

Return to Campus Working FAQs for Employees Updated January 2022

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Latest Updates

1) What has changed in response to the latest Government guidance?

This document was updated on 21 January 2022 to take account of the following changes:

Date	Source	Change
19/1/2022	Government announcement	You are no longer asked to work from home if you can. Talk to your employer to agree arrangements to return to your workplace.
13/1/2022	Government announcement	From 17/1/22 people with COVID-19 in England can end their self-isolation after 5 full days, as long as they have negative lateral flow test results on day 5 and day 6.
5/1/2022	Government announcement	From 11/1/22 individuals without symptoms will no longer need to confirm a positive lateral flow test with a PCR result. This is a temporary change.
2/2/2022	Secretary of State for Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Face to face teaching to continue, but risk mitigations to be enhanced. 2. FE and HE students, and staff are asked to self-test at home before they return to campus, either the night before, or on the morning of their return date. All staff and students are also strongly encouraged to test twice a week using an LFD test and to report all results to the NHS.

		3. From 4 th January, face coverings should be worn in classrooms and teaching spaces where students in year 7 and above are educated. This guidance is to be reviewed on 26 January.
23/12/2021	NHS	If you have tested positive for Covid 19, you may stop self-isolating after 7 days subject to certain conditions. There is no change to the requirement to self-isolate for close contacts of someone with a confirmed Covid case, where that contact is not double vaccinated.
8/12/2021	Government announcement	People asked to work from home where they can. (Please note announcement of 2/2/22 above)
30/11/2021	Government announcement	All contacts of suspected Omicron cases must self-isolate, regardless of their age or vaccination status.

Colleagues should also be aware that, due to quarantine and isolation requirements for students arriving from outside of the UK for the new semester, employees should only use the library café for food and drink from 17 to 21 January 2022 inclusive, as quarantine and isolation restrictions shall be in place in the main building dining hall during mealtimes.

Introductory guidance

1) What measures will be in place to help minimise the transmission of Covid-19?

The University regularly reviews its Workforce Risk Assessment in light of the latest government and Public Health England advice and guidance. The following measures remain in place:

- Colleagues asked to work from home where possible; arrangements should be discussed with line managers, as face to face teaching to be maintained on-campus.
- Face masks to be worn in classrooms, shared offices where people may come into contact with people they don't normally meet, and in transit through university buildings (individuals with a health condition may wish to consider wearing an exemption badge).
- Enhanced cleaning regimes in high touch areas, toilet facilities and classrooms
- Hand sanitiser at every entrance, in computer labs, library and offices
- Sanitising products available to allow users to self-clean all shared equipment in classrooms.
- One-way systems and unique entrances and exits to high traffic buildings (Library and Main Building during high use times)
- Visible measures including information signage, one-way systems, and floor markings.
- Reduced employee numbers on-site, with a rota system in place.

- Completed risk assessments for buildings and workforce
- [Lateral flow test](#) collection service run through the main reception to supplement NHS service. All employees working on-site, and students are requested to undertake lateral flow tests twice weekly.
- Students also to wear face masks in classrooms, all communal areas including offices and where social distancing is not possible to 2 metres. Takeaway options available in the cafes and dining hall to facilitate social distancing. No employee access to dining hall 17-21 January 2022 due to student quarantine arrangements.
- Courtyard area to be covered to provide an additional outside seating area
- Track and trace protocols for all individuals attending campus (including QR codes in every building reception for use with the NHS Track and Trace app).
- Ventilation units maintained to check working properly

Please note that whilst social distancing is no longer mandatory, it is encouraged where possible. Where it is not possible, colleagues should consider alternative risk mitigations such as ventilation and face masks. Colleagues who have stopped self-isolating on day 7 or later following a positive test and two negative lateral flow tests on day 6 and day 7, should be mindful of [Government guidance](#) regarding limiting transmission and work from home where possible.

