

COVID-19 General workplace safety risk assessment

This risk assessment is being used during the planning process for a return to work of some staff to the college's physical campuses in June 2020 and then for a September 2020 opening and then the Government's new response to the pandemic post 19 July 2021. It identifies the control measures that are being put in place to protect employees and others from the risk of coronavirus infection.

NOTE: separate return to work assessments on the usual health and safety concerns such as legionella, hazardous substances, work equipment, etc. have been completed separately.

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Job title: Director of HR & Student Support Services

Assessment Date: 28 May 2020

Review date(s): 29 May 2020 / 5 June 2020 / 25 June 2020 / 6 July 2020 / 3 August 2020 / 29 September 2020 / 5 November 2020 / 10 December 2020 / 17 December 2020 / 6 January 2021 / 2 March 2021 / 30 March 2021 / 14 May 2021 / 6 August 2021 / 8 October 2021 / 30 November 2021 / 10 December 2021 / 17 December 2021 / 4 January 2022

Business type/location: General Further Education College / Lincoln, Newark & Gainsborough

Business hazards associated with the coronavirus pandemic	Potential risks to workers caused by hazards	Control Measures	Further actions required
Infection Prevention, Cleaning and Staff Safety			
As staff return to work, the organisation must ensure their safety by making premises "COVID" secure – unsafe workplace premises raise the risks of virus transmission	There is a direct threat to staff health and wellbeing from transmission of the COVID-19 coronavirus while at work People can catch the virus from others who	Ensure that the organisation complies with its duty to provide a safe and healthy workplace / working conditions for staff in the workplace during the coronavirus pandemic by:	Regular workplace posts and updates will continue as appropriate. Risk assessments updated periodically.

	<p>are infected in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • virus moves from person-to-person in droplets from the nose or mouth spread when a person with the virus coughs or exhales • the virus can survive for up to 72 hours out of the body on surfaces which people have coughed on, etc. • people can pick up the virus by breathing in the droplets or by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching their eyes or mouth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating safety procedures to all staff and managers; these set out how staff should behave and the precautions they must adopt during the pandemic to keep them safe e.g. ensuring good hygiene practices, maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes, keeping occupied spaces well ventilated & following public health advice on testing, self-isolation & managing confirmed cases of COVID-19 	<p>Consultation meetings with trade union local representatives take place as and when required.</p> <p>New guidance issued to staff and students as a result of the government recommending the re-introduction of face coverings in classrooms effective from Sunday 2 January 2022. To remain in place until Wednesday 26 January 2022 when the Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire.</p>
<p>Homeworking, Hot-desking and Equipment Sharing</p>			

<p>Staff working together in workplace premises inevitably raises the risk of virus transmission. Hot desking and the sharing of equipment present hazards that raise the risk of virus transmission further</p>	<p>There is a direct threat to staff health and wellbeing from the transmission of the COVID-19 coronavirus while at work.</p>	<p>The Government will continue to manage the risk of serious illness from the spread of the virus.</p> <p>The Government has announced the introduction of its Plan B effective from 13 December 2021. Staff who can work from home are advised to work from home</p>	<p>The College has launched a flexible working policy and therefore some staff will continue to work remotely on occasion.</p> <p>Staff are still reminded to maintain hygiene regimes.</p> <p>Comms issued to staff and students to explain how we're responding to the implementation of the government's Plan B.</p>
<p>Workplace Social Distancing</p>			
<p>Effective social distancing is a key element in reducing the transmission of COVID-19</p>	<p>Social distancing refers to people being required to maintain a distance from each other of 2 metres wherever possible or 1 metre with risk mitigation. Social distancing effectively puts people at a safe range from anyone coughing. The main route of virus transmission is through droplets exhaled or coughed by an infected person</p>	<p>The Government has mandated the requirement for face coverings / face masks in shops, when using public transport and in most public indoor venues, other than hospitality.</p> <p>Updated government guidance that face coverings are recommended in classrooms from Sunday 2 January 2022 as well as when moving around FE premises such as in corridors or communal areas.</p>	<p>Staff are encouraged to use their judgement and to still social distance when they are indoors and in large groups or working in a situation where close contact is unavoidable.</p> <p>Additional guidance issued on Monday 3 January 2022 in response to the recommendation that face coverings are also to be worn in classrooms.</p>

