

## **FAQ on the measures for preventing the Spread of the Novel Coronavirus Infection [Research Activities]**

### **Q1. Way of thinking on Activity Restrictions of Research for Faculty members**

“Okayama University Guidelines on Activity Restrictions” (hereinafter referred to Guidelines) has been announced on April 17, and it shows that Education and Research activities (the Code of Conduct for Faculty members) is the Level 3, Maximum restrictions.

The level 3 means here that all research activities are to be suspended and it is also prohibited to begin new experiments/research except for research directly connected with new coronavirus countermeasures.

And the designated persons will be permitted to enter laboratories only in the case that the Head of the Department deems it necessary.

For the Head of the Department, it is necessary **to decide the judgment comprehensively from the various points of views** as follows. It is because that the government has decided to expand the state of emergency nationwide, and that **the Heads of Prefectures request cooperation such as suspension of business including the operation of universities in neighboring prefectures.** It is also important **to suppose and simulate the serious situations such that a cluster might be identified in a laboratory in our university two weeks later** when the symptom of coronavirus infection will become obvious, not considering that the present situation around us is not serious compared with the one of other prefectures.

**The reason the Government of Japan requests the restrictions on people’s self-imposed activities at a rate of about 80% is that infection cannot be controlled by May 6, the deadline of the period taken emergency measures under the declaration and that it may also lead the collapse of the medical care system nationwide if people don’t follow the restrictions.**

In case of disasters, normalcy bias often leads people to underestimate the likelihood of a disaster and its possible effects. **Normalcy bias is a tendency for people to think that they will be safe even though there might be a risk, and fail to prepare adequately themselves for disasters. It can cause people to misunderstand the significant situations in disasters and assume that everything will be all right.**

We should recognize this tendency and seize the present infection situation from the news reports etc. It is necessary to manage the laboratories carefully **to avoid the situation that the laboratories should be closed for a long time because of a cluster of infections two weeks later.** Do not think that we are safe.

## Q2. Definition of Research staff

In the Guidelines, **Undergraduates, Graduates, Researchers, and Research staff** are generally assumed as the staff conducting research activities in laboratories.

Specifically, **Researchers** are divided into the following categories **under our university system**:

① Researchers with employment relationship → persons receiving salary (= Corresponding to **Part-time researchers**)、

② Researchers without employment relationship (= **Overseas visiting researchers**)  
and

Researchers handled **originally by each department** (= **Visiting researchers** etc)

The Guidelines defines all of the above researchers as Researchers.

**Excepting the above Researchers, Research staff** means **Professors, Associate Professors, Senior Assistant Professors, Assistant Professors, Research Associates, Technical Employees, Clerical employees and so on.**

Note that Postdoctoral researcher is defined as any one of Assistant Professor and the above Part-time researcher.

## Q3. Application of Research staff in the Guidelines

As the Guidelines applies to the entire staff (Students, Executives, Faculty members) in Okayama University, **all related persons who enter into the laboratories correspond to the scope of the application in the Guidelines.**

## Q4. Treatment of Graduates provided tasks

Graduates, **who also have high efforts for clinical services or research support (employed as RA)** and, who carry out the important research tasks pointed in “the item(3) of the level 3” of the Guidelines in each department, **are permitted to conduct the required minimum tasks as “Research staff”.**

At that time, please take **the levels and the contents for the important research tasks** into consideration from the viewpoint of BCP (Business Continuity Planning) in advance after carrying out the **risk assessment and BIA (Business Impact Analysis)**.

#### **Q5. Treatment of the Research Fellowship for Young Scientists of JSPS**

In some departments, there seems to be a case that the Research fellowship of JSPS who signs an employment contract and conducts research activities as Research staff practically without no job title of Okayama University.

We understand the idea that you would like to ask them to deal with this emergency situation as Research staff to compensate for the shortage of members. If you have any problems on this matter, **please call or e-mail to the Research Cooperation Department (251-7115 / adc7116@adm.okayama-u.ac.jp)** .

#### **Q6. Check sheet for research activities**

We provide a check sheet for research activities classified by each definition of research staff. Please refer to the attached (only in Japanese) as a guide for research activities in each department.