Sodexo have also been awarded a Certificate of Assurance from [Bureau Veritas](#) for implementing appropriate measures, policies and procedures, in accordance with local and national guidelines and WHO guidance to reduce the risk of Covid transmission. These high standards help to minimise the risk posed by COVID-19 at the University.

- We are pleased to learn from surveys in August/September 2021 that 98% of students and 88% of staff are fully vaccinated. We also strongly encourage all students and staff on campus to take up the vaccine and to get a booster vaccine when offered and get [tested](#) twice a week, as vaccinations and regular testing are an essential part of keeping everyone safe on campus and the continued easing of COVID-19 restrictions. [Self-test kits](#) are available from the NHS directly, your local pharmacy or test site, and also from Reception on campus.

2) What should I do if I start displaying Covid-19 symptoms?

If you are on campus:

- If symptomatic, isolate in vacant room/area
- Contact HR (HR@richmond.ac.uk/0771 505 1523) to:
 - Agree arrangements to get home safely (HR can book taxi if needed)
 - Confirm details, e.g., close contacts
- Book a Covid-19 test on <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>
- Advise HR if you receive a positive test
- Provide copy of test result to HR
- HR will confirm latest advice on self-isolating and discuss any support needed

- Keep in touch with your line manager let us know how you are

If you are at home:

- Do not attend campus
- Book a Covid-19 test on <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>
- Advise HR if you receive a positive test
- Provide copy of test result to HR
- HR will confirm latest advice on self-isolating and discuss any support needed
- Keep in touch with your line manager/ HR to let us know how you are

The university will work with local council response units as required to record and report any positive Covid-19 test results for students and colleagues and can support with contact tracing for the NHS Test and Trace. Please see the section on 'Covid-19 symptoms and self-isolation' for further information.

Measures for on campus working – Spring 2022

1) What measures will be in place to help minimise the transmission of Covid-19?

See: Introductory guidance (page 2)

2) What are the arrangements in 37 Kensington High Street (KHS)?

KHS is available for PG students. Covid secure arrangements in place at KHS include:

- QR codes in the hallway to the 2nd floor.
- Hand-sanitisation units throughout the buildings and face masks will be made available for those who forget to bring their own.
- Visible measures including information signage and floor markings.
- Additional surface and toilet cleaning regimes.
- Ensuring ventilation units are working properly
- Face masks to be worn, and employee rosters as at Richmond campus
- Social distancing and natural ventilation are encouraged as far as reasonably possible.

3) I am based at the Leeds campus, does this all apply to me?

RIASA employees based in Leeds should generally follow the Leeds Beckett University Covid19 guidance: <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/covid-19/staff/>. However, if there any occasions where this might contradict Richmond's current guidance, please discuss this with your manager.

4) Do I have to be fully vaccinated to work on-campus?

We are greatly encouraged that 98% of students and 88% of employees reported being fully vaccinated in September 2021. The University strongly encourages all employees and students to be vaccinated and to get their booster vaccines, provided that they do not fall into one of the groups for whom this may not be clinically considered safe. This is to protect

yourself and others, some of whom may have health conditions or live with people who do. Feedback in our summer survey on return to campus indicated that many colleagues would feel safer working in an environment in which as many people as possible are vaccinated. If you are not fully vaccinated, you may still work on-site but we encourage you to ensure you are fully informed about your decision by accessing **NHS resources**.: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccines – NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus-vaccines)

5) **Should I wear a face covering on any of the campuses?**

Yes. The University requires all staff and students to wear face coverings when moving around the building, in shared offices where people may come into contact with people they don't normally meet, and in communal spaces. Students must also wear face coverings in classrooms. This is to reduce transmission risk and adheres to the [Government's Plan B rules](#) as well as [guidance from the Secretary of State for Education](#). [Government guidance](#) is that teaching staff are not ordinarily expected to wear face coverings when teaching in order to support educational delivery.