		<p>Students in FE settings should also wear a face covering when travelling on public transport and dedicated transport to and from the settings.</p> <p>Face coverings do not need to be worn when outdoors.</p>	
Higher Risk Areas of the Workplace			
<p>Some areas of the workplace may present a higher risk than others – this may include areas such as staff toilets and staff rooms</p>	<p>Heavily used areas of the workplace are more likely to present an infection transmission risk Essential for staff to wash hands regularly but also that toilets are kept clean and free of coronavirus contamination.</p>	<p>Ensure higher-risk high traffic areas of the workplace are COVID-19 secure by applying appropriate safety precautions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stressing the need for staff to follow good hygiene practice at all times while at work (i.e. regular handwashing, using tissues and disposing of them appropriately, etc.) • Managers ensuring that adequate hand cleaning resources are provided; all toilets to be supplied with adequate supplies of hot water, liquid soap and paper towels • Printing handwashing instructions/posters and displaying throughout workplace, especially in toilets • Toilet doors fitted with foot operated door openers 	<p>Staff advised to continue home testing twice weekly using LFD tests 3 to 4 days apart.</p> <p>Staff provided with an update on Monday 3 December 2022 ref control measures following the government’s implementation of its Plan B.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing environmental cleaning, especially in and around toilets and restrooms and staff rooms; special attention to be paid to frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, toilet flush handles, light switches, etc. • Increasing toilets/washrooms inspections to check for cleanliness/adequate stock of soap/toilet paper, etc. • Where possible, providing paper towels as an alternative to hand dryers in handwashing facilities 	
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, Clinically Vulnerable and Higher Risk Staff			
Some staff may have pre-existing medical conditions which render them more vulnerable to the dangers of coronavirus infection	Those who are classified by PHE as being at greater risk from COVID-19 include people in the vulnerable (moderate risk) and extremely vulnerable (high risk) categories. Vulnerable (moderate risk) people include those who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are 70 or older • are pregnant • have a lung condition such as asthma, COPD, emphysema or 	CEV people are advised, as a minimum, to follow the same guidance as everyone else. Additional precautions deemed appropriate should still be considered. Specific guidance is available for pregnant employees.	Staff in the CEV “high risk” category will continue to be supported when discussing flexible working options. Staff advised that despite the Omicron variant, vulnerable people are not being asked to shield again due to the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme.

	<p>bronchitis (not severe)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have heart disease, diabetes, chronic kidney disease or liver disease (such as hepatitis) • are taking medicine that can affect the immune system (such as low doses of steroids) • are very obese <p>Extremely vulnerable (high risk) people include those who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have had an organ transplant • are having chemotherapy for cancer, including immunotherapy • are having an intense course of radiotherapy for lung cancer • have a severe lung condition (such as severe asthma or severe COPD) • are taking medicine that makes them much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids) • have a serious heart condition and are pregnant 		
Staff Health and Staffing Levels			
Low staffing levels due to high rates of staff sickness or staff having to self-isolate themselves at home due to coronavirus symptoms	<p>Staff may get sick with coronavirus infection.</p> <p>People who have a positive LFD test or symptoms must “self-isolate” at home for 7</p>	<p>The following safety arrangements should apply to staff health or staffing levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff who are sick should contact HR and those self-isolating should apply 	<p>Website continually updated to provide both staff & students with the relevant guidance.</p> <p>Guidance also issued via</p>

	<p>days from the start of symptoms to prevent them from passing the infection on and contributing to the overload on the NHS. Isolation can end after 7 days following 2 negative LFD tests taken 24 hours apart. The first LFD test should not be taken before the sixth day.</p> <p>If a negative PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive LFD test, it overrides the LFD test result and people are no longer required to self-isolate as long as they no longer have COVID-19 symptoms.</p> <p>NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive cases to identify close contacts.</p> <p>Individuals are no longer required to self-isolate (advised to complete 7 days of lateral flow tests) if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and any of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They're fully vaccinated • They're below the age of 18 	<p>for special leave if they are unable to work from home – on no account should they attend for work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that communications go out that no member of staff should come to work if they are self-isolating or if they have COVID-19 symptoms or if they feel unwell • Staff may be reallocated from non-essential parts of the organisation to essential functions or may be subject to furlough arrangements • Managers should consider temporary departmental closures or operational adjustments if staffing is reduced to unsafe levels or there is a lack of skilled/trained staff. 	<p>workplace and all staff emails.</p> <p>The impact on operational areas due to the volume of confirmed cases is monitored and reviewed by ELT.</p> <p>Education settings are no longer expected to undertake contact tracing.</p>
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	<p>years 6 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They've taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial • They're not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons <p>Due to Omicron infections rising in the UK, from Tuesday 14 December 2021, people who are fully vaccinated and identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 (whether Omicron or not) should take an NHS rapid lateral flow test every day for 7 days to help slow the spread of COVID-19.</p>		
Premises Access and Travel			
Staff who are required to attend for work must be given safe access to the workplace	Travel to and from work may lead to greater risk of virus transmission	The following safety arrangements should apply to workplace access and travel arrangements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face coverings and face masks are mandated again on public transport effective from 30 November 2021. Face coverings and face masks are also recommended in classrooms (effective from Sunday 2 	

