



COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

Q 1: A student has informed me that after seeking medical advice they are required to self-isolate what should I do?

During discussion with the student can you establish the reason why they are self-isolating. The most common symptoms of corona virus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- New continuous cough and/or
- High temperature

On the basis that the reason is genuine then the student should be marked as an authorised absence for the period of their non-attendance at College. This will ensure that their student support payments continue and you should where possible arrange for the student to undertake the required work so long as this does not require them to leave their house.

Q 2. What should I do if I think I may have the virus?

- If you have symptoms of coronavirus, however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days
- You need to phone First Care 0345 456 5780 giving the reason for your absence
- You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are not better after 7 days, contact NHS111 online (<https://111.nhs.uk>). If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.
- After 7 days, if you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return to your normal routine.

The NHS has comprehensive advice on their website about what to do if you think you may have the virus, precautionary measures, and self-isolation procedures.

Q 3. What should I do if I've been in contact with someone who has travelled to an affected area?

A. If you have recently travelled to an affected area or been in contact with someone who has, and you think you have symptoms associated with the coronavirus, you should not go to hospital or your doctor but self-isolate yourself at home and contact NHS 111 online which has an online coronavirus service that can tell if you need medical help and advise you what to do.

If the contact is confirmed to have coronavirus then stay home and call the free NHS 111 helpline for advice. You can also find specific advice on the [NHS website](#) if you are unable to get through.

Q 4. I live with someone who has had a suspected or confirmed case of coronavirus at their place of work/school. What should I do?

A. If you have been in contact with an individual whose place of work at school has suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus, and they are showing no symptoms of the virus, then there is currently no need for any action. If the contact is confirmed to have coronavirus then stay home and call the free NHS 111 helpline for advice. You can also find specific advice on the NHS website. **Q. I want to self-isolate, but I have not symptoms. What is College's policy on this?**

A. Staff with an underlying health condition which may put them in a high risk category should contact Claire Collins, Director of People & Comms to discuss their personal situation.

If you have concerns regarding your health, you should contact your GP or the [free NHS 111 telephone helpline](#) and follow their advice.

If you have wider concerns, you should discuss these with your line manager who will consider whether any potential temporary changes to your role are required. Alternatively, you may request to take a period of annual leave or unpaid leave. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Q 5. What should I do if I become unwell with possible coronavirus while I'm out and about?

A. Please follow the Public Health England advice. Do not go to a GP surgery or hospital.

If you become unwell in a public place:

- Try to find a room to isolate yourself away from others. Ask for help if you need to, but try to stay at least 2 metres away from other people.
- Open a window for ventilation if you can, but otherwise touch objects and surfaces as little as possible.
- Call the free NHS 111 helpline for advice. You can also find specific advice on the NHS website if you are unable to get through.

If you become unwell on public transport:

- Go back to your home or place of residence immediately.
- Try to avoid close contact with other people and touch objects and surfaces as little as possible.
- Call the free NHS 111 helpline for advice. You can also find specific advice on the NHS website if you are unable to get through.

Q 6. Should I wear a protective face mask?

A. The advice from NHS England is that the risk of further infection is low, so extra protective measures are not required. Research has not shown that masks are necessarily effective in preventing the spread of contamination.

We are not accepting the wearing of masks at College for safeguarding reasons.

Q 7. What is the College doing to plan and keep people informed during the current coronavirus outbreak?

We have established these FAQs which we will update as and when advice changes.

During the current outbreak we have also ensured that College cleaners are increasing the frequency of cleaning to ensure that soap is available and surfaces are clean.

Q 8. Can the College increase the frequency of cleaning on campus?

A. The college has redirected the housekeeping staff away from low-priority tasks to increasing the frequency of cleaning of washrooms and high traffic areas. The Group has standardised the use of particular hard surface cleaners and hand soap that are recommended for use against viruses. The Group has a campaign running to raise awareness of the importance of handwashing especially on arrival to campuses.

Q 9. Should I send out my own communications to students about coronavirus?

A. No, you can direct all students to the intranet which will be frequently updated.

Q 10. Should staff prepare for possible building closures due to coronavirus?

A. The College is currently open, and there are no plans to close buildings at present. If you'd like to take steps to ensure that you are prepared for possible building closures, you can:

- Ensure that you have all the software you need in order to work effectively from home
- Take your laptop and charger home every night.

We have several tools and services that can assist and support you with your work while you are away from College. Please refer to the “**Preparing to work from home**” and how to set up “**Sharing folders in one drive**”

We have a range of resources and information to support the teaching and assessment of our students.

Q 11. I have plans to travel to a country or area affected by coronavirus, or I'm worried the situation may change during my trip. What should I do?

A. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) is currently advising against all travel to some countries and areas affected by coronavirus, and against all but essential travel to other affected areas.

The situation is changing rapidly so please check the [FCO website](#) for the latest travel advice for the specific country or area you are planning to visit. Remember that circumstances may change during your trip, and you may be subject to travel restrictions or required to self-isolate on your return to the UK.

Q 12. My child's school has closed while they do checks for coronavirus. What shall I do?

A. Please inform your line manager as soon as possible. As this is an unforeseeable breakdown of normal caring arrangements you may take paid leave in accordance with the personal and domestic leave procedure for one or two days, while you make alternate arrangements for their care.

If your child's school is closed for longer than two days, and you have not been able to make alternative care arrangements, you should talk to your line manager about how this time might be managed which may include working at home where possible, annual leave or unpaid leave.

Keeping up to date

Guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19) will frequently be updated, therefore please keep up to date with communications on the Staff Intranet.

If you have any concerns about your health you should contact the free NHS 111 telephone helpline (or find specific advice on the NHS website if you are unable to get through). Please also check [Public Health England](#) for the latest official advice.