

# **Infection Control Guidance**

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## 1. Introduction

This document outlines the infection prevention and control measures being put in place to ensure that activities by employees, students and other persons on our campuses can be carried out safely under current government guidance for [living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID19](#). **As this continues to be a changing area, this guidance will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect relevant government guidance and internal feedback.** Please send any questions about this guidance to the Health & Safety Unit ([safetyunit@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:safetyunit@greenwich.ac.uk)).

In June 2022, the Government updated its “living with COVID” plan to acknowledge the removal of all remaining legal restrictions. As an employer and educational establishment, we recognise that COVID and other infectious illnesses are still present within society. As a result, we will continue to apply sensible and proportionate [infection prevention measures](#) to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level and in order to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses, including influenza. As part of this the University expects all staff, students and visitors to co-operate with the measures outlined in this guidance document. This guidance exists in addition to all other current [health and safety policies and guidance](#).

## 2. General Principles

The following general advice, to minimise risk associated with respiratory infections, underpins all subsequent recommendations and should be followed, even if individuals are fully vaccinated:

1. The University will make every reasonable effort to ensure all staff and students can work or study safely, whether activity is on site or remote.
2. All activities will be subject to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment (see also [Infection Control risk assessment guidance](#), [Occasional Homeworking Guidance](#) and [University working principles](#)).
3. If displaying symptoms of respiratory infection, such as COVID-19 (e.g. a high temperature or not feeling well enough to carry out your normal activities), you are expected to stay at home, follow the [Government guidance for people with respiratory infections](#) and inform the University using our [reporting form](#). You should also use this form to inform the University if you test positive for COVID-19 and do not have any symptoms OR if you have been diagnosed with any other type of infectious illness, such as TB, Chicken Pox, Monkey Pox, etc. If you are not sure whether you should complete the form, please contact [safetyunit@gre.ac.uk](mailto:safetyunit@gre.ac.uk)
4. If you develop symptoms whilst on site, you should tell your line manager / personal tutor and immediately return to your term time address. The University will then follow the arrangements set out in section 8 – Infection Control.
5. Staff who are informed about an actual or potential infectious illness case should direct the individual to complete our [reporting form](#)
6. Anyone who is concerned about attending campus, due to being at higher risk of becoming severely unwell if they are infected, should discuss this with their line manager / personal tutor. Those who have a weakened immune system are advised to continue to take extra precautions to protect themselves in line with [current guidance](#). An occupational health referral may be appropriate for staff in these circumstances and should be discussed between the individual and their line manager.
7. All staff and students should regularly wash their hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, particularly after touching surfaces, eating, drinking or smoking. Sanitiser may be used if soap and water are not immediately available.
8. Coughs and sneezes should be covered with a tissue and disposed of immediately (or into your elbow if no tissue) followed by hand washing as above.
9. Staff and students should endeavour to maintain a degree of social distancing from those who are not part of their household.

10. Wearing a face covering can reduce your risk of spreading respiratory infection to others and can also provide some protection to the wearer. During times when case rates for respiratory infections are high, and / or a risk assessment deems it necessary, we strongly encourage staff and students to wear a face covering in crowded indoor settings (e.g. inside University buildings and vehicles, and on public transport) in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.
11. Staff and students will be provided with relevant health and safety information, instruction or training as relevant to their role / activities.

### 3. Safety on Campus

All of the measures described below form part of our University infection control risk assessment and are being implemented in order to reduce the risk associated with one, or more, of the ways in which respiratory viruses can be spread (i.e., through aerosols, droplets and surfaces).

The [GermDefence](#) website can also be used to help you identify ways to protect yourself and others in your household from viruses. It provides scientifically proven advice on reducing the risks from COVID-19 and other viruses in your home.

All individuals are asked to be respectful of others within any given space, including around entrances / exits, in corridors, on staircases and within communal facilities, such as toilets, cafes, libraries and open IT spaces.

The University recommends additional consideration is given to the following spaces:

#### 3.1. Lifts

We recommend that lifts only be used by disabled persons, those with other medical / physical needs, or for the transport of large/heavy/hazardous materials, where transport on stairways would not be possible or safe. When infection rates are high, occupants are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering whilst inside the lift and to stand as far apart as possible and face away from each other.

#### 3.2. Toilets / Showers

Facilities across campus differ greatly, ranging from single, lockable WCs to larger communal facilities.

In all cases, everyone is asked to respect good hygiene, close the lid when flushing and make a conscious effort to wash your hands effectively.

Good hygiene can play an important role in helping to prevent the spread of infectious disease. The official NHS technique illustration for hand washing is provided in Figure 1 below:

## Hand-washing technique with soap and water



Figure 1 – NHS Handwashing poster

### Hand Drying:

The World Health Organisation states that, once your hands are cleaned, you should dry them thoroughly by using paper towels or electrical dryers. The University will provide paper towels in locations where electrical dryers are not already provided.

### Single/accessible facilities

In the case of single, lockable facilities, please leave the facility in a respectable condition. If waiting to use such a facility, ensure you stand a reasonable distance from the door to allow the previous occupant the appropriate space to leave.

### Communal/multi-occupancy facilities

If all cubicles / urinals / sinks are in use, individuals are asked to queue in a socially distanced way whilst waiting.

### Showers

Users are encouraged to avoid being in close proximity with others and to ensure the number of users in the space at any one time is as low as possible. Cleaning will be undertaken during the day and usage will be monitored to ensure the frequency of cleaning remains appropriate to the level of use.

### 3.3. Workspaces, including labs, workshops and offices

Users are encouraged to communicate within their departments/teams to find safe and practical solutions to avoid close proximity working as a means of controlling infection.