- **Face coverings must be worn in all internal communal areas and is advised whenever you may come into close contact with someone.** For example, when moving around campus or within buildings, and in spaces where social distancing is difficult. We expect everyone to do this, unless they are exempt, and you should not be offended if you are asked by other employees to wear a face covering in these areas. If you have a reason why you are not able to wear a mask, you should inform your line manager. You may also wish to consider wearing an exemption badge.
- Based on employee feedback, and in consultation with Student Government, students will also be required to wear face coverings in classrooms, in transit around university buildings and in common spaces and offices where social distancing is not possible. Faculty and staff should remind students of this. If a student does not comply this will be addressed through the Student Code of Conduct.
- Face coverings are not required in your working area and can be removed when you arrive at your desk or other workstation, provided there is adequate spacing. Colleagues working in reception or support areas where a high degree of interaction takes place may need to ensure screens are in place and/ or keep face coverings on.
- A face covering can be very simple but needs to cover your mouth and nose. Importantly, a face covering is a precautionary measure and not the same as personal protective equipment (PPE), which includes surgical masks and tight-fitting face masks. Government and Public Health England continue to advise PPE is not required in workplaces.

6) **What do I do if someone is not wearing a face covering?**

We hope that all colleagues will play their part in managing the risk of Covid transmission by following the University's required protocol on wearing face masks. In the event that you see that someone is not wearing a mask, please courteously remind the individual that masks are required (noting that they may be exempt and not wearing a badge), or discretely raising with their line manager/tutor/Student Affairs. The University may

consider disciplinary proceedings for repeated or deliberate breaches of this requirement without good reason.

7) Should I wear surgical/fitted masks and gloves on campus?

The advice from Public Health England continues to be that there is no need or requirement for people to wear a surgical or fitted face mask or gloves in the local community, including the University campuses. The University community is expected to concentrate on ensuring that other appropriate measures are in place, including adequate ventilation, cleaning and hand and respiratory hygiene as these are still the best way to protect yourself and others.

8) What is the correct hand washing procedure?

The Government launched a [hand washing campaign](#) and the University have disseminated 'how to' posters on best hand washing technique.

You can reduce your risk of acquiring and spreading respiratory infections by practising good hygiene:

- avoiding direct hand contact with your eyes, nose, and mouth
- wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; when you arrive at work or home; after coughing or sneezing; after going to the toilet; and prior to eating and drinking
- If you are unable to use soap and water, hand sanitiser could be used but you must ensure it is at least 60% alcohol to be effective and you must wash your hands as soon as you are able to.

Hand washing posters have been displayed at all sinks around the university buildings.

9) Will there be hand sanitisers available on campus?

Hand sanitisers are supplied in the entrance way and throughout all open buildings. However, washing hands with soap and water is still the most effective means of preventing a spread and if using hand sanitisers, ideally you should also follow this up by proper hand washing.

10) Will there be increased cleaning on campus?

Yes, we have worked with Sodexo to ensure that preventative cleaning measures are in place, these include:

- new preventative cleaning procedures including disinfection cleaning
- enhanced cleaning routines to include more frequent cleaning of toilets and high touch areas
- sanitising products available in classrooms
- revised waste management systems (change to centralised waste points in all areas)

Sodexo have been awarded a Certificate of Assurance from [Bureau Veritas](#) for implementing appropriate measures, policies and procedures, in accordance with local and national guidelines and WHO guidance to reduce the risk of Covid transmission. These high standards help to minimise the risk posed by COVID-19 at the University.

11) What do I need to do if the fire alarm sounds?

Please follow the fire exit signs (these take precedence over any Covid-19 signage) and leave the building by following the normal fire exit signs. Always have your face covering with you. Exit the building and wait at the assembly point for further instructions, maintaining social distancing wherever possible.

12) Are the hand driers safe to use?

Providing hands are washed correctly, as above, then either paper towels or hand driers can be used.

13) Will the buildings be properly ventilated?

