*
- *Specific Skills Training (SST),*
- *Skills for Work, Traineeship,*
- *Evening Courses,*
- *Specialist Training Providers (STPs),*
- *Local Training Initiative (LTI) and*
- *Education Units in prisons.*

**Given the range of workplaces in which TUI members work, “TUI member”, “staff” and “centre/workplace” comprehend members in all grades and posts, in all FET and dual-provision institutions.*

What preparatory work is required to facilitate the re-opening of FET provision?

1. *ETBs will establish COVID-19 Policy Statements for application in all FET workplaces*
2. *ETBs will provide Pre-Return to Work Questionnaires for completion and submission by all staff three days prior to resumption of work*
3. *Risk assessments on individual FET facilities/buildings will be undertaken as appropriate and the application of appropriate re-opening solutions in accordance with the outcome of those risk assessments*
4. *It is agreed that FET Institutions will plan for returning to education and training on the basis of the following sequence, with planning taking a phased return of learners into consideration*
 - a. *Learners awaiting assessment who have their course substantially completed, those who require additional tuition and practical instruction in order to complete their FET programme and continuing learners, e.g. PLC Colleges, Youthreach.*
 - b. *New learners*
5. *It is agreed that apprentices will be recalled in two main groups:*

- a. *Apprentices who have practical assessments still to be completed and apprentices who had their training interrupted when education facilities were closed on 12th March*
 - b. *New apprentices who are starting their Phase 2 off-the-job training*
ETBs will establish a schedule for the return of apprentices to training in liaison with SOLAS.
6. *FET Institutions will engage in ongoing communication to raise awareness amongst all members of its community about how COVID-19 spreads and how spread can be prevented.*
7. *FET Institutions will enable safe access to indoors space. Where practical, a one-way system and or marked lanes should be used to separate flow of people into, and out of buildings.*
8. *Staff and learners will be supported to absent themselves from the FET Institutions if they have any symptoms that suggest that they may have COVID-19 or if they have been identified as contacts of someone with COVID-19. All members of the FET community will be encouraged to download the COVID-19 Tracker App and to use the symptom checker on the App on a daily basis. Advice on using the COVID- 19 Tracker App will be included in email communication to learners, on the ETB website and on noticeboards across FET Institutions. Members of the FET community who travel to Ireland from other jurisdictions should follow Government advice on restricted movement on arrival in Ireland.*
9. *ETBs will provide an identified space in each centre where staff or learners who develop symptoms that suggest COVID-19 can wait safely away from others while waiting to be picked up from the FET Institution.*
10. *FET Institutions should record attendance at all events and retain records for 4 weeks in case required for contact tracing purposes.*
11. *In advance of returning to or beginning training, all learners and apprentices will complete an induction on the new protocols in place in the FET Institution, e.g. PLC, Youthreach, Training Centre. Some or all of this induction may be completed online and in advance of learners and apprentices returning to the FET Institution.*
12. *Arrangements will be put in place for the appointment of a Lead Worker Representative/s in accordance with the agree unions/management protocol.*

Social Distancing/Physical Distancing

What is social distancing/physical distancing?

Social/physical distancing involves minimising contact between potentially infected individuals and healthy individuals. Members should avoid all social/physical contact in school (for example, shaking hands) and also avoid sharing personal items such as pens, cups, etc.

Why is physical distancing so important?

It is important because it is the single most effective protection against transmission of the virus. In the context of the busy, crowded setting of a workplace, it is a fundamental responsibility of management to provide and maintain this protection for staff and students.

What are the physical distancing requirements for my classroom?

In line with the advice of the public health authorities, in any classroom or in any alternative space or venue used in lieu of a classroom, 2m of social distancing applies between all persons in the room i.e. both staff and learners; the only exception to which would be practical classes i.e. those that take place in practical rooms i.e. college hair salons, dog grooming rooms, commis chef kitchens, woodwork rooms, workshops, science and IT labs etc. If required, social distancing may be reduced to 1m, subject to the wearing of appropriate PPE, if the class content requires it. Nonetheless, the capacity of the room should reflect 2 metres when practical demonstrations are not being undertaken.

The 2 metre of social distancing applies when planning for apprenticeship Phase 2 training as apprentices and instructors may be within a workshop for approx. 7hrs per day. However, where there is a necessity to reduce the social distancing below 2 meters, for example, when giving a practical demonstration to a class appropriate PPE must be worn by the instructor and apprentices.

As apprentices undertaking large sections of Phase 2 training will be based within a workshop for approx. 7hrs per day, it is important that when planning capacity within a workshop, the 2 metre social distance rule applies.

This will allow learners and instructor to operate without having to have a face mask on at all times.

However, where there is a necessity to reduce the social distancing below 2 meters for example when giving a practical demonstration to a class, face masks will be worn by the instructor and apprentices. It should be noted, however, that all locations should endeavour to maintain a 2 metre social distancing policy at all times.

What should management do to ensure my classroom complies with the physical distancing requirements?

In Further Education settings, management should complete the following steps as a means of ensuring compliance with the physical distancing requirement (minimum of two metres).

- *Reconfigure class spaces to maximise physical distancing. The location of chairs and desks should be clearly marked.*
- *Utilise and reconfigure all available space in the centre in order to maximise physical distancing*
- *Review timetables*
- *Reconfigure classes*
- *Consider use of live streaming to students*
- *Access available spaces within the local community*

If, having applied all of the six steps above, there is still a difficulty in complying with the physical distancing requirement, the line/centre manager is expected to contact the

Education and Training Board Director (ETB) of Further Education and Training (FET) for advice and assistance. The manager must also consult with the Lead Worker Representative and, as the matter is of such importance to the health and welfare of members, must also advise the TUI Workplace Committee of the difficulty.

Workplaces should be able to clearly demonstrate the actions it has taken under each of the 6 steps in the Framework for Maintaining Physical Distancing and continually review same to achieve a workable solution using whatever additional resources are provided by the Department.

The TUI will support the workplace in any efforts or representations it makes to secure the additional resources necessary for compliance with the physical distancing requirements.

The physical distancing requirement of a minimum of 2 metres must not be reduced, compromised or collapsed (in any classroom or in any alternative space or venue used in lieu of a classroom). To do so would put the health and safety of staff, students and their families at unacceptable risk. The TUI will regard any proposal to breach or any actual breach of the minimum physical distancing requirement as a serious industrial relations issue and will respond accordingly.

Staff Rooms

My workplace staff room has been converted into a classroom. Is this allowed?

The staff room should only be used as a classroom where school management has exhausted all other options and management informs staff of all other options explored.

Where a staff room is being used as a classroom, management should provide a suitable alternative facility for staff.

What is the physical distancing requirement for the staff room/staff meetings?

In staff rooms and canteens, the physical distance of 2 metres should be maintained.

Consideration should be given to formation of staff pods or teams who work together and who can take breaks together.

As part of the suite of public health measures, limits were placed on gatherings in other settings in order to support the re-opening of schools which by its nature involves significant numbers of staff and students in school buildings.

