

COVID-19 Outbreak Management / Contingency Plan 2021/22

The COVID-19 Outbreak Management / Contingency Plan describes what we would do if students or staff test positive for COVID-19 and how we would operate if advised to reintroduce any additional measures to help break chains of transmission. The plan needs to cover:

- roles and responsibilities
- when and how to seek public health advice
- details on the types of control measures we might be asked to put in place

For each control measure we should include:

- actions we would take to put it in place quickly.
- how we would ensure every student receives the quantity and quality of education and support to which they are normally entitled.
- how we would communicate any changes to students, parents, carers and staff.

Existing Baseline Measures:

Baseline measures which are already in place to manage transmission of COVID-19:

- Follow public health advice on testing and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Students should be tested twice on site on return in the autumn term.
- Staff and students should then test themselves twice a week at home until the end of September (when this will be reviewed)
- Be prepared to implement high-quality blended learning arrangements so that any student who is well enough to learn from home can do so.
- Continue to ensure good hygiene for everyone and maintain appropriate cleaning regimes,
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated
- Ensure strong messaging about signs and symptoms, isolation advice and testing
- Encourage vaccination uptake for eligible students and staff.

When to consider extra action:

If the number of positive cases substantially increases, then extra action will need to be taken. This is because it could indicate transmission is happening within the college setting. The following thresholds are to be used as an indication for when to seek public health advice.

Thresholds:

Whichever of these thresholds is reached first:

- 5 students or staff (who are likely to have mixed closely) test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

or

- 10% of students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

Cases of hospitalisation with COVID-19:

The college must seek public health advice if a student or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern.

Defining 'close mixing':

This could include:

- students and teachers on practical courses that require close hands-on teaching, such as hairdressing and barbering
- students who have played on sports teams together
- students and teachers who have mixed in the same classroom

Actions to consider once a threshold is reached:

When reaching a threshold the college should review and reinforce the testing, hygiene and ventilation measures already in place.

LEVEL 1

We should consider:

- whether any activities could take place outdoors, including exercise or classes
- ways to improve ventilation indoors, where this would not significantly impact thermal comfort
- one-off enhanced cleaning focussing on touch points and any shared equipment

If concerned about transmission we must seek PHE advice. A director of public health may give advice reflecting the local situation. In areas where rates are high, this may include advice that extra action and some other measures are needed higher than set out above.

LEVEL 2

Additional action that could be advised by public health experts:

1. Strengthened communications to encourage students to undertake home testing
2. Temporarily reinstating face coverings for students, staff and visitors in indoor and/or communal spaces. This should be for two weeks in the first instance.
3. Reinstating on-site rapid LFD testing for a two-week period to encourage uptake of twice weekly testing
4. Increased frequency of testing.

LEVEL 3

Other Measures:

PHE may also recommend other measures in the contingency framework to support continuing face-to-face education.

This includes limiting:

- residential educational visits
- open days
- transition or taster days
- parental attendance in settings
- live performances in settings

LEVEL 4

Extreme case:

In extreme cases and as a last resort where all other risk mitigations have not broken chains of in-school transmission, a DPH may advise introducing short-term attendance restrictions on site, such as sending home a class or year group.

In such circumstances we must ensure:

- High-quality remote learning to be provided for all students well enough to learn from home.
- On-site provision to be retained for vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers.

PHE will inform us when it is appropriate to stop additional measures or if they should be extended.