To support this, home working will continue to play a role as part of our overall approach during periods when case rates from infectious disease are high. Any home working arrangements should be in accordance with the University's health and safety [Home Working Guidance](#) and [Working Principles and Guidelines](#).

It is preferable for each person working on site to be allocated a specific desk from which to work. If hot desking does occur, users are expected to clean the workstations and equipment before and after use (see section 4, Cleaning).

Where more than one person is required to work within the same space, the layout should consider ways to minimise the potential for transmission between users.

Where people cannot be reasonably distanced (based on maintaining at least 1m distance between people), and / or the number of people in contact with one another cannot be reduced, those who manage the space should consider 'other controls' to reduce the risk of spread of respiratory viruses.

These 'other controls' may include:

- ventilating the space (see section 5)
- wearing face coverings
- using screens or barriers to separate people from each other
- keeping the activity time as short as possible
- using back to back or side by side working
- staggering arrival and departure times
- using fixed teams or partnering to reduce the number of people each person has contact with

Wearing of face coverings is strongly encouraged inside our buildings and vehicles when case rates from respiratory infections are high and / or a risk assessment deems it necessary, in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.

If considering a re-arrangement of workstations to accommodate social distancing, it may be possible for local users to move and reconnect the IT equipment themselves, but the IT Service Desk must be contacted in advance and provided with details of both the original and proposed locations, along with network socket references.

During periods of high infection, remote working tools (e.g., Microsoft Teams) are encouraged to reduce the need for in-person meetings / visits and to reduce the number of participants needing to travel to meetings, especially if large numbers of participants are expected. Where in-person meetings / visits are necessary, reasonable distancing between attendees should be observed, where possible. To reduce the risk of infection, consideration should be given to holding in-person meetings / visits outside or in well ventilated areas where possible.

### 3.4. Communal Kitchens / Tea Rooms

Facilities across campus differ greatly, ranging from small tea rooms to larger communal kitchen facilities.

In all cases, users are asked to take personal responsibility for maintaining good hygiene and keeping a reasonable distance from others using the space.

Prior to the handling of communal items in the kitchen, such as kettles and cutlery, all persons should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds in accordance with government guidance to prevent contamination of surfaces (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pm94ChOPw50>)

Where communal cutlery / mugs etc are used, all items should be washed thoroughly before and after uses, using soap and warm water, dried and put away to reduce the risk of transfer of contamination to other persons.

### 3.5. Academic / Teaching Spaces

We will continue to offer in person teaching to full capacity within our academic / teaching spaces. This will continue to be kept under review in light of government guidance.

This may mean that social distancing is not always possible in these spaces. Therefore, additional controls are in place to reduce the risk of infection. These include: encouraging vaccination in collaboration with local public health teams; provision of sanitiser at entrances to buildings / key locations across our campuses; ensuring our buildings are well ventilated; encouraging individuals to enter and exit the space one at a time, with those nearest the exit leaving first; and encouraging the wearing of face coverings in these spaces during times when rates from respiratory infection are high and / or when a risk assessment deems it necessary.

### 3.6. Service Desks

Many departments and teams across campus offer essential student facing services e.g., admin receptions, library services, student services, catering outlets, etc.

Within these areas, queuing arrangements will be clearly laid out for customers. This may include indicating where to queue from, tape or markings on the floor to aid distancing between persons as they queue and clear signage.

It may be appropriate in some cases to regulate entry so that the premises do not become overcrowded. Additional signage, to ask customers not to enter the premises, will be provided, if this is the case.

For those working behind service desks and therefore at higher risk of unavoidable face to face contact, the University will conduct a risk assessment to determine whether protection barriers may be required (see Figure 2 as an example of a protection barrier – Actual sizes and shapes vary greatly for the various points across campus.)



*Figure 2 – Example of protection barriers*

### 3.7. Libraries / Open IT spaces

Our physical library spaces are operating a full range of services, with study spaces available on a first-come-first-served basis. Enquiry services are all available online. In all cases, general protection measures as described in the previous sections above have been adopted.

Where we have other open access IT spaces, the University will expect users to follow instructions for using the service safely, in accordance with local signage, including maintaining a reasonable distance from other users, using sanitiser provided at key locations throughout the estate and using disposable wipes or sprays to clean shared surfaces before and after use.

### 3.8. Faith Spaces

Faith spaces are open for worship in line with the general arrangements as described in the previous sections above.

Users are discouraged from using communal resources such as prayer mats, leaflets or other materials and are asked to bring their own. Users should also avoid touching property belonging to others, such as shoes, wherever possible.

### 3.9. Cafes / Restaurants

The University continues to liaise with the contracted service provider to seek assurance that [safe working practices are](#) being followed.

Catering outlets will offer a full food provision (a range of hot and cold drinks, snacks and meals). Customers are encouraged to take away their items in order to minimise unnecessary mixing indoors. Additional outdoor seating has been provided in some areas.

Drinks will be served in china and disposable containers except where customers request the use of personal re-usable cups (in cafes). Where re-usable cups are presented, café staff will wash their hands after serving the drink.

Food is served on crockery or in a disposable container if requested. Other self-service items such as cutlery, condiments, sauces, etc., will be available for customers to select.

Hand sanitiser will be available for customer use.

Further information about Students' Union outlets is published on the [Greenwich Students Union webpages](#).

### 3.10. Travel: Parking / Inter campus bus service

The University continues to encourage individuals think carefully about the times, routes and ways you travel so that we will all have more space to stay safe. Staff and students using public transport should follow the government's [guidance on living safely with respiratory infections, including Covid-19](#) and any rules specific to the service being used.