We are committed to taking all reasonable steps to minimise the potential for airborne spread of Covid-19 and we will continue to abide by health and safety legislation and guidance to ensure we have safe ventilation systems in place. This includes ongoing maintenance of all building ventilation systems, and where weather and security permits, we would also encourage maximising natural ventilation.

14) What risk assessments have been conducted?

The University has undertaken building and workforce risk assessments.

15) Do the risk assessments recognise the pandemic's unequal impact on different groups of employees?

All employees were considered when completing the risk assessments and we have put in place measures to make the campuses Covid-19 secure. Any individuals who feel they are at particular risk from Covid-19 should speak with their line manager or HR to ensure their individual circumstances can be considered.

16) Will there be anti-bacterial wipes in each group office?

Wipes are mainly provided in classrooms, Registry, and other high touch point for students. Any other areas that have regular visitors, etc. should get in touch with Estates to discuss arranging plastic screens/ wipes.

Wipes available in common spaces around office (i.e., Taylor Library 3rd floor) and these can also be requested (via maintenance request) via Reception@richmond.ac.uk.

17) Do I need to clean shared equipment?

The University requests that colleagues clean all shared equipment, especially in classrooms before/after use, using the sanitising products that have been made available. This may include shared keyboards, lecterns etc.

18) Will the University be providing face masks etc. to staff?

Our preference is that people use their own re-usable masks as these are more environmentally friendly. However, a limited supply of face masks is available at the main reception.

19) Does enhanced cleaning include regular fogging with biocides?

No, as the benefits are not clear, and it has not been recommended by DfE.

Returning to Campus – Spring 22

1) Will I be working on-campus?

In line with the Governments' move to Plan B Covid restrictions, and guidance from the Secretary of State for Education, face to face teaching on-campus will continue, but colleagues should otherwise work from home where possible. Please discuss arrangements with your line manager.

Most individuals will also have designated work from home days each week. Please contact your line manager if you are unclear about your on-site days.

2) I have concerns about returning to work on campus.

It is understandable that colleagues may have concerns about working on-campus. Please be assured that the University is adhering to Government guidelines and that risk assessments have been undertaken. More details are in the '**Measures for on campus working**' section.

We are also pleased that Sodexo have been awarded a Certificate of Assurance from [Bureau Veritas](#) for implementing appropriate measures, policies and procedures, in accordance with local and national guidelines and WHO guidance to reduce the risk of Covid transmission.

If you are concerned, we encourage you to speak with your manager about the measures in place to help you understand what your working environment will be like. We will listen to concerns and may change and adapt our approach as we all learn how to make this operate more effectively.

3) I am still concerned about travelling on public transport.

It is understandable to have concerns about travelling via public transport and where this is the case, we encourage individuals to seek alternative ways of getting to campus. Where operationally possible, to help avoid peak times, you could also discuss amending start/finish times, work patterns, etc. with your manager so that this can be considered in team rotas. When travelling to campus please follow the [government's guidance on safer travel](#) for passengers. TfL has also issued the following [guidance on safer travel](#).

You may also be aware of the Imperial College London study that ran monthly tests for coronavirus on the TfL's transport network and found no airborne or surface traces of Covid-19. You can read their published report [here](#).

When travelling by public transport is unavoidable, we recommend you follow the latest government advice including the use of face coverings and avoiding peak times.

4) What can I do to stay safe on public transport?

Travellers on public transport are advised to:

- Travel at off-peak times.
- Take a less busy route and reduce the number of changes.
- Buy a ticket in advance where possible and use contactless payment.
- Maintain social distancing where possible and take suitable precautions, including wearing a face mask
- Wash their hands for at least 20 seconds after completing their journey.

There is further guidance on safe travel [here](#).

5) I am still really anxious about catching Covid-19.

Feeling overwhelmed or anxious by the ongoing Coronavirus outbreak is understandable. We would encourage all employees to take up the offer of a vaccine when offered and undertake regular tests. Whilst these actions will help reduce the risks of infections, we do also appreciate that you may have concerns about how this will impact you or your family and friends.