The public health guidance recommends 2m physical distancing between staff in schools.

When organising staff meetings, school management should make every possible effort to hold them remotely or in small groups while maintaining a 2m distance and to avoid large gatherings including large full school/year group assemblies in one physical space.

If the staff room in my school/centre/college is being used as a classroom, is my employer required to provide suitable alternative facilities for staff?

Yes. The employer is required either to provide suitable and adequate facilities to allow employees to eat and drink any meals or beverages or to have arrangements in place to allow employees access to other suitable and adequate facilities.

Any facilities provided or made available for use by employees must have means for boiling water.

Table surfaces should be easy to clean. Sitting facilities/seating should have back supports. The area should have adequate lighting and heating.

All members should familiarise themselves with the guidelines as provided by the Health and Safety Authority which are available at this link -

https://www.hsa.ie/enq/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/General_Application_Regulations/gen_apps_workplace.pdf

Local management has said that because the staff room is being used for classes and space is at a premium, staff will have to eat their lunch/drink their tea in their cars/in the school yard/in the local park/in a local café. Is that acceptable?

No. As set out above, management must either provide suitable and adequate facilities or have arrangements in place to allow employees access to other suitable and adequate facilities. A car, school yard, local park or café would not be suitable and/or adequate.

Local management has said that because the staff room is being used for classes and space is at a premium, staff will have to eat their lunch/drink their tea in a classroom while supervising students. Is that acceptable?

No. Under the Organisation of Working Time Act, employees have an entitlement to scheduled breaks, including lunch breaks. You cannot be required to supervise students while on such a break, as supervision is work and a break is a break from work.

What should I do if management refuses to provide or put arrangements in place to allow employees access to suitable and adequate facilities?

In the first instance, the Lead Worker Representative should be informed and requested to make representations to management. If this does not lead to a swift resolution of the matter, TUI members should follow the 'Procedure for Dealing with Health and Safety Concerns in Schools/Colleges/Centres/IOs/TUs owing to COVID-19'.

Cleaning and Ventilation

How often should classrooms be cleaned?

Each workplace setting should be cleaned at least once per day by centre cleaning staff. Additional cleaning should be focused on frequently touched surfaces – door handles, hand rails, chairs/arm rests, communal eating areas, sink and toilet facilities.

TUI members and students are also responsible for wiping down their own individual work area during the school day.

- *Students who move between classes should be given cleaning products to allow them to wipe down their own desk, chair and surface area before they leave the room.*
- *All members will have access to cleaning products and will also be required to clean and disinfect their work area each day/before they leave the room.*

What about ventilation? Is it important?

Yes, good ventilation is important in preventing spread of the virus. Classrooms and other workplaces must be well ventilated. For example, the opening of all windows and doors is recommended.

What practical measures should be used to ensure good ventilation?

- *Open windows to introduce fresh air. If possible, windows should remain open during school hours.*
- *Partially opening a number of windows rather than fully opening one can help minimise discomfort. In colder weather, to minimise the chilling effect, windows nearest and above the radiator should be opened.*
- *Rooms should not be stuffy or have condensation on the window glass.*
- *Centres should ensure that all permanent ventilation openings in rooms are fully open and not blocked by wall hangings etc. These normally are either a circular or rectangle ventilation grill on the external classroom wall or linear slot type ventilators built into the window frames. All of these should be opened all the time, if they have been taped and sealed for decorating purposes then the tape/sealing should be removed.*
- *All mechanical ventilation systems and any air conditioning systems should be set to 100% fresh air, any air conditioning units that cannot operate on 100% fresh air should be left off. Check with unit suppliers if in doubt.*

Wearing of Face Coverings

Why is wearing face coverings so important?

It is important because, combined with physical distancing, it is an effective protection against transmission of the virus. In the context of the busy, crowded setting of a centre, it is a fundamental responsibility of management to maintain this protection for staff and students by insisting that staff, students and visitors to the centre wear appropriate face coverings.

Am I required to wear a face covering in my centre?

Yes. As a member of staff you must wear a face covering where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres, unless you have breathing difficulties.

I have a breathing difficulty and cannot wear a soft face covering. What happens?

If you are medically advised not to wear a soft/cloth face covering, you should wear a clear visor and remain 2 metres from others at all times.

What type of face covering should I wear?

As a general rule, cloth face coverings must be worn. This is in line with the advice of the public health authorities and has been established as a requirement by the Minister for Education/Government.

Cloth face coverings should be washed, in a hot wash i.e. over 60 degrees with detergent, after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.

Face coverings should not be worn if they are wet. A wet cloth face covering may make it difficult to breathe.

There are specified exceptions to the general rule. The public health authorities have stated that cloth face coverings should not be worn by any of the following group:

- *Any person with difficulty breathing*
- *Any person who is unconscious or incapacitated*
- *Any person who is unable to remove the face-covering without assistance*
- *Any person who has special needs and who may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the face covering, for example persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.*

Can I wear a visor rather than a cloth face covering?

In certain situations, the use of clear visors should be considered; for example when staff are interacting with students with hearing difficulties or learning difficulties. In all other instances, cloth face coverings must be worn. It is of course open to a member of staff to wear a visor as well as a cloth face covering.

Do I have to provide my own face covering?

Members may wish to use their own cloth face coverings and are, in any event, expected to wash such coverings, in a hot wash i.e. over 60 degrees with detergent, after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.

However, workplaces are expected to have additional disposable face coverings available on site.

Should I wear medical standard face masks?

The use of medical standard face masks is not generally required in classroom settings by members.

However medical face masks should be worn in circumstances where members need to be in close and continued proximity with students with intimate care needs.

Where medical face masks are required, they should be purchased by the ETB and are available under the PPE procurement process.

My workplace has put a perspex screen at my desk. Do I still have to wear a face covering?

Yes. Members, in many instances, will be moving from room to room and should therefore wear a soft face covering at all times. A perspex screen may be a useful additional protection but it cannot and does not reduce or remove the requirement that members wear face coverings. Nor does it reduce or remove the requirement for a minimum of 2 metre physical distancing.

My workplace has installed a perspex screen at my desk. Is it ok if I just wear a visor?

No, other than in the limited circumstances set out above. Based on public health advice, the Government has stated that all members must wear a soft face covering where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres, unless the member has breathing difficulties.

Members, in many instances, will be moving from room to room and should therefore wear a soft face covering as opposed to a visor unless working with a student with a hearing or

learning difficulty. It is of course open to a teacher/member of staff to wear a visor as well as a cloth face covering.

Am I required to wear face coverings in other areas of the centres outside of my classroom, for example, in the staff room?

Yes. All members of staff must wear a face covering where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres.

Am I required to wear face coverings on public transport?

Yes. All members of staff and students must wear face coverings when traveling to and from centre via public transport.

Will I ever be required to wear additional PPE?