The University recognises that some staff / students will not be able to walk or cycle and others will need to use public transport and is therefore continuing to manage the onsite parking and offer an intercampus travel service that incorporates the principles outlined throughout this document. Wherever possible, this will include:

- Providing signage to build awareness of good handwashing technique, including the need for increased handwashing, to avoid touching your face and to cough or sneeze into your arm, and marking pick-up and drop-off collection points.
- When rates of respiratory infection are high, and / or a risk assessment deems it necessary, strongly encouraging the use of face coverings inside our vehicles in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Minimising unnecessary contact. For example, contactless ticket payments / electronic pre-booking.

- Recommending that passengers maintain social distancing wherever possible, both whilst queuing and on board.
- Making sure vehicles are well-ventilated to increase the flow of air, for example, by opening a window or adjusting the intensity of fresh air filtration systems.
- Ensuring regular cleaning of vehicles, supported by provision of sanitiser stations at pick-up and drop-off collection points.

We expect all passengers to treat transport staff with respect and follow instructions for using the service safely. This may include:

- Waiting for passengers to get off first before you board and following the boarding / exiting protocols
- Respecting other people's space while travelling
- Avoiding consuming food and drink on the buses
- Being aware of pregnant, older and disabled people who may require extra time or space
- Being aware that some individuals may have hidden disabilities

Staff continuing to regularly work from home, including those based at Greenwich and parking on campus, may use the PAYG phone app on the occasions they attend instead of paying monthly via Payroll.

### 3.11. Student accommodation

Any residents who developed symptoms of an infectious illness are expected to stay at home and avoid contact with other people, in line with [Government guidance](#).

Any residents who are subject to quarantine arrangements upon arrival in the UK will be supported by the University, in line with government requirements, where they are quarantining in University accommodation. Students who are quarantining in any other accommodation must do so at their own expense.

The concept of 'bubbles' does not apply to educational settings. However, each flat within the residences is considered a household and will be treated as such for the purposes of cleaning and contact, if necessary.

The University will work with partner providers to ensure the arrangements in communal spaces remain consistent with those outlined within this guidance document.

### 3.12. Gyms / Sports facilities

Our gyms / sports facilities, including changing rooms, at Avery Hill and Greenwich are open with enhanced cleaning and ventilation. All users are required to sign in, are expected to be respectful of other people's space whilst using the facilities and to observe good hygiene practices, as outlined in the general principles (Section 2) above.

### 3.13. Field trips and off campus activities

Field trips and off campus activities within the UK (including overnight stays) are not subject to restrictions.

Overseas travel may be subject to [restrictions](#) depending on the country you are travelling to and should only take place in accordance with the [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office travel advice](#) . As this advice may change at short notice, organisers should carefully consider the potential risk of disruption if individuals need to isolate and / or test on arrival back into the UK.

In line with the [University's health and safety guidance for off-campus activities](#), a risk assessment must be carried out before any field trip or other off campus activity. In addition to the usual risks



associated with the activity, and assuming that national / local travel restrictions allow for travel to take place, consideration should be given to the risks associated with respiratory infections and appropriate mitigations identified, e.g., maintain reasonable distancing between individuals, ensure contact is minimised, good hygiene is observed and infection control measures are in place.

### 3.14. Events

The risk of transmission of respiratory infections at any event will depend on several factors, including the characteristics of the event, the venue itself and the attendees. For example, an indoor event with a large number of people mixing in close proximity for a prolonged period of time is likely to present a higher risk than fewer people outside for a shorter period.

In line with the [University's health and safety guidance for events](#), a risk assessment must be carried out before any event occurs. In addition to the usual risks associated with the activity, consideration should be given to the risks associated with respiratory infections and appropriate mitigations identified in line with the general arrangements as described in the previous sections above.

The government's [risk management template](#) can be used to help with this and the events risk assessment should consider the following:

**Congested areas:** Congested areas or 'pinch points' e.g., whilst queuing, visiting hospitality areas, entry/exit points and ticket collection points, will be present at all types of events (including outdoor events), and could potentially lead to an increased risk of transmission.

**Events with free movement between people:** Events where there is significant close-mixing of people typically pose a higher risk.

**Crowd density:** As crowds at an event become denser it becomes more difficult for people to be physically distant from each other, and close contact inevitably increases.

**Large numbers of attendees:** Events where large numbers of people attend do not necessarily constitute a greater risk than smaller events (particularly if the event is outside or attendees are dispersed over a large area). However, end-to-end transmission risks are increased through large numbers of people travelling to and from venues.

**Events involving energetic activity:** Unstructured and energetic activity with a high crowd density may lead to higher airborne transmission risks. This could include activities such as actively chanting and celebrating while attending sporting events, singing along at concerts or services, or dancing/singing at a nightclub.

More detailed guidance on the measures you can take to reduce risk at events can be found in the Government guidance for [Reducing the spread of infections in the workplace](#).

## 4. Cleaning

### General Cleaning

To ensure good practice, all areas will be cleaned at least once per day. This will be enhanced by additional / ongoing cleaning of high contact surfaces such as door handles, handrails within communal areas. The University will continue to work with its contracted cleaning provider to ensure an appropriate service is provided. As indicated elsewhere, to reduce the risk of infection, 'hot desking' should be avoided, and where it cannot be, workstations and equipment should be cleaned by the users and between different occupants.

It is also recognised that a level of personal responsibility for cleaning surfaces before and after use, enhanced personal hygiene and especially handwashing, are key factors to reducing the risk of spreading infection. Therefore, to support the routine cleaning schedules, staff, students and visitors are encouraged to undertake local cleaning of shared surfaces, such as within academic spaces and open access IT equipment, and / or locations where contamination is more likely, such as kitchen facilities etc, and to make use of hand sanitisers or hand washing stations at access points or within buildings (see figure 3) where provided. Wipes and sanitising spray will be provided in libraries and IT labs.



