

Inclusive meeting guidance: Getting the most from your meetings

Contents	Page no.
1. Purpose	1
2. Good Practice Guidance	1
3. COVID-19 Etiquette Guidance	2

1. Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure that all colleagues have the opportunity to participate in meetings and are not consistently excluded by the timing of when these meetings are held.

These inclusive guidelines not only ensure that all colleagues have the opportunity to engage in discussions and decisions that affect their workplace environment, but ensure that meetings benefit from a wide range of perspectives that maximise the opportunities for effective discussion and best use of everyone's time.

This guidance fully supports the University's ambition to have an inclusive workplace culture and aim to ensure that work-life balance is optimised wherever possible. Consideration should be paid when scheduling meeting at a certain time mindful of attendees' working patterns, including caring for relatives, school drop-offs, and part-time working.

2. Good Practice Guidance

- Checking that your planned meeting doesn't clash with any other big events in the local unit, Faculty or University that are already scheduled, and/or any major religious festival or school/university holidays. The Inter-Faith network has a list of religious festivals (major and minor) celebrated every month in the UK, which is regularly updated, and you may find helpful.
- Scheduling outside the school and/or University term times might limit the attendance of parents and carers and those university colleagues undertaking a period of research or scholarship outside their teaching responsibilities.
- Thinking about the timing during the day. In some areas of the University, some regular meetings (e.g. seminar series, group meetings, staff meetings) now take place in locally agreed meeting hours. It is not that meetings can only be held during these times, but careful attention should be paid to arranging meetings at times when all colleagues may not be able to attend.
- Due to the time difference it is often necessary to arrange meetings involving colleagues in Singapore and Malaysia either at the start or end of the day. This is unavoidable, however, in addition to the guidance above, organisers could also consider alternating the timing of meetings with those campuses so it is not solely one party that is staying late/coming in early.
- If one-off meetings outside agreed local hours are necessary then the organiser(s) should consider: if the event is a one-off or less frequent social gathering that will take place at the end of the working day then ensure plenty of notice is given or consider allowing staff to bring their children (please note that some university venues are not suitable for this)
- Giving participants plenty of notice (at least two weeks where possible) to allow alternative caring arrangements or similar to be put in place.
- Sending meeting documents at least one week in advance so that colleagues who don't work on a fulltime basis have equal opportunity to read documents in advance of the meeting to allow full participation.
- Ensuring that if a colleague is unable to attend that they are not disadvantaged in any way and are given the opportunity to comment before or after the meeting as appropriate
- Rotating the timing and location of the meetings if possible to encourage attendance from colleagues with different commitments and working patterns.

- Where a meeting is scheduled outside the local agreed meeting hours, giving the reason for the timing of the meeting in the meeting request (e.g. to involve Singapore-based colleagues, diary clashes, to allow for clinic hours for NHS colleagues).
- Allowing deputies to attend meetings where appropriate, which also provides development opportunities.
- Give consideration as to whether the meeting room has an induction loops and check this in advance using University information about rooms.

3. COVID-19 Etiquette Guidance

We need to take all appropriate and necessary steps to keep our community safe. Now, perhaps more than ever, there is a real need for us all to work to support each other; to conduct ourselves with courtesy and consideration; to continue to uphold the aspirational values of our institution – Excellence, Creativity, Impact and Respect.

We have developed this guidance, in consultation with colleagues and students:

Be safe.

- Stay up to date with University guidance, FAQs.
- In the case of becoming infected or showing symptoms, report this using the processes within the University and follow guidance to self-isolate, get tested and so on.
- Follow campus and building signage and directives regarding, for example, one-way systems, 2m distancing, use of common spaces (like toilets and kitchens), wearing of face coverings etc. unless an exemption is in place.
- Continue to follow government and University advice on handwashing/sanitising.
- Ensure that you are aware of your movements and that you have followed sign in/out procedures in University buildings and beyond, should a track and trace exercise be necessary at any stage.

Be accountable.

We expect that most colleagues, students and visitors will understand and adhere to the COVID-secure systems and guidance in place on campus. However, if someone repeatedly refuses, there is the option for this to be handled through existing disciplinary routes for colleagues and students. If you become aware of an issue, please talk to your line manager or People Services contact.

Document Control Information		
Does this replace another policy? No		
Approval		
Approved by: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee		Date: Jan 2020 Updated: Nov 2020
Effective from:		
Review date:		
Responsibilities		
Executive Sponsor:		
Policy Owner:		
Person(s) responsible for compliance:		
Consultation		
Version	Body consulted	Date

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Analysis:

Does the policy have the potential to impact on people in a different way because of their protected characteristics? No

Initial assessment by:

Date:

Key changes as a result of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Analysis

Document location

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/who-we-are/equality/>