Some work activities will require the wearing of additional PPE, including, but not limited to:

- *Where a suspected case of COVID-19 is identified while at your centre*
- *Where a member is particularly vulnerable to infection but not categorised as being in the Very High Risk Group*
- *Where a member may be living with someone in the Very High Risk category*
- *When administering first aid*

Will students (including those in Youthreach Centres) be required to wear face coverings?

Yes. Cloth face coverings must be worn by every student unless s/he:

- *Has a difficulty breathing*
- *Is unconscious or incapacitated*
- *Is unable to remove the face-covering without assistance*
- *Has special needs and may feel upset or very uncomfortable wearing the face covering, for example persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity.*

Will students/staff be required to wear face coverings throughout the day?

Yes. All members of staff must wear a face covering where it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres.

What happens if a student, other than those set out above, refuses to wear a face covering?

A refusal by a student to wear a face covering is a serious disciplinary offence and should be considered and treated as a serious breach under the ETB's code of behaviour, inclusive of the nationally agreed supplement mandated by the Department of Education.

So there are two key measures to protect staff and student – physical distancing of no less than two metres and the compulsory wearing of face coverings?

Yes, that is right. These are required and complementary. They both apply – not one or the other; both.

Does reliance on compulsory face covering allow a workplace to abandon physical distancing or reduce it to less than one metre?

No. Absolutely not. Both measures are required.

Does reliance on physical distancing allow a workplace to abandon compulsory face coverings?

No. Absolutely not. Both measures are required.

Hand Hygiene

How often should members of staff and students wash their hands/use hand sanitiser in work?

- *On arrival at work*
- *When moving between classes*
- *Before eating or drinking*
- *After using the toilet*
- *After petting animals*
- *After playing outdoors*
- *When their hands are physically dirty*
- *When they cough or sneeze*

Temperature Checks

Is it appropriate for my centre to take the temperature of staff and students and refuse entry to those with a high temperature?

There is currently no provision in the DES guidelines for taking the temperature of staff and/or students at workplaces. Students and staff should be reminded regularly by the ETB

authorities that if they feel unwell and/or have ANY COVID-19 symptoms they should not attend work.

Underlying illnesses/conditions

I have a pre-existing illness and do not feel safe returning to work. What do I do?

The HSE has classified underlying illnesses/conditions as putting persons at either Very High Risk or High Risk. You will need to establish which category you are in as different procedures apply to each. Therefore, you should consult the HSE lists of illnesses in advance of returning to work. The list of illnesses/conditions is available at:

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html>

Members should also read:

Circular Letter 50/2020 – Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for staff other than Teachers and SNAs who are employed by ETBs available at:

https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0050_2020.pdf

Circular Letter 49/2020 – Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for Teachers and SNAs available at: [https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-](https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0049_2020.pdf)

[Circulars/cl0049_2020.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0049_2020.pdf)

I have a condition/illness that puts me in the Very High Risk Category. What happens?

The HSE advice on the 'very high risk' groups can be found at:

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html>

If a member believes that s/he is in the Very High Risk Category, s/he must complete an online Occupational Health Service COVID-19 Risk Assessment immediately and submit it to the OHS (i.e. Medmark) as well as advising the employer (ETB) that they may fall into this category. The member does not have to disclose to management the nature of the underlying illness/condition.

Having considered the medical information provided with the OHS Risk Assessment, the OHS will provide the employee with a 'COVID-19 Risk Assessment Report' which advises whether he/she is at a very high risk of serious illness from contracting COVID-19.

For members where the 'OHS Risk Assessment Report' advises that they are at a very high risk of serious illness from contracting COVID-19 and cannot attend the workplace, the Declaration Form at Appendix C of CL50/2020 (or CL49/2020, as appropriate) must be completed by the member and returned immediately to the employer (i.e. ETB) accompanied by the OHS COVID-19 Risk Assessment Report. Where a medical diagnosis changes, the employee must inform the employer immediately.

If the OHS advises that you can work from home, the ETB must facilitate that request and you will continue to be paid as normal.

*If the OHS advised that you are medically unfit for work due to a **non-COVID-19** illness, the normal terms and conditions of the Sick Leave Scheme apply.*

How do I apply to Medmark for the COVID-19 Risk Assessment Report?

Initial Procedure:

- *a detailed questionnaire is submitted to Medmark. Detailed medical evidence to provide further clarity with respect to the medical complaints in question is also submitted. All of this information is reviewed by a specialist occupational health physician, with care and detailed consideration. This includes an assessment of the combined and cumulative risk that can arise when an individual suffers from more than one health condition. The risk assessment is comprehensive and follows the same process that is being applied across other sectors. There is nothing happening in Education that is new or different from other places of employment.*
- *The outcome of the risk categorisation is in large measure governed by the HSE guidance. However, Medmark retains the discretion to place someone into the higher risk group if they feel they have more than one complaint and that their combination of risks warrants a higher categorisation. No individual is placed at a lower level of risk than that set out by the HSE standards.*
- *There is an obligation on the employer to examine the COVID-19 Response Plan in the school and ensure that all appropriate risk mitigation measures are in place.*

I am not happy with the risk categorisation provided by Medmark. What can I do?

Where an individual feels that they have been placed in an incorrect risk category, a review process has been put in place by Medmark.

Members should email Medmark to request a review as follows:

- *Members send an email to cork@medmark.ie*
- *In the subject box they type in "Risk Assessment Review"*
- *You may attach additional medical evidence should you wish to do so and should include your name and date of birth in the email*

The review will be undertaken by a team of four specialist occupational physicians who re-evaluate the medical evidence and deliver a consensus opinion on the risk categorisation. If someone is considered borderline, Medmark indicates that it is highly likely they will be given higher categorisation.

I am in the High Risk Category. What do I do?

The HSE advice on the 'high risk' groups can be found at: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html>

A member in the 'high risk' group who is not otherwise ill must attend the workplace, unless advised not to do so by the OHS.

If a member remains concerned, s/he may complete the Declaration Form at Appendix C of CL50/2020 (or CL49/2020, as appropriate) and return it immediately to the employer (i.e. ETB) accompanied by the OHS COVID-19 Risk Assessment Report.

If a member in this 'high risk' group has been advised by OHS not to go to work, s/he will be facilitated to work from home.

If a member has been advised to go to work by OHS and s/he still has concerns and has been certified by a GP not to go to work, normal sick leave rules apply.

I have been advised by OHS to work from home. What can my management ask me to do?

The work assigned should be determined by your employer, in consultation with you, and may include relevant duties that support the work of the programmes delivered by the ETB - in developing and delivering its programmes.

For you these duties may include:

- *Liaising closely with and supporting the work of the substitute(s) who become responsible for the tuition duties of the member on special leave with pay.*
- *Supporting and engaging (using online technology) with the work and progress of very high risk or extremely vulnerable pupils who are unable to attend their course.*
- *Participating in staff meetings, team/subject planning meetings and all other normal meetings, using online technology.*
- *Participating in relevant professional development through online media.*
- *Developing aspects of the programme's tuition resources or teaching plans.*
- *Undertaking administrative or other tasks associated with a post of responsibility (provided you have been properly appointed to hold the post in line with relevant DES publications) to the greatest extent possible using online technology.*

Caring/Childcare Responsibilities and Pregnancy

I am a teacher. Can I apply for Parental Leave or Carer's Leave if I have caring or childcare responsibilities or am living with a person/s with a high risk or very high risk of contracting COVID 19?