Figure 3 – An example of a foot operated sanitiser station and associated signage

The official NHS technique for applying sanitiser is provided below (see Figure 4):



Figure 4 – NHS alcohol hand rub hand hygiene technique – for visibly clean hands

### Cleaning after someone reports symptoms

Upon receipt of the [relevant staff or student notification form](#), the facilities management team will ensure any areas the individual has visited whilst potentially infectious have been suitably cleaned. Cleaning will be undertaken as soon as possible after someone with symptoms submits a notification. Those involved in cleaning the area will wear clothing and PPE as directed within the relevant risk assessment.

If a risk assessment indicates that a higher level of virus may be present (for example, within student accommodation, where individuals stay overnight) then additional PPE to protect the cleaner's eyes, mouth and nose may be necessary.

Occupants may be asked to temporarily vacate the immediate area whilst any cleaning is arranged.

## **5. Ventilation**

[Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\) guidance](#) indicates that the risk of air conditioning spreading respiratory illness in the workplace is extremely low, as long as there is an adequate supply of fresh air and ventilation.

In line with the [industry guidance](#), the University will, therefore, to reduce the risk of infection:

- Wherever our air handling units (AHUs) would normally use recirculated air (i.e., where there is a centralised ventilation system that removes and circulates air to different rooms), we will ensure the air is filtered to remove impurities and contains a minimum 20% fresh air. For AHUs with no filters, we will maintain 100% fresh air supply.
- Schedule all air handling units run by our building management system (BMS) to start up and shut down in line with the building opening hours.
- Ensure all supply and extract systems are run at an appropriate speed to ensure adequate air is being supplied & extracted.
- Where AHUs have CO2 control settings, these will be adjusted to operate at 800PPM

Where mechanical air handling systems are not present, the University is encouraging people to open windows and doors (where safe and practical). In most buildings this will be led by the occupants. Where a risk assessment identifies a specific safe system of work for opening the windows, any requests for assistance in opening windows should be directed to Campus Security by telephone in the first instance. Any other queries should be directed to the [Facilities helpdesk](#). Fire doors should not be wedged open and doors that are opened to increase ventilation should be closed when rooms are unoccupied.

During the winter months, windows will not be opened as widely and heating will be adjusted, to ensure a comfortable environment is provided for occupants.

## **6. Face Coverings**

From the 24 February 2022, all legal requirements regarding COVID were lifted. However, the University recognises the benefits of face coverings in reducing the risk of transmission from Covid-19 and other respiratory diseases. During times when rates of infection from respiratory diseases are high, and / or a risk assessment deems it necessary, we strongly encourage staff, students and visitors to wear a face covering in crowded indoor settings (e.g. inside our buildings and vehicles, and on public transport) in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained. Further details about wearing of face coverings can be found in the [Government guidance on when to wear a face covering](#).

As research has shown face coverings become less effective when damp, sufficient changes of face coverings should be carried.

Staff / students who cannot wear a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability, should discuss this with their line manager / personal tutor, as it may have implications for the type of activities in which they can engage in and how activities are carried out. Managers should seek advice from the [Safety Unit](#) where necessary.

Transparent face coverings ([as detailed](#)) may be considered as an alternative where individuals rely on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate. However, they may not offer as much protection in reducing the spread of COVID-19. The comfort and breathability of a face covering that contains plastic should also be considered, as plastic is less breathable than layers of cloth.

The University continues to make free washable and reusable face coverings available to staff and students. During times when rates of infection from respiratory diseases are high, disposable face coverings will be made available for visitors who do not have their own.

If making your own cloth face covering, it should:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face and cover your mouth and nose;
- Be secured with ties or ear loops;
- Include at least 2 layers of fabric (the World Health Organisation recommends three depending on the fabric used);
- Allow for breathing without restriction;
- Be able to be washed and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

Instructions for making your own face coverings can be found on the BBC News Website (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52609777>)

Instructions for how to make face coverings with clear panels can be found on the National Deaf Children's Society webpages <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/blog/diy-face-masks-with-clear-panels/>

When applying or removing the face covering, it is important that you wash your hands both before and after handling the covering and avoid touching your face. After each use, you must either, for multiple use coverings, wash the face covering (according to fabric washing instructions) or, for single use coverings, dispose of it directly into the bin. Used face coverings should be placed in a plastic bag until you have an opportunity to wash / dispose of them.

## **7. Vaccination**

The University strongly encourages all staff and students, who are able to do so, to get vaccinated against Covid-19 (including booster shots for those already vaccinated) and will continue to work with local councils and the NHS to support vaccination, e.g. through publicity to students and staff and through pop-up vaccination clinics on campus.

## **8. Infection control and outbreak management**

### **8.1. Reporting cases and self-isolation**

If displaying symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19 e.g. a high temperature and / or not feeling well enough to carry out your normal activities, you are expected to stay at home (and not attend campus), follow the [Government guidance for people with respiratory infections](#) and inform the University using our [reporting form](#). (There are separate notification forms for staff and students.)

You should also use this form to inform the University if you test positive for COVID-19 and do not have any symptoms or if you have chosen to stay at home because you are a household contact of someone who has COVID 19.

If you are not sure whether you should complete the form, please contact [safetyunit@gre.ac.uk](mailto:safetyunit@gre.ac.uk)

Staff who are informed directly about a Covid-19 case should direct the individual to our [reporting forms](#).

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, [government guidance](#) is that you should stay at home and avoid contact with others. You should stay at home until you no longer have a temperature (if you had one), or until you no longer feel unwell. If you have taken a COVID test and received a positive result, you should stay at home for at least 5 whole days from the day you took the test. If you still have a temperature or feel unwell after 5 days, you should continue to stay at home until you feel better.