		January 2022) and mandated in communal areas of the college.	
Cases of Possible Infection On-site			
People becoming unwell while on-site or a symptomatic person using a site	High risk of transmission	<p>If a member of staff becomes unwell in the workplace with coronavirus symptoms (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature) they should be sent home and advised to follow government advice to self-isolate.</p> <p>If anyone is unable to immediately travel home, they should be left in a room on their own if possible and safe to do so. A window should be opened for fresh air ventilation if possible. Appropriate PPE should be used if close contact is necessary.</p>	Staff continue to be offered the ability to test themselves at home twice each week (3 to 4 days apart).
Business Continuity			
Crisis management and business continuity hazards caused by the pandemic emergency	The crisis threatens business continuity and ability to deliver essential services to our customers	<p>Managers should refer to business continuity policies and procedures</p> <p>After lockdown the following safety arrangements should be applied to establish business recovery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish overall coronavirus risk management team • Devise appropriate business recovery 	<p>General COVID-19 Risk Assessment reviewed on a regular basis.</p> <p>As defined by the Lincolnshire Health Protection Team, a potential outbreak is now classed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 students or staff, who are likely to have mixed

		plans and keep under constant review	<p>closely, test positive within a 10-day period or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% of the setting population, who are likely to have mixed <p>closely, test positive within a 10-day period.</p>
Information			
Hazards caused by lack of information or inaccurate information being circulated	The pandemic has been accompanied by a large amount of official guidance, some of which needs interpretation, and by misinformation, rumour and “fake news” or “myths”. If these are allowed to gain traction within the organisation, they can obscure and confuse vital health and safety measures.	<p>The following safety arrangements should be applied to mitigate risks caused by misinformation and “fake” news (this does not include accurate / peer-reviewed scientific guidance):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff business strategies must be based on accurate information and staff must be given consistent, simple and clear messages • Coronavirus risk management team to monitor official advice carefully and update all policies and procedures. Ensure leadership teams/local managers are briefed and kept up to date • Managers to beware fake news and discourage the circulation of misinformation 	Comms will continue as necessary.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep staff informed – key messages include the need for unwell staff or homeworking staff to stay at home, for frequent handwashing and for social distancing 	
Communication			
Threat to effective communications	The pandemic crisis threatens communications with clients/customers/ suppliers – such communications are vital in the reestablishment of business activities and procedures after lockdown	<p>The following safety arrangements should be applied to mitigate risks to communication systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior management to review all outward facing communications (e.g. on college website, etc.) to ensure messages are consistent and clear • Managers to revise communications strategies and plans • Devise specific plans for how and how often to communicate with clients/customers/ suppliers 	
Cyber Security			
Cyber-security risks	<p>Cyber-security threats often accompany a crisis, including computer viruses, phishing and scam emails and coronavirus related “ransomware”</p> <p>With the organisation and individual staff more reliant than ever on digital communications and the internet, and with</p>	<p>The following safety arrangements should be applied to mitigate cyber risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review cyber security and surveillance infrastructure and ensure that all reasonable protection is in place • Circulate warnings to staff and managers of any 	<p>Guidance and updates provided by the Director of IT & Information Management as necessary.</p>

	<p>more staff working from home and using a variety of digital devices, the need to ensure the security and function of our digital systems is more important than ever</p>	<p>credible cyber threats, especially scam emails and text messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that remote access to college systems uses multi-factor authentication to protect against unauthorised access • Ensure that staff are aware of college IT and Data Protection policies and that they apply equally to office and home working • Ensure that existing cyber-security systems do not interfere with the availability of critical safety information and updates relating to coronavirus • Assess cyber risks to new supply chain connections developed during the crisis 	
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Assessor:					
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Position				Date	

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