Yes. You are entitled to have a request to avail of existing, relevant leave entitlements considered by your ETB. In considering such applications, your ETB will take account of its policy on employee absences where the welfare and educational needs of the pupils must take precedence over all other considerations.

More details on how to apply for Parental or Carer's leave is available at:

https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0054_2019.pdf

I am pregnant. Am I required to attend work?

Under the current HSE guidelines, a pregnant employee is not deemed to be at very high risk of serious illness from contracting COVID-19, unless suffering from a serious heart condition, in which case alternative working arrangements will be put in place.

If a pregnant member remains concerned, she may complete the Declaration Form at Appendix C of CL49/2020 (or CL49/2020, as appropriate) and return it immediately to the employer (i.e. ETB) accompanied by the OHS COVID-19 Risk Assessment Report.

If a pregnant member has been advised by OHS not to go to work, she will be facilitated to work from home.

If a pregnant member has been advised to go to work by OHS and she still has concerns and has been certified as ill by a GP not to go to work, normal sick leave rules apply.

If a member has a pregnancy-related illness the normal rules for such illness apply.

I am pregnant. What are my general health and safety rights while at work?

The Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 299 of 2007) place an obligation on the employer, as soon as it is notified by the member that she is pregnant, to assess any specific risk in the workplace to that member and to ensure that the pregnant, post-natal, or breastfeeding member (within a 26 week period after the birth of the child) is not exposed to any agents, processes or working conditions that will damage either the safety or health of the pregnant member and/or that of the developing child.

A member should be informed of the results of the risk assessment and the measures to be taken. The detailed arrangement regarding the respective responsibilities of the employer and the member in relation to Health and Safety Leave are contained in Sections 17 – 20 of the Maternity Protection Act 1994.

Where a risk has been identified and it is not possible to remove it, protective and preventive measures should be taken by the employer to safeguard the health and safety of any member to whom the provisions apply. Such measures may include:

- *a temporary adjustment in the working environment of the member concerned so that exposure to the risk is avoided, or*
- *moving the member to suitable alternative work which does not involve the risk in the event that such adjustment is not possible, or*
- *granting the member Health and Safety Leave in the event that such alternative work is not available, having consulted with and received certification from the OHS. The member is entitled to receive, on request, a certificate stating the reasons she has been granted leave. The certificate must also state the start date and expected end date of the leave.*

Substitution for Health and Safety Leave will be paid by the ETB.

Health and Safety Leave will cease when:

- *the member concerned commences Maternity Leave, or*
- *the member is no longer an employee to whom Part III of the Maternity Protection Act, 1994 applies (i.e. she notifies the employer that she is not pregnant, has not given birth within the last 14 weeks or is not within 26 weeks of the birth and breastfeeding, as defined in the Act); or*
- *the risk ceases.*

A member who makes PRSI contributions at the modified rate (Class D), and has no entitlement to Health and Safety Benefit from the DEASP, will be entitled to full pay while on Health and Safety Leave.

A member who makes PRSI contributions at the full rate (Class A) and who is entitled to Health and Safety Benefit from the DEASP will be paid full salary by the Paymaster for the first 21 days and thereafter will be paid full salary less any benefit paid by DEASP HSB1 Form.

Additional Resources

What additional resources have been provided to support ETBs in minimising the risk of spread of infection of COVID-19?

The following additional resources are being made available to FET Centres, on an application basis. The application will be issued to SOLAS via the Director of FET:

- *Lead Worker Representative (LWR) in FET settings*

As provided for in the FET implementation guidelines, 2 hours of protected time will be provided for per week for this role to be carried out. The 2 hours will be by way of

a reduction in class contact teaching time for grades with teaching responsibilities - teacher, instructor, resource worker, tutor etc.

- *Stand alone and dual provision FET institutions*

The LWR will report to the Manager/Co-ordinator/AEO/Principal in a stand-alone FET centre.

- *Multiple programme FET centres*

Clarity will be provided to the LWR as to the agreed manager/co-ordinator/AEO the LWR will report to.

There will be one LWR per centre/institution. Any requirement for an additional LWR will be considered based on the number of students and the duration of provision at centre level i.e. 8am – 10pm.

- *Physical and logistical arrangements in advance of re-opening*

Funding will be provided to employ someone to assist with the physical and logistical arrangements necessary in advance of re-opening where the return date requires this additional resource.

- *Reconfiguration of physical locations in advance of re-opening*

Given that each FET institution is different in terms of (i) location; (ii) physical layout (iii) available space and (iv) learner numbers; individual institutions are best placed to decide on the appropriate re-configuration works. Funding is available for this purpose, and in the situation where delivery cannot be delivered in a safe way, the obtaining of additional space can be explored.

- *Cleaning regimes*

There is a commitment to ensure that funding is available to accommodate cleaning regimes at local level to adhere to public health guidance and keeping staff and learners safe.

- *Additional staffing*

A range of measures may be used within the FET Institution to accommodate apprentice or other learner classes while adhering to the public health guidelines. Examples include prioritising space in centres where needed; splitting of classes into

two groups, one for theory and one for practical; increased use of blended learning for theory elements and other measures as appropriate.

In broad terms, it is envisaged that this will require additional staff to be employed to ensure that classes are fully supervised at all times, whether in the classroom or the workshop environment. It will not be feasible to leave groups unsupervised for prolonged periods of time. Risks around social distancing in both classroom and workshop settings must be managed on a continual basis.

Additional Staff, Changes to Career Break & Job Sharing Schemes

Centres are permitted to hire additional tuition staff. Where are ETBs going to get such staff?

PLC Colleges/VTOS Centres/BTEI and other Teacher led programmes

First and foremost an ETB is required to apply the mandatory sequence set out in Circulars 59/2016 and 49/2017. This means that, in the first instance, existing CID holders on part-time hours and then fixed term teachers on part-time hours must be offered hours for which they are qualified in the first instance. It should be noted that this includes Resource hours (Under Circular 06/2004, a teacher who is qualified - and registered – for a subject in the post-primary list of subjects is also deemed qualified to teach Resource hours).

To increase the availability of teachers, the TUI has secured:

- the suspension of the limits on the hours that can be worked by teachers on career break.*
- a facility to allow teachers who are job sharing to work additional hours, if they choose to do so.*
- Agreement that those in their second year of the PME programme can be engaged for paid substitution, paid supervision and paid teaching hours (over and above the unpaid PME placement hours).*

Youthreach and other FET Programmes

Funding has been provided to ETBs to form substitution panels to ensure substitution for absent staff is on a like-for-like basis. As such, at least four panels should be formed i.e. Teacher, Resource Person, Tutor and Instructor. An absent teacher will be substituted for by a teacher, an absent Resource Person will be substituted by a Resource Person etc.