Whilst isolating, you should not attend campus and you should tell your line manager / personal tutor if you are not able to work / study from home.

Where an individual completes a notification form to let us know they have symptoms of a respiratory infection, the Health and Safety team may contact the individual to offer support and establish whether any contact has occurred with other members of the University community. Advice will then be issued to those contacts as follows:

- Take extra care in practising social distancing, including from those you live with, wear a well-fitting face covering when engaging with others and wash / sanitise your hands frequently.
- Limit contact with people who are not part of your household, especially in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces.
- Avoid contact with people who you know are at high or increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus, such as people with weakened immune systems.
- If you develop symptoms, please take a lateral flow test, if you are able to, and stay at home until you feel better. Most people with COVID will only have mild symptoms, similar to a common cold e.g., headache, runny or blocked nose, sore throat, fatigue, general aches and pains.

## 8.2. Identifying Infectious Disease Cases

We may become aware of potential or confirmed cases, such as COVID19, meningitis, chicken pox, etc, through:

- A member of our University community informing us via our [reporting form](#);
- An individual contacting the Health and Safety Unit where they have been informed about an actual or potential case amongst the University community;
- The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Health Protection Team (HPT) contacting us.

## 8.3. Responding to cases

The actions which we will take where we are informed about any infectious diseases are set out in our [Student and Staff Notification Protocols](#).

Actions may involve the Safety Unit, HR, Student and Academic Services, Estates and Facilities and the individual's faculty/directorate, and include:

- Providing advice and support to the individual;
- Where required by government guidance, notifying the local UKHSA HPT and our local authority partners about cases (see section 8.5 for the information which we may be asked to provide about individual cases and outbreaks);
- Gathering the information required for more detailed reporting of cases;
- Identifying whether and when the individual was last on campus;
- Identifying and informing contacts;
- Initiating cleaning;

- Issuing communications.

Where we are informed that an individual has a confirmed diagnosis of an infectious disease, we will seek where possible to inform members of the University community who we believe may have had contact with the individual during the relevant infectious period, to enable them to take precautions. This will be done without disclosing the identity of the individual unless the individual is willing for their identity to be disclosed as appropriate.

Students in University accommodation who are symptomatic or test positive are expected and will be supported to self-isolate in their accommodation. Students living in the same flat as a positive or symptomatic student are automatically considered close contacts (see section 8.2 for the guidance relating to close contacts). In accordance with the Student Notification Protocol, the University will contact self-isolating students once a notification is received to provide guidance and wellbeing support. Students self-isolating in University accommodation will be contacted daily to check on their wellbeing.

#### 8.4. Liaising with Local and Government authorities

We may be contacted by UKHSA for information where a student, staff member or visitor, who has a confirmed diagnosis of an infectious disease, has reported having recent contact with someone at the University or where they believe an outbreak is occurring. We hold a range of information that can assist in managing the Public Health concern and will provide it when requested by our local authority partners or UKHSA. This might include:

- Students and staff members' contact details;
- Timetabling information;
- Information on classroom attendance, e.g. other students and staff who attended the same class;
- Work patterns and office layouts;
- Flatmates' names and contact details (if the individual is resident in our accommodation);
- Swipe card and access data.

Any queries relating to tracing of close contacts within the University should be directed to the Health and Safety Unit ([safetyunit@gre.ac.uk](mailto:safetyunit@gre.ac.uk)) who will contact other departments as necessary.

#### 8.5. Communications

This guidance (including changes to it), government advice and other measures to prevent and respond to infectious diseases will be communicated to staff and students through a range of channels, including emails, website articles, meetings and local Health and Safety Managers.

We will use template communications to provide guidance and information to:

- Individuals who inform us that they have developed symptoms or have tested positive;
- Individuals who have had contact with a person who has developed symptoms or tested positive;
- Students/staff in an individual's faculty, directorate, or hall of residence, where an outbreak is occurring.

In the event of an outbreak, communications will also be issued in liaison with UKHSA and our local authority partners.

#### 8.6. Identifying and reporting outbreaks

In line with current [government advice](#), the University will seek public health advice when there is:

- A higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences due to an infectious disease; or
- Evidence of severe illness (e.g. hospitalisation); or
- A cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff and students within the affected group.

The identification of any outbreak will be made working in conjunction with the UKHSA HPT and/or local authority director of public health (DPH), who will advise on risk assessments and any required action.

Where we become aware of a potential outbreak, we will notify UKHSA in accordance with their notification requirements. Notifications to UKHSA of potential outbreaks will be made by the Safety Unit ([safetyunit@gre.ac.uk](mailto:safetyunit@gre.ac.uk)). The Safety Unit will also notify our local authority partners at the same time.

The information that we may be asked to provide about individual cases or outbreaks may include details of cases and the environment in which we operate, including:

- Contact details of the people affected and their programmes (if applicable);
- The numbers of people affected;
- The symptoms experienced;
- When the individual or individuals became unwell, or a test was undertaken;
- When they were last present in the University;
- The nature of the roles/job undertaken by anyone affected;
- Known links between infected individuals;
- Number of people that the individual or individuals had close contact with, including details of those they live with if they are in University accommodation;
- Nature of the environment (e.g., layout and nature of the building);
- Details of control measures;
- Any contacts with other agencies (e.g., the local authority).

