**St. George’s, University of London CoVID-19 Research Co-ordination Group**

Chair – Julian Ma

Members – Tim Bull, Penny Lympany, Ariel Poliandri, Steve Goodbourn

SARS-CoV2 is a hazard group 3 pathogen. St George’s encourages research into this virus, but whilst the university’s laboratories are mostly closed, the CoVID-19 Research Co-ordination Group (CoV RCG) has been established to oversee research governance, co-ordinate research activities and space, and oversee researcher training to ensure St. George’s, University of London fulfils its duty of care to provide a safe working environment.

All research activities involving Covid-19 work at St. George’s, University of London need to be reviewed by CoV RCG and be approved before any work starts. CoV RCG supports the work of the SHE office, the Pathogen Management and Genetic Modification Safety Committee, Safety Management Committee and the CL3 Laboratory Users Group to ensure that researchers have considered all health and safety aspects of the work they propose, and that the university can provide adequate space, facilities and necessary staff training. CoV RCG does not override or replace the functions of these groups.

It is envisaged that CoV RCG will only be needed until university research activities are fully operational after the CoVID-19 shutdown.

Terms of reference

* To review all proposals for research relating to CoVID-19 at St. George’s, University of London, including changes to existing research proposals.
* To decide whether proposed CoVID-19 research is feasible at St. George’s, University of London, taking into account adequacy and capacity of research facilities.
* To ensure that adequate and appropriate risk assessment has been carried out for all proposed work on SARS-CoV2 and CoVID-19 at St. George’s, University of London.
* To provide approval for research to start, following confirmation that all health and safety issues have been addressed.

Procedure for seeking approval to carry out CoVID-19 research.

If you intend to carry out CoVID-19 research, please follow the procedure in the flowchart below.

If your research includes any risk of infection, however small, you must submit a description of your work to the CoV RCG. The purpose of this step is to provide support to progress the work by considering available research facilities, equipment and other requirements in relation to potential risk. The CoV RCG will aim to respond within 3 working days. In some cases, a meeting in person may be requested by the CoV RCG to discuss your proposal further.

A decision will be made, either that:

* the work can be performed entirely in your CL 2 laboratory;
* the work requires use of the CL 3 laboratories and there is capacity to carry out the work; or
* that your proposed work cannot be accommodated with existing facilities at St. George’s, University of London.

If the research proposal is approved, the CoV RCG will next provide final approval for the work to start, once it receives confirmation that the Pathogen Management and Genetic Modification Safety Committee (PMC) agrees with the COSHH/risk assessments (and any other approvals that may be required) and that staff are adequately trained.