My centre is looking to hire more tuition staff. I am part-time. Should I be offered these hours, in the first instance?

Yes. ETBs should offer any available hours to existing part-time staff in the first instance. This is set out in Circular Letter 59/2016 (teachers), 65/2017 (tutors) and by direction of the DES (Youthreach Resource Persons).

I have been hired under the additional allocation provided to ETBs owing to COVID-19. What type of contract should I get?

The hours are being treated as part of normal allocation and therefore will be filled under pro-rata fixed-term contracts.

In PLC Colleges/VTOS Centres/BTEI and other Teacher led programmes, what changes have been made to the career break scheme?

A teacher who is on a Career Break may now be employed, in a substitute capacity only, without the restrictions imposed in the Career Break Scheme as contained in Chapter 7 (Paragraph 8.1) of Circular 54/2019.

A teacher who is on career break and is employed in a substitute capacity will be paid at the same rate as a regular substitute.

Such substitute teaching will count towards progression on the incremental salary scale and superannuation.

In PLC Colleges/VTOS Centres/BTEI and other Teacher led programmes, what changes have been made to the job-sharing scheme?

A Job Sharing teacher, if and only if s/he so chooses, may now be employed to work in a substitute capacity, during the period he/she is rostered off duty.

Given the need to minimise movement between centres during the current COVID- 19 pandemic, the Job Sharing teacher is limited to carrying out substitute work in his/her own centre.

A Job Sharing teacher who is employed in a substitute capacity will be paid the personal rate of pay (including personal allowances).

Such substitute teaching will count towards progression on the incremental salary scale and superannuation. This is subject to the requirement that a Job Sharing teacher can advance to the next incremental point on the scale only after a minimum of 365 days after the last increment was awarded.

A Job Sharing teacher undertaking a combination of work in a job-sharing capacity and as a substitute in his/her own school/centre is not permitted to exceed the maximum number of weekly contracted hours of a full time teacher, or AP1, as appropriate.

What happens if a number of teachers are absent from the centre on sick leave and the centre cannot source appropriate substitution cover?

This is a matter for centre management. Centre management has a responsibility to ensure that all students are supervised at all times. If appropriate substitution cover is not available centre management may need to take the decision to send class groups home.

Members must not, under any circumstances, reduce social distancing measures in a classroom to accommodate additional students owing to absent colleagues..

PME Students

I am a PME student. Can I be hired by a PLC College to teach?

Yes. PME students who are registered with the Teaching Council (typically under Route 3/Further Education) and are in the college undertaking college placement as part of their PME programme, can be recruited in line with CL31/2011. That is, they can be paid for hours worked (teaching, substitution or supervision) that are in addition to the unpaid placement hours required as part of the PME programme. Such teachers will be paid at the unqualified rate of pay.

PME students should not be asked and cannot be required to work on an unpaid or under-paid basis for any such additional hours.

In keeping with the Teaching Council protocol, this must not impact adversely on the teacher's professional development and achievement of their PME qualification. It is essential that engagement of these teachers adheres to the Teaching Council protocol, the college's policy on college placement and the Memorandum of Understanding agreed between the college/ETB and the higher education institution.

I am a PME student. Can I join the TUI?

Yes. There is no fee to join the TUI as a student member and you will have access to TUI advice and representation. To join the TUI, please visit www.tui.ie and complete the student application form.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is likely that many student teachers will be offered paid employment in colleges for the 2020/2021 academic year, either for teaching/substitution hours or supervision hours, or both. Therefore, to ensure that student teachers are protected in their workplace, the TUI will offer representation, where necessary, to such members who join the TUI as student members.

Payment of Tutors

I am a tutor that normally claims for hours delivered. Will I have classes as usual?

It is not yet clear what enrolment will take place at the start of the year. Nonetheless, as per the provisions of Circular Letter 65/2017, ETBI has advised ETBs to schedule your hours as per your work schedule for the last academic year, 2019/20, and to ensure that your claim forms/DCS claims are set up and approved according to that schedule.

What if I have no students?

As above, alternative work may be assigned as determined by your employer, in consultation with you, and may include relevant duties that support the work of the programmes delivered by the ETB - in developing and delivering its programmes.

For you these duties may include:

- *Supporting and engaging (using online technology) with the work and progress of very high risk or extremely vulnerable students who are unable to attend their course.*
- *Participating in staff meetings, team/subject planning meetings and all other normal meetings, using online technology.*
- *Participating in relevant professional development through online media.*
- *Developing aspects of the programme's tuition resources or teaching plans.*
- *Undertaking administrative or other tasks associated with a post of responsibility (provided you have been properly appointed to hold the post in line with relevant DES publications) to the greatest extent possible using online technology.*

COVID-19 Response Plan

What is a COVID-19 Response Plan?

A COVID-19 Response Plan is a document that centre management is required to have in place and to update as necessary. It is a supportive tool for management to assist them in putting measures in place, at centre level, to minimise the risk of COVID-19 spread in a centre.

Is my centre required to have a COVID-19 Policy?

Yes. A centre must have a COVID-19 Response Plan/Policy. It must be in place prior to centre re-opening and a copy must be forwarded to all members of staff in the centre and to the Lead Worker Representative/s.

Where can my centre get assistance in preparing a COVID-19 Policy?

Details on what must be included in a COVID-19 Policy, including relevant templates, are set out in the Implementation Guidelines for Public Health Measures in ETB Further Education and Training Institutions (FET).

Who was involved in designing the DES COVID-19 Response Plan?

This relevant material to support the Implementation guidelines has been drawn up by the TUI, ETBI and SOLAS, and SIPTU informed by public health advice and are supported by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

Training - Induction

Will training be provided to members on COVID-19 and related issues?

Yes. The DES has published training videos for use in ETBs. Some ETBs have developed their own resources also. The training videos address:

- *COVID-19 training for all staff in post-primary schools which is also relevant to FET settings*
- *Lead Worker Representative induction*
- *Information on cleaning in centres*

All the DES videos can be found here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/dd7fb-induction-training-for-reopening-schools/>

In addition, the DES has published posters (in English and Irish) for use in centres. These posters cover coughing etiquette, correct hand washing, wearing of face coverings, correct use of hand sanitisers, etc.

All the posters can be found here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/2da43-signage-for-reopening-of-schools/>

Prior to returning to work

What do I have to do before I return to work?

Members must complete a Return to Work (RTW) Form which will be available from your ETB. This form must be returned to your centre/ETB at least 3 days before returning to work.

You must also complete the COVID-19 induction training for all ETB staff as instructed by the ETB.

Should COVID-19 signage and sanitising stations be in place in the workplace prior to our return?

Yes. COVID-19 signage has been provided to all workplaces. All the necessary PPE has also been available for centres to purchase. The TUI sought and secured a paid 'COVID-19 Aide' position (based on the second-level Exam Aide model) to assist centres in this necessary preparatory work for centres to re-open.