### 8.7. Managing outbreaks

The University has three campuses operating in two local authority areas (the Royal Borough of Greenwich for our Greenwich and Avery Hill campuses, and Medway Council for our Medway campus). The Medway campus is operated jointly with the University of Kent and Canterbury Christchurch University. The management of any future Covid-19 outbreaks involving our campuses will take place within the framework of the Royal Borough of [Greenwich's Outbreak Control Plan](#) and [Medway Council's Outbreak Control Plan](#). Outbreak management will involve close liaison with UKHSA, our local authority partners and (in the case of Medway) the other universities operating at the campus. We also have established lines of communication with major private student accommodation providers housing Greenwich students, including those operating McMillan Student Village at Greenwich and Pier Quays at Medway; and with Bird College, with respect to Bird College students residing in our student accommodation.

The University has nominated Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) to liaise with UKHSA over the management of a Covid-19 outbreak. The SPOC will liaise with other parts of the University which may need to be involved in an outbreak.

The University's SPOCs are:

- For cases and outbreaks involving the Greenwich and Avery Hill campuses: Peter Taylor, Chief Operating Officer (deputy: Peter Garrod, University Secretary).
- For cases and outbreaks involving the Medway campus: Stuart Ashenden, Faculty Operating Officer, Engineering and Science (deputy: Peter Garrod, University Secretary).

The UKHSA HPT will assess the risks and may establish an Outbreak Control Team (OCT) with the local authority to support the University in managing the outbreak if the outbreak is serious. Factors that the UKHSA HPT may take into account in determining whether to convene an OCT include:

- Whether there has been a death at the University or halls of residence;
- Whether there are large numbers of vulnerable residents/staff;
- There are a high number of cases;
- The outbreak has been ongoing despite enhanced control measures;
- There are identified challenges in ensuring adherence to control measures;
- There are concerns on the safe running of the University or halls of residence;
- There are other factors that require multi-agency coordination and decision making

If UKHSA establish an Outbreak Control Team, the University will be asked to nominate representatives to serve on it.

Following discussion with UKHSA and/or the relevant local authority DPH, the University may be asked to put in place measures to manage the outbreak (see section 8.9).

How an outbreak is managed within the University will be determined by the severity of the outbreak and the advice received from UKHSA and the relevant local authority DPH. Where:

- there is a likelihood of significant disruption to the University through the closure of buildings and/or restriction of activities; or
- the University faces multiple outbreaks simultaneously;

the [Emergency Response Plan](#) will be invoked and the outbreak(s) will be treated as an emergency under the Emergency Response Plan. The University Health and Safety Committee will be kept informed about the management of the outbreak.

Otherwise, an outbreak or potential outbreak will be managed in accordance with the [Student and Staff Notification Protocols](#) which involve actions by relevant areas (e.g. the Health and Safety Unit, Estates and Facilities, Student and Academic Services, HR, the faculty/directorate affected by the outbreak). The Health and Safety Unit and University Secretary will provide oversight and will seek guidance from others where necessary, e.g., where discussions with UKHSA and/or the local authority DPH lead to a recommendation that additional measures should be put in place (see section 8.9).

As an outbreak at Medway may spread beyond one university's population, the University may, where relevant and necessary, share details in confidence with the Single Points of Contact for our partners at Medway (the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University). The partner SPOCs are:

- University of Kent: Lucy Foley, Director of Student Services;
- Canterbury Christ Church University: Moira Helm, Director of Student Services.

#### 8.8. Outbreak management: scenarios and contingency planning

In the event of an outbreak at one or more of the University's campuses, or a wider outbreak in the local area which affects one or more of our campuses, the measures that we will put in place will reflect the severity of the outbreak and its spread, balanced against any control measures, and will also reflect the guidance that we receive from UKHSA and/or the relevant local authority DPH and any local restrictions that are applicable. The context of any outbreak will determine the University's response. Potential scenarios and responses include:



Scenario	Response
Increased prevalence of infection in Greenwich or Medway that requires interventions on the whole community, including students and staff.	Support actions by UKHSA and the local authority, e.g., by issuing communications to students and staff. In discussion with UKHSA and the local authority, consider putting in place additional measures or attendance limitations (see below) and modifying operations accordingly.
A large-scale outbreak that may result in substantial restrictions implemented at a local level that impact on the activities of the University.	Collaborative role, working closely with UKHSA, the local authorities and (if relevant) university partners at Medway to implement and support restrictions. In discussion with UKHSA and the local authority, consider putting in place additional measures or attendance limitations (see below) and modifying operations accordingly.
A localised outbreak in student accommodation	Lead role in containing the infection working in conjunction with UKHSA and the local authority. Support local contact tracing operations. In conjunction with UKHSA/the local authority, consider putting in place additional measures: e.g., issuing communications to students reinforcing infection control guidance, remaining in accommodation, wearing face coverings and other public health measures; support for individuals who are self-isolating; enhanced cleaning measures; support for individuals to access LFD tests.
A localised outbreak involving a particular student or staff member, faculty, or department	Lead role in containing the infection working in conjunction with UKHSA and the local authority. Support local contact tracing operations. Issue communications reinforcing infection control guidance. Support individuals who are self-isolating. Support for individuals to access LFD tests.

As indicated above, we will work closely with UKHSA and our local authority and university partners to manage any outbreak. How we respond to outbreaks and to increasing local restrictions will depend on the particular circumstances and the guidance that we receive. Our responses will be underpinned by the following principles which are derived from [UKHSA's guidance](#) on health protection in education and childcare settings:

- Any measures or restrictions which we put in place beyond those in our usual Infection Prevention and Control Guidance will be informed by discussions with UKHSA and/or the relevant local authority DPH;

- In line with [government guidance](#), the thresholds in section 8.6 for identifying outbreaks will be used to determine whether public health advice is sought about additional measures which may be required;
- We will prioritise the continuation of face-to-face teaching and on-campus activities. Limitations on students' attendance will only be imposed on a short-term basis as a last resort after other measures and following public health advice;
- Where measures are required that go beyond those required by our Infection Planning and Control Guidance, we will initially focus on measures which do not impact on attendance (e.g., enhanced cleaning and hygiene, increased communications to staff/students, moving activities outdoors where possible, reviewing ventilation, limiting residential field trips, mandatory wearing of face coverings following public health advice);
- Where it becomes necessary to limit attendance, we will do so following public health advice. This may happen where other measures have failed to break chains of transmission or where our campuses are in an area which is subject to local restrictions, e.g., in response to a new variant of COVID 19. We anticipate that limiting attendance would be done in a phased way, initially by reducing teaching on site and increasing social distancing; then by prioritising on site teaching for 'practical' courses where on campus teaching is most beneficial; and finally by prioritising on-site teaching for those courses where on campus teaching is essential.

