

Access and usage restriction of research laboratories and Central Research Facilities

Health, Safety and Environment Office

Monday, March 30, 2020 5:05 pm

Dear Heads and DSOs,

Following the latest announcement from the senior management about further reducing campus operations, this is a message sent to heads and DSOs of units with laboratory operations to provide guidelines on implementing access and usage restriction to research laboratories and Central Research Facilities during this special period.

Written approval to access laboratories

Faculty members are responsible for critically assessing the need for members of their research groups to access laboratories during this time. Research related work should be done at home as much as possible. Each faculty member with laboratory operations should submit a name list of personnel specifically allowed to access their research lab to their department heads. As a general rule, no more than half of the research group members should be present at any one time to ensure adequate social distance. A roster must be submitted together with the name list if more than half of the group is allowed access. Heads of CRFs should submit a special access and operation plan for this period to VPRDO, specifying measures to ensure social distancing and hygiene.

Social distancing and other preventive measures

While working in the lab area, users must wear a face mask in addition to normally required protective gears, i.e. safety glasses and lab coat. Everyone should maintain a social distance of 1.5 meter, and wash their hands frequently. People with a fever or respiratory symptoms should seek medical assistance at once, and are not allowed to work in the laboratories even if they are on the approved list. Departments and CRFs should publicize their own access and operation rules for this special time to members and users.

Hazardous operations not allowed

Hazardous operations are not allowed in this special period unless specifically approved by supervisors, DSOs and Heads. Lab workers must pay extra attention to safety during this time when few users are around, and normal support may not be available.

Enforcement by DSO and HSEO

DSOs should enforce the special access and operations rules and approved lab user list all the time. HSEO staff will contact DSO of each unit for their special rules and approved user list, and will regularly inspect lab areas to ensure compliance.

Under the severe pandemic situation, we trust that we will have full cooperation from all UST researchers and laboratory users. Together, we shall endure and overcome this unprecedented hardship.

Take care and stay well,

Samuel Yu

Director of Health Safety and Environment