Lead Worker Representative

What is a Lead Worker Representative?

A Lead Worker Representative is a person, selected by staff, to assist management to implement a range of measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in centres.

Is a Lead Worker Representative the same as the Safety Representative?

No. Both roles are separate although they may be undertaken by the same person.

How many Lead Worker Representatives (LWRs) should my school/centre have?

The number of LWRs a school/centre has depends on the total number of staff in the centre. Every centre will appoint one Lead Worker Representative. In workplaces with more than 40 staff, or multiple campuses, more Lead Worker Representatives may be appointed. Appointment by management follows selection by staff of the LWR/s, in accordance with a process that has been agreed at national level.

Does a LWR have any legal responsibilities?

No. A Lead Worker Representative does not have any legal responsibilities in relation to COVID-19 other than those that apply to employees generally.

Who selects the LWR?

There is a nationally agreed process that must be followed. The first step in the process requires management to seek expressions of interest from all staff. If more people are interested in the position than there are LWR positions on offer, an election by all staff must take place.

I have been selected by staff to be the Lead Worker Representative. What exactly do I do?

You are required to:

- Represent all staff in your workplace i.e. tuition staff/ administrative staff/ caretakers etc.
- Keep up-to-date with the latest COVID-19 public health advice
- Liaise and work with management to ensure, insofar as is practicable, the safety, health and welfare of all staff in the workplace including consulting on COVID-19 control measures implemented in centres.
- Promote good hygiene practices
- Assist management to implement measures to suppress COVID-19 in centres
- Monitor, in conjunction with management, compliance with measures introduced to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- Conduct safety reviews including a walk around of the centre at least twice a week to ascertain if safety measures are being complied with
- Report any concerns immediately to management
- Keep records of any issues of concerns
- Keep records of actions taken by management to rectify concerns
- Consult with management on the centre's COVID-19 response plan
- Consult with colleagues on all matters relating to COVID-19 in the centre
- Make representations to management on COVID-19 related matters

Should all staff know who the LWR is?

Yes. All staff should be advised of the name and contact details of the LWR. Management is required to provide this information.

Am I entitled to time off timetable to undertake the role of LWR?

Yes. You are entitled to a reduction of 2 hours from your teaching time per week to engage in this role. For example, a Resource Person would ordinarily have a maximum of 20 hours class contact per week. If selected/appointed as LWR, s/he will have a maximum class contact of 18 hours per week.

Is the time remission from timetable for the LWR available for the duration of the academic year 2020/2021?

Yes.

Can management ask me to undertake duties/responsibilities unrelated to the role of LWR during the 2-hour remission for LWR activities?

No. The time cannot be used for **any** purpose other than those set out above.

COVID-19 Diagnosis

I have COVID-19 symptoms, should I attend work?

No, absolutely not. You have no discretion in this matter. You must not attend work.

What should I do if I develop symptoms of COVID-19 at work?

You must advise your management immediately and follow the relevant procedures as set out in the workplace's COVID-19 Response Plan.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- *High temperature*
- *Cough*
- *Shortness of breath or breathing difficulties*
- *Loss of smell, of taste or distortion of taste*

What happens if a student presents with COVID-19 symptoms during the day?

Each centre's COVID-19 Response Plan must deal with this scenario. All staff must be advised of the procedure that applies in their centre. On 28th August, the TUI issued guidance to members on the procedures for dealing with suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 in centres. This advice can be found here: <https://www.tui.ie/news/proceduresfor-dealing-with-suspected-and-confirmed-covid-19-cases-in-schools-hseguidance.13824.html>

I have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Will I still get paid?

Yes. Special leave with pay will be granted by the ETB, for those members who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or those who have been advised to self-isolate.

To apply for special leave with pay, a member must complete Appendix A of CL50/2020 (or CL49/2020, as appropriate) and return it to the ETB immediately. The completed form, which can be signed digitally, must be accompanied by appropriate HSE/medical certification to include the estimated date of fitness to return to work. The certification can be scanned and emailed to the line manager/ETB until you are fit to return to work and are in a position to provide the original version.

I have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Must I advise my centre/ETB?

Yes. A member must provide HSE/medical certification to the employer, to include estimated date of fitness to return to work.

If I have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Will it affect my normal sick leave?

No. Special leave with pay is separate to the normal sick leave scheme.

How much special leave with pay am I entitled to?

Special leave with pay commences on the day that you develop symptoms of COVID-19 and notify your ETB.

It is considered by the Occupational Health Service (OHS – i.e. MedMark) that most recoveries will happen 14 days after the onset of symptoms. You must be 5 days fever free (which may run concurrently) before returning to work. It should be noted that the 14 days is from the onset of symptoms and not the date of receiving a positive COVID-19 test result.

Nonetheless, if symptoms persist you must keep in touch with your employer regarding the need for further leave which may be considered in consultation with MedMark.

These arrangements do not preclude an employee working from home at an earlier stage, if this is feasible, depending on the individual case.

When you return to work, you must be informed by the employer of the procedures in the centre regarding social distancing, use of personal protective equipment and hand washing techniques.

Self-isolation

What is self-isolation?

Self-isolation means staying indoors and completely avoiding contact with other people. This includes other people in the household, as much as possible. A member with COVID-19 symptoms will be medically/HSE advised to self-isolate while he/she waits for a COVID-19 test appointment and test results.

I have been advised to self-isolate. Will I still get paid?

Yes. Special leave with pay will be granted by the ETB for members who have been advised to self-isolate pending a COVID-19 test. A member must seek a COVID-19 test immediately upon experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and/or being advised to self-isolate.

To apply for special leave with pay, a member must complete Appendix A of CL49/2020(or CL49/2020, as appropriate) and return it to the centre/ETB immediately. The completed form, which can be signed digitally, must be accompanied by appropriate HSE/medical certification to include estimated date of fitness to return to work. The certification can be

scanned and emailed to the centre/ETB until you are fit to return to work and are in a position to provide the original version.

If the COVID-19 test is positive the member remains on special leave with pay.

If the COVID-19 test is negative, following the period of self-isolation, and the member remains unwell, s/he reverts to the normal sick leave scheme.

Am I required to tell my ETB if I have been advised to self-isolate?

Yes. All members have a responsibility to adhere to Government guidelines as they relate to COVID-19. If management becomes aware that a member attended work when s/he should have been self-isolating, they are expected to report this to the HSE. The matter may also have to be dealt with at local level.

Close Contact

Whose responsibility is it to advise me that I have been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case/person? Is it the responsibility of the centre or the HSE?

If you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 you will receive either:

- *a call from a Contact Tracer*
- *an alert on your mobile phone, if you're using the COVID Tracker app*

Calls from contact tracers come up as a private number. You cannot contact a contact tracer directly or return a missed call. If you don't answer a call from a contact tracer, s/he will leave a message, if voice mail is working. Contact tracers will let you know that they have tried to contact you. They will call you a few times, if necessary.

If you are advised that you are a close contact, you will have to get tested for COVID-19. A contact tracer will arrange a COVID-19 test for you, even if you do not have symptoms.