The table below is indicative only; it reflects the principles above and indicates how measures might be implemented in a phased way in response to a major outbreak or where one or more of our campuses is in an area which is subject to increasing local restrictions imposed by the government. It is anticipated that measures will be implemented on a campus by campus basis depending on local circumstances. In all cases, the measures that we implement will be determined in discussion with UKHSA and the local authority and will reflect the local requirements and restrictions that are in place.

Please note that the table below reflects what may be put in place in response to a major local outbreak or local restrictions affecting the University. During any national lockdowns, the relevant national rules will determine what activities are able to operate.

## Outbreak planning: potential phased responses to a major local outbreak or increasing local restrictions

Activity	Level 0: normal operation	Level 1: additional measures	Level 2: some limitations on student attendance	Level 3: further limitations on student attendance	Level 4: last resort
Academic and teaching spaces	Academic and teaching spaces remain open with normal capacity and risk mitigations set out in the infection control guidance.	Academic and teaching spaces remain open with normal capacity, and additional risk mitigations following public health advice: e.g., increased communications to staff / students about infection control guidance and vaccination, enhanced cleaning, reviewing ventilation, mandatory wearing of face coverings, limitations on events and field trips.  Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.	Following public health advice, academic and teaching spaces remain open with some limitations on attendance: e.g., teaching in smaller groups; social distancing based on 1m+; additional blended learning. Additional risk mitigations as at Level 1.  Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.	Following public health advice, on campus teaching limited to practical courses where on campus teaching is most beneficial. Additional risk mitigations as at Level 2.  Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.	Following public health advice, on campus teaching limited to courses where on campus teaching is essential (e.g., health, education). Additional risk mitigations as at Level 3.  Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.
Research labs / workshops	Research labs and workshops remain open with risk mitigations in place as per Infection Control Guidance.	Research labs and workshops remain open with additional risk mitigations following public health advice: e.g., increased communications to staff / students about infection control guidance and vaccination, enhanced cleaning, reviewing ventilation, mandatory wearing of face coverings.	Research labs and workshops remain open with additional risk mitigations as at Level 1.  Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.  Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.	Research labs and workshops remain open with additional risk mitigations as at Level 2.  Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.  Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.	Following public health advice, research labs and workshops remain open for essential activities, prioritised according to: (1) activities which are externally funded especially those where no extension to the delivery period is possible; (2) essential laboratory work by PhD students; (3) internally funded laboratory work; (4) MSc or Undergraduate projects (5) unfunded or speculative laboratory work.

Activity	Level 0: normal operation	Level 1: additional measures	Level 2: some limitations on student attendance	Level 3: further limitations on student attendance	Level 4: last resort
		<p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>			<p>All access subject to specific permission.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place..</p>
<p>Student services (e.g., libraries and open IT spaces, Student Wellbeing Service)</p>	<p>Student facing services remain open with risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance in place.</p>	<p>Student facing services remain open with additional risk mitigations following public health advice: e.g., increased communications to staff / students about infection control guidance and vaccination, enhanced cleaning, reviewing ventilation, mandatory wearing of face coverings.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>	<p>Following public health advice, reduced staffing levels to reflect reduced student numbers on campus. Student facing services remain open with staff working on a rota basis, with additional risk mitigations as at Level 1.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>	<p>Following public health advice, libraries remain open with reduced services. Most student services move online. Some on-site services to cater for reduced numbers on campus, with additional risk mitigations as at Level 2.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>	<p>Following public health advice, libraries remain open with reduced services. Most student services move online. Some on-site provision to cater for reduced numbers on campus, with additional risk mitigations as at Level 3.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>

Activity	Level 0: normal operation	Level 1: additional measures	Level 2: some limitations on student attendance	Level 3: further limitations on student attendance	Level 4: last resort
'Back office' professional services (e.g., HR, Finance)	On campus working subject to risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance.	<p>Following public health advice, reduced back office services on campus with staff working on a rota basis. Additional risk mitigations for those working on site: e.g., increased communications to staff / students about infection control guidance and vaccination, enhanced cleaning, reviewing ventilation, mandatory wearing of face coverings.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>	<p>Following public health advice, back office services move online. On site working limited to key workers (e.g., some Estates and Facilities and contractor staff, staff who require ad hoc access for specific reasons) subject to risk assessments. Additional risk mitigations as at Level 1.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>	<p>Following public health advice, back office services move online. On site working limited to key workers (e.g., some Estates and Facilities and contractor staff, staff who require ad hoc access for specific reasons) subject to risk assessments. Additional risk mitigations as at Level 2.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>	<p>Following public health advice, back office services move online. On site working limited to key workers (e.g., some Estates and Facilities and contractor staff, staff who require ad hoc access for specific reasons) subject to risk assessments). Additional risk mitigations as at Level 3.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>
Student accommodation	Student accommodation remains open with risk mitigations in line with Infection Control Guidance and routine support for students.	<p>Following public health advice, student accommodation remains open with additional risk mitigations: e.g., increased communications to staff / students about infection control guidance and vaccination, enhanced cleaning, reviewing ventilation, mandatory wearing of face coverings in communal areas.</p>	<p>Following public health advice, student accommodation remains open with additional risk mitigations as at Level 1. Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance and</p>	<p>Following public health advice, student accommodation remains open with additional risk mitigations as at Level 2.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p>	<p>Following public health advice, student accommodation remains open with additional risk mitigations as at Level 3.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p>

