

## Approaches for Interactions Regarding Masks

August 2021

It can be awkward and intimidating to ask people to physically distance or to wear a mask. If someone is unable to wear a mask, we encourage everyone on campus to maintain physical distancing, and respect that some individuals may have health or other issues that prevent them from wearing a mask. It is important to understand that not all people are able to wear a mask, and for privacy reasons, we cannot ask someone why they are not wearing a mask.

When engaging in a conversation, it is helpful to provide reasons for why you are asking them to wear a mask or to physically distance. Reasons can be personal, or community-related. Some helpful examples are as follows:

### Sample conversation 1 (personal)

*“Do you mind standing back so we’re two metres apart? I have an older relative who’s at risk and I want to protect them.”*

### Sample conversation 2 (community)

*“Physical distancing is an important way to prevent the spread of COVID-19. I would appreciate it if you would give us some space so we can stay two metres apart.”*

*“Let’s make sure that we give enough space in order to keep everyone on campus healthy and safe. Did you know that disposable masks are available at the Faculty/School Offices and all vending machines?”*

*“Physical distancing is a great way to prevent the spread of COVID-19. If you are unable to wear a mask, we will need to keep two meters apart.”*

*“To keep us both safe, the University requires the wearing of masks or following physical distancing and staying two metres apart if masks are not worn.”*