**Staff Guidance**

**Covid-19 on Campus**

*This guidance outlines our approach to responding to a case of Covid-19 symptoms for staff working on campus.*

**Covid-19 (coronavirus) symptoms**

Staff should not attend work if they are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms. The main symptoms of Covid-19 are:

* **A high temperature** – this means that you feel hot to the touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
* **A new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
* **A loss or change in your sense of smell or taste** – this means you’ve noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal
* Shortness of breath
* Feeling tired or exhausted
* An aching body
* A headache
* A sore throat
* A blocked or runny nose
* Loss of appetite
* Diarrhoea
* Feeling sick or being sick

The symptoms are very similar to symptoms of other illnesses, such as colds and flu.

**You are no longer required to undertake a lateral flow test or PCR test if you suspect that you have Covid-19.**

If a member of staff becomes ill while on campus they should report any [Covid-19 symptoms](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/) to their line manager immediately in line with the sickness absence procedure and should leave campus as soon as possible, taking care to minimise their contact with other people. It is recommended that staff wear a face covering that fits snuggly against the face and has more than one layer when leaving campus if they suspect they have symptoms of Covid-19.

**How long to stay at home and away from others**

Staff are advised to follow [NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/) and government advice. If you have Covid-19 you can pass the virus on to other people for up to 10 days from when your infection begins. However, many people will no longer be infectious after 5 days. National guidance is that you should stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 days. You should also avoid meeting people at higher risk from Covid-19 for 10 days, even if they have had the Covid-19 vaccine.

Staff should note that free testing for Covid-19 has now ended for most people in England, therefore if you want to take a test, you will now need to purchase one. These are available from a number of retailers and pharmacies and may be purchased in person or online.

**Returning to your normal activity**

You should not return to your normal routine until your symptoms have gone. This may take up to 10 days. You can go back to your normal activities if you:

* Feel well enough to do so
* Do not have a high temperature

**Confidentiality and Data Protection**

Information relating to health is special category data under the GDPR and requires additional care when processing.

Employees should not disclose the identity of a person who has symptoms or has tested positive with other members of staff. The HR pathway should be followed by the Line Manager to share information with SLS for communication with public health. Any information regarding staff absence due to Covid 19 will be reported in the normal way and held securely within HR. Please ensure you do not disclose information about an individual’s health to others.

**Frequently asked Questions**

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| Question | Answer |
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| Should I get a PCR test if I have symptoms of Covid-19? | You are no longer required to undertake a lateral flow test or PCR test if you suspect that you have Covid-19. If you wish to take a test, these are available to purchase from pharmacies and retailers. |
| I’ve tested positive for Covid-19, what should I do? | If you have Covid-19 you should stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 days. You should not recommence your normal routine until you feel well enough to do so and no longer have a high temperature. |
| I have symptoms that appear to be Covid-19, should I come into work? | You should not go to work, school or public places if you suspect you have Covid-19. The University recommends that where possible staff who suspect they have Covid-19 should work from home for at least five days.  However, if you are ill with Covid-19 then you do not have to work from home, you should take sick leave as you would for other illnesses.  If you are unsure whether you can work from home, please speak to your line manager. |
| I have Covid-19 and feel quite unwell with it. Do I still have to work from home? | No. If you are ill with Covid-19 then you do not have to work from home, you should take sick leave as you would for other illnesses. |
| If I’ve been working with someone / a student I have been teaching has developed Covid symptoms do I need to isolate? | No, unless you have symptoms yourself, or test positive for Covid-19, you do not need to self-isolate. |
| If a colleague / student in my class tests positive for Covid-19 do I need to isolate? | In most cases no, unless you develop symptoms yourself or test positive for Covid-19 |
| What is a ‘close contact’? | A close contact is defined as someone who:  • lives in the same household as someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (Covid-19)  • has stayed overnight in the household of someone who has Covid-19  The NHS has advice for close contacts available [here](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/if-youre-told-to-self-isolate-by-nhs-test-and-trace-or-the-covid-19-app/) |
| Do I need to be tested if I am a close contact? | You are no longer required to either take a test or self-isolate if you are a close contact of someone with Covid-19, however the NHS continues to recommend that you should take steps to reduce the chance of passing the virus on to others.  • avoid contact with the person who has Covid-19 as much as possible  • avoid contact with people at higher risk from Covid-19, especially if they have a weakened immune system  • work from home if you can  • limit contact with people you do not live with, particularly in crowded places, indoors or where there is not much fresh air  • wear a face covering that fits snugly against your face and has more than one layer where you’re in close contact with other people, in crowded places, indoors or where there is not much fresh air |
| Should I do daily rapid lateral flow tests if I am a close contact? | You no longer need to do daily rapid lateral flow tests if you’ve been in close contact with someone with Covid-19 |
| I want to tell people that I have received a positive test result – can I? | This is your personal data and you are able to share the information as you see fit. You are requested to inform your line manager of the outcome of your test to help the University to plan any appropriate response. |
| What will the University do with the information that I have symptoms or have tested positive? | The University will only use and share this information in accordance with its legal obligations. When carrying out the contact tracing activities, the University will only disclose information that is necessary in order to respond quickly and effectively to all suspected or confirmed Covid 19 cases within its community. Individuals who have received a positive test result can choose what information to disclose and to who. For more information please refer to the University’s Covid privacy notice. |
| Will I be paid if I need to self-isolate? | If you are unable to work you will receive payment in line with the University Sick pay scheme. If you do not have symptoms you may carry out work from home and should discuss this with your line manager. |
| Do I need to self isolate if there is a local lockdown in my area? | Travel to work would usually be permitted however you will receive specific local guidance should additional restrictions be placed on the local area where you live. |

**Further Information:**

[Coronavirus (COVID-19) - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.tees.ac.uk/sections/about/university/coronavirus.cfm>