Activity	Level 0: normal operation	Level 1: additional measures	Level 2: some limitations on student attendance	Level 3: further limitations on student attendance	Level 4: last resort
		Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance and support for students remain in place.	support for students remain in place.	Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance and support for students remain in place.	Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance and support for students remain in place.
Catering, bars and restaurants; campus shops	Catering, bars and restaurants and shops operate with risk mitigations in line with Infection Control Guidance and local risk assessments.	Staff / students encouraged to bring in food from home. Catering, bars and restaurants and shops operate with additional risk mitigations following public health advice: e.g., increased communications to staff / students about infection control guidance and vaccination, enhanced cleaning, reviewing ventilation, mandatory wearing of face coverings except when eating/drinking, social distancing, more outdoor seating.  Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place	Following public health advice, catering remains open on a 'click and collect' / takeaway basis. Eat-in catering closed. Bars closed.  To support students remaining in accommodation, Village Shop at Avery Hill remains open with additional infection control mitigations.	Following public health advice, catering remains open on a 'click and collect' / takeaway basis if permitted. Eat-in catering closed. Bars closed.  To support students remaining in accommodation, Village Shop at Avery Hill remains open with additional infection control mitigations.	Following public health advice, catering remains open on a 'click and collect' / takeaway basis if permitted. All eat-in catering closed. Bars closed.  To support students remaining in accommodation, Village Shop at Avery Hill remains open with additional infection control mitigations.
Gyms and sports facilities	Gyms and sports facilities operate with cleaning and ventilation in line with Government advice for operating gym / leisure facilities and the UK Active framework for the gym and fitness industry.	Gyms and sports facilities operate with enhanced cleaning and ventilation in line with Government advice for operating gym / leisure facilities and the UK Active framework for the gym and fitness industry.	Following public health advice, indoor gyms and indoor sports facilities closed. Outdoor sports facilities operate with social distancing and cleaning regimes in place to reflect Government advice for operating gym / leisure	Following public health advice, indoor gyms and indoor sports facilities closed. Outdoor sports facilities operate with social distancing and cleaning regimes in place to reflect Government advice for	Following public health advice, gyms and sports facilities closed.

Activity	Level 0: normal operation	Level 1: additional measures	Level 2: some limitations on student attendance	Level 3: further limitations on student attendance	Level 4: last resort
		<p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p>	<p>facilities and the UK Active framework for the gym and fitness industry.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place</p>	<p>operating gym / leisure facilities and the UK Active framework for the gym and fitness industry.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place</p>	
Communal welfare spaces (e.g., kitchens / tea points / toilets)	Communal welfare spaces remain open with risk mitigations in line with Infection Control Guidance.	<p>Communal welfare spaces remain open with additional risk mitigations following public health advice: e.g., increased communications to staff / students about infection control guidance and vaccination, enhanced cleaning, reviewing ventilation, mandatory wearing of face coverings.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health in response to specific outbreaks.</p>	<p>Reduced communal welfare spaces reflecting reduced on campus population. Those that remain open do with additional risk mitigations as at Level 1</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place</p>	<p>Reduced communal welfare spaces reflecting reduced on campus population. Those that remain open do so with additional risk mitigations as at Level 2.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place</p>	<p>Following public health advice, all communal welfare spaces closed other than those that are part of student accommodation and open facilities. Those that remain open do so with additional risk mitigations as at Level 3.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.</p>

Activity	Level 0: normal operation	Level 1: additional measures	Level 2: some limitations on student attendance	Level 3: further limitations on student attendance	Level 4: last resort
		Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place.			
Intercampus bus service (Greenwich to Avery Hill and Greenwich to Medway)	Intercampus bus service operates in line with Infection Control Guidance and Staff and Student Travel Plans.	<p>Intercampus bus service operates in line with additional risk mitigations following public health advice: e.g., increased communications to staff / students about infection control guidance and vaccination, enhanced cleaning, reviewing ventilation, mandatory wearing of face coverings.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place</p>	<p>Intercampus bus service operates in line with additional risk mitigations as at Level 1. Reduced timetable reflecting reduced numbers on campus.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place</p>	<p>Intercampus bus service operates in line with additional risk mitigations as at Level 2. Reduced timetable reflecting reduced numbers on campus.</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p> <p>Other risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance remain in place</p>	Following public health advice, intercampus bus service suspended.
Events	University organised events take place in line with Infection Control Guidance and local risk assessments.	Following public health advice, University organised events limited to those which support teaching, learning or research (including open days, interviews and graduation ceremonies).	<p>Following public health advice, University organised events limited to those which support teaching, learning or research for students/staff on campus.</p> <p>Risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance and local risk assessment remain in place</p>	<p>Following public health advice, University organised events limited to those which support teaching, learning or research for students/staff on campus.</p> <p>Risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance and local</p>	Following public health advice, University organised events suspended.



Activity	Level 0: normal operation	Level 1: additional measures	Level 2: some limitations on student attendance	Level 3: further limitations on student attendance	Level 4: last resort
		<p>Risk mitigations in Infection Control Guidance and local risk assessment remain in place</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p>	<p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health.</p>	<p>risk assessment remain in place</p> <p>Further risk mitigations may be considered following discussion with UKHSA and/or Local Directors of Public Health</p>	