It is not the responsibility of the ETB to conduct contract tracing. However, ETBs are required to keep a contact log of all persons attending/visiting the centre.

I have been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case/person. Should I attend work?

No. You should not attend.

I have been advised that I am a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case/person and have been advised to restrict my movement. What happens?

If you have no COVID-19 symptoms you may still be medically/HSE advised to restrict your movements for 14 days if you have been in close contact with a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 or if you live with someone who has COVID-19 symptoms. The 14 day period is from the last date of contact with the diagnosed person.

As with a diagnosis, you are advised to restrict your movements and you must arrange a COVID-19 test as soon as possible.

If you are advised to restrict your movements, you must complete the Declaration Form at Appendix B of Circular Letter 50/2020 (or CL49/2020, as appropriate) and return it immediately to your centre/ETB, accompanied by medical certification (GP/HSE) including the date of fitness to return to work. Where medical diagnosis changes, you must inform the employer immediately.

Am I required to teach online while restricting my movements?

If you are advised to restrict your movements and are not, yourself, symptomatic, you are medically fit for work and remain available for work. You will be assigned work, which can be completed remotely, for the 14 day period and your employer must therefore facilitate alternative working arrangements to the maximum extent possible e.g. working from home.

As there is a contractual obligation to work while well, all employees must co-operate with all such flexibilities while they are restricting their movements. Where an employee on restricted movement tests positive for COVID-19, the provisions set out above apply.

Travel Abroad

What happens if I wish to travel abroad before going back to work or during Christmas or other closures?

The current Government advice is to avoid all non-essential travel.

What happens if I need to travel abroad, i.e. if it is essential travel?

Any person coming into Ireland, (apart from those arriving from Northern Ireland and individuals arriving in Ireland from locations with a security rating of normal precautions - "Green List"), is required to restrict her/his movements for 14 days.

It is your responsibility to provide for the period of restricted movements arising from non-essential travel overseas. Therefore, if you intend to undertake non-essential travel overseas, you are required to make provision for the 14 day period of restricted movement. This may require an application to your centre/ETB for Unpaid Leave, in line with the normal terms and conditions.

When you are absent on approved Unpaid Leave, you will not be paid. You must advise your employer in advance, in writing, of any travel abroad and include the travel details.

If I travel abroad and am required to restrict my movements when I return, will I be paid?

No. You will be required to take unpaid leave.

Access to the Workplace

Can visitors be permitted entry to my centre?

Attendance by visitors to centres is restricted to those attending for essential reasons only and will only be allowed with prior arrangement with the principal/co-ordinator/manager.

Is my centre required to keep a contact log for all those attending or visiting the centre?

Yes.

Compliance issues

I have a student who deliberately flouts the COVID-19 response plan; for example, by refusing to comply with hand hygiene or social distancing. What happens?

Any breach of the COVID-19 response plan or any action/inaction that puts the health and safety of staff or other students at risk is a serious disciplinary offence and should be considered and treated as a serious breach under the centre's code of behaviour/code of conduct.

How should a centre deal with a suspected case of COVID-19 in a centre?

The TUI, SIPTU, ETBI, SOLAS and the DFHEIR are currently in discussions regarding a national approach to deal with a suspected case of COVID-19 in FET centres. This FAQ will be updated when the information becomes available.

What are my Health and Safety (H&S) responsibilities in terms of COVID-19?

Employers and all employees in a centre have responsibilities and duties. An employee, must:

- *Comply with the centre COVID-19 Response plan, for example, by maintaining physical distancing, wearing face coverings and practising good hand hygiene*
- *Comply with safety and health legislation*
- *Take reasonable care to protect her/his own safety, health and welfare and that of any other person who may be affected by her/his acts or omissions at work*
- *Co-operate with the employer and any other person to enable them to comply with health and safety legislation*
- *Not engage in improper conduct or other behaviour which could endanger his or her safety, health and welfare or that of any other person.*

What is the procedure for dealing with COVID-19 Health & Safety concerns?

The COVID-19 response plan makes provision for a workplace to have a Lead Worker Representative (LWR). In the first instance, concerns or issues that arise are processed in accordance with the procedures specified in the COVID-19 response plan.

However, if those procedures are not applied in a fair and prompt manner or if the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, the TUI reserves the right to act on behalf of members to protect their health and safety, as outlined in the following steps.

Step one:

If a TUI member wishes to raise a COVID-19 related health and safety issue in a centre s/he should, in the first instance, inform the Lead Worker Representative (LWR). The member should also advise the TUI Workplace Committee (WPC) and the WPC should keep a record of this.

Step Two:

The LWR will deal with issues that arise in line with the procedure set out in the workplace COVID-19 Response Plan. This includes raising the matter with centre management/employer immediately and keeping a record of all COVID-19 problems, areas of non-compliance or defects that the LWR has identified or that have been reported to her/him.

Under this procedure the employer is expected to act promptly on these representations. If unable or unwilling to do so, the employer (for example, centre management) must detail the reasons why, in order that the LWR can escalate the issue of concern, in the manner specified in the COVID-19 Response Plan.

If a concern is resolved, the LWR must record any actions taken to rectify the concern and inform staff.

Step Three:

If, notwithstanding the efforts of the LWR, a concern has not been addressed to the satisfaction of the TUI member/s, the matter should then be referred as an industrial relations issue/grievance to the TUI Workplace Committee (WPC).

The TUI WPC can seek advice from the local Branch Officers and/or Area Rep. The contact details for Area Reps can be found in the TUI Diary and Handbook that issues to all members in September. Contact details are also available by contacting TUI Head Office on 01-4922588 or tui@tui.ie.

The TUI WPC will meet with management immediately and seek to resolve the matter. In an ETB, if a satisfactory resolution is not provided by local management, the WPC will advise the local Branch who will contact the ETB (Director of Schools, Director of Further Education and Training, Director of OSD, Human Resource Department, as appropriate) to seek an immediate resolution of the matter.

Step Four:

If a satisfactory resolution is not provided, following the steps as outlined above, the WPC will:

- *Lodge a collective grievance using the nationally agreed grievance procedure*
and
- *Report the matter to the Health and Safety Authority. If the HSA sends an inspector to the workplace, the LWR is entitled to accompany them during the inspection and to get a copy of any recommendations or orders. This should, in turn, be provided to the TUI WPC.*
and
- *Where relevant, report the matter to the Health Service Executive (HSE).*

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

I teach a practical subject. Will guidance issue to assist me to teach my subject in a COVID-19-safe way?

On 31st August, agreement was reached by the relevant stakeholders to the effect that, in any classroom or in any alternative space or venue used in lieu of a classroom, 2m of social distancing applies between all persons in the room i.e. both staff and learners; the only exception to which would be practical classes i.e. those that take place in practical rooms i.e. college hair salons, dog grooming rooms, commis chef kitchens, woodwork rooms, workshops, science and IT labs etc. If required, social distancing may be reduced to 1m, subject to the wearing of appropriate PPE, if the class content requires it. Nonetheless, the capacity of the room should reflect 2 metres when practical demonstrations are not being undertaken.

The 2 metre of social distancing applies when planning for apprenticeship Phase 2 training as apprentices and instructors may be within a workshop for approx. 7hrs per day. However, where there is a necessity to reduce the social distancing below 2 meters, for example, when giving a practical demonstration to a class appropriate PPE must be worn by the instructor and apprentices.

Will adjustments be made to the LCA assessments, including examinations, project work etc.?

Yes. On Friday 21 August 2020, the DES issued new Assessment Arrangements for Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate Examinations 2021. These arrangements are designed to take account of the disrupted learning experienced by students during the 2019/20 school year and can be found at:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Curriculum-and-Syllabus/assessment-arrangements-junior-cycle-and-leaving-certificate-examinations-2021.pdf>

It is important to note that adjustments have been made to the assessment arrangements for Year 2 LCA students.

Will adjustments be made to the Module Assessment Components, including examinations, project work etc.?

The TUI is in contact with QQI and will update members on these discussions as they progress.

I am the LCA Co-ordinator. How can this programme operate safely this year?

*The DES has published guidelines specifically in relation to the LCA programme. These guidelines will be regularly updated and can be found at:
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7acad-reopening-our-post-primary-schools/>*

Can night classes that I teach still take place?

Yes, provided the public health advice and Government/Department guidelines, including those in relation to cleaning, are followed. However, it is anticipated that, in many cases, night class provision will not proceed this year.

For tutors delivering programmes at night or at weekends see the advice above on tutors.

Inspections and School Self Evaluation (SSE)

What changes have been made to school inspections and SSE owing to COVID-19?

Due to COVID-19, the third cycle of SSE, which had been due to commence in September 2020, will now commence in September 2021. Therefore, there will be no new SSE requirements for schools and centres for education in the academic year 2020/21.

During the first term of the 2020/21 academic year, the Inspectorate will focus on advisory, support and research work. Inspection activity will be confined to a small number of priority inspections, including: work to complete inspections commenced prior to 12 March 2020; a number of Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections; urgent Follow-through Inspections; and a limited number of other necessary inspections.

Additional Supervision in Centres

Why will more supervision be required in schools/centres this year?

Additional supervision may be required to maintain social/physical distancing in schools/centres.

What funding will be provided for additional supervision?

SOLAS has committed to provide more funding for any required increase in supervision in centres this year.

Am I required to undertake extra supervision this year?

No. Undertaking this additional supervision is strictly voluntary. It is entirely separate from the S&S scheme.

Is there a change in the quantum of supervision required from a teacher who is engaged in the S&S scheme?

*No. The level of supervision **required** from a teacher under the S&S scheme should be no more than the level of supervision that was required in 2019/2020.*

If I am currently in the S&S scheme and I undertake additional supervision, how will I be paid?

You will be paid for any additional supervision carried in any given week in 2020/21 that is over and above the weekly level of supervision you carried out under your contracted, compulsory S&S liability in 2019/20.

How much supervision am I required to do, under normal circumstances, as a teacher in the compulsory S&S scheme?

Under an agreement reached at the Teachers' Conciliation Council, a teacher cannot be required to engage in supervision for more than 50 minutes in a given week. A teacher, may, following consultation and agreement undertake more than 50 minutes.

However, if in 2019/2020 you were, for example, undertaking 45 minutes of supervision per week (say, 30 mins at lunchtime and a 15 minute break) any additional supervision (i.e. above 45 minutes) undertaken in a given week in 2020/21 year, will be paid as additional supervision as provided for in CL53/2020 available at:

https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0053_2020.pdf

If I am a Deputy Principal or Principal in a PLC college, can I opt to get paid for additional supervision under the additional scheme?

Yes, provided you were in the S&S scheme (on the roster) already.

If I normally undertake 50 minutes per week supervision under the S&S scheme, and I agree to do an extra 30 minutes additional supervision for this year only will I be paid extra for it?

Yes. A teacher will be paid for additional supervision carried out on a weekly basis in 2020/21 that is over and above the weekly level of supervision carried out by the teacher under their compulsory S&S liability in 2019/20.

How will the additional supervision be allocated within a setting staffed by teachers?

Following representations by the TUI, additional supervision will be offered in the following order:

- *Part-time teachers employed in the school who are not currently opted out of the S&S scheme, then*
- *Full-time teachers employed in the school who are not currently opted out of the S&S scheme, then*
- *Teachers employed in the school who are currently opted out of the S&S scheme whether employed on a part-time or full-time basis, then*
- *A PME student who is undertaking the school placement element of their PME course in that school may be offered supervision. Where this occurs, the student should as far as possible carry out supervision in an area of the school where they have contact with a teacher colleague.*
- *Where additional supervision hours remain after the above sequence has been exhausted, school management may source and recruit personnel to provide supervision services.*

If I commit to additional supervision this year, will I be compelled to do it in other years?

No.

I am prepared to provide additional supervision until Christmas, can I do this?

Members should consult with management in this regard. There is nothing prohibiting this approach by a teacher.

Supporting Documentation

Implementation Guidelines for Public Health Measures in ETB Further Education and Training Institutions (FET), available at:

<https://www.etbi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/200812FETImplementationGuidelinesFinaltoissueV1.1.pdf>

Ventilation

Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools – published: 24 August 2020, available at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7acad-reopening-our-post-primary-schools/>

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) Advice for management and teachers of LCA 2020/21 in Second-Level Schools and Centres for Education – published: 27 July 2020, available at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7acad-reopening-our-post-primary-schools/>

Arrangements for Inspection and Schools Self-Evaluation for the 2020/2021 School Year, available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0041_2020.pdf

Additional School Supports

Additional supporting material to Implementation Guidelines for Public Health Measures in ETB Further Education and Training Institutions (FET), available at:

<https://www.etbi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/200810Additional-supporting-material-to-FET-Implementation-Guidelines.pdf>

0053/2020 - Coronavirus (COVID-19): Additional Supervision Arrangements for the 2020/21 School Year – published 12 August 2020, available at:

https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0053_2020.pdf

Terms and Conditions

0049/2020 - Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in recognised Primary and Post Primary schools – published 7 August 2020, available at https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0049_2020.pdf

Circular Letter 0050/2020 Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for staff other than Teachers and SNAs who are employed by ETBs – published 12 August 2020, available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0050_2020.pdf

Changes to the Job Sharing Scheme for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools - 2020/21 School Year – published 7 August 2020, available at: <https://www.education.ie/en/Education-Staff/Services/Breaks-Leave/Job-Sharing/ttc005-2020.pdf>

Changes to the Career Break Scheme for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools 2020/21 School Year – published 7 August 2020, available at: <https://www.education.ie/en/Education-Staff/Services/Breaks-Leave/Career-Break/TTC007-2020.pdf>

This document will be updated on a regular basis so please continue to check the website (www.tui.ie), TUI's social media and the TUI App following the initial publication.