Ways to Manage Fears & Anxieties:

- **Keep connected.** Maintaining social networks, even online, can help maintain a sense of normality, and provide valuable outlets for sharing feelings and relieving stress.
- **Be mindful of assumptions about others.** Someone who has a cough, or a fever does not necessarily have coronavirus. Self-awareness is important in not stigmatizing others in our community.
- **Stay healthy.** Continue to practise good hygiene measures:
 - Avoid direct hand contact with your eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Wash hands with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser, especially after coughing or sneezing, after going to the toilet, and prior to eating and drinking.
 - When coughing or sneezing, cover your nose and mouth with disposable tissues and disposing of them in nearest waste bin after use, or cough or sneeze into your sleeve.
 - Avoid contact with others who are sick and stay home while sick.

There are a number of wellbeing links on the [employee coronavirus portal](#) which you can use, including details of Richmond's Employee Assistance Programme (provided by BUPA).

6) I have been shielding/have an underlying health condition – is it safe for me to return to campus?

The government has paused [shielding](#) requirements for clinically extremely vulnerable from Covid-19. NHS advice for people in this category can be found on the [NHS website](#).

The University has put in place a wide range of Covid-19 preventative measures that we believe provide a safe environment for all colleagues to return. If you or someone you live with has a serious health condition and/ or is Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, and you have

concerns about returning to the workplace, please do discuss these with your manager or HR so we can consider any adjustments that might be able to be made.

7) Who is the university working with as part of its Covid-19 planning?

As part of the 'London Coronavirus Response Cell (LCRC), the University is working with Kensington & Chelsea Council and Richmond Council, as well as Public Health England. The Councils have each established local Covid-19 working groups, comprising local HEIs and FEs, Council health professionals and PHE representatives. We are also working with Richmond's Director of Public Health on our Campus Outbreak Management Plan.

8) Will flu vaccinations be offered to faculty, students, and staff?

No, although we would encourage colleagues to take up flu-jobs if offered or recommended by their GP.

9) Can I take time off work for a Covid vaccination?

We encourage employees to take up the Covid vaccine when it is offered to them. Time off to attend a vaccination appointment during working hours will be supported and you should inform your line manager and discuss any arrangements to provide appropriate cover, where this is required.

10) Are there any changes in processes regarding general sickness reporting?

No, there is no change. If you are unable to work, notify your manager by 9am on the first day of absence.

- For absences of seven consecutive calendar days or less (including weekends) you must complete a self-certification form.
- For absences of eight consecutive calendar days or more, the University's procedure is that employees must obtain a Statement of Fitness for Work from your doctor and send it to the University by the eleventh consecutive calendar day of absence. The University is however aware of a temporary change to the [Government's guidance on fit notes](#) and is currently only be requesting these after 28 days of continued absence. The University will revert to its standard procedure when the Government guidance changes.

11) What if I need to deal with an emergency for a dependant, or someone I have caring responsibility for?

Dependants' leave is a right to take reasonable unpaid leave to deal with an emergency, for example, should a school close for a deep clean. If this needs to be for an extended period, other options to consider include annual leave, unpaid leave, flexible working, or a reduction in working hours on a temporary or permanent basis.

12) Have any organisational stress level risk assessments been undertaken?

We recognise that this is a challenging time for our employees and that it affects different people in different ways. We encourage our employees to use the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) through BUPA, contact details and several other resources relating to health and wellbeing are available on the University's [Staff and Faculty portal](#). We are also discussing this issue with UCU, and employees are also encouraged to speak to their managers with regards to their workload and wellbeing.

13) What is the parking availability on campus?

There are over 50 spots available on the Richmond campus, so there should not be a problem for those driving in. There are a number of bicycle racks on-site, all of which are monitored by CCTV.

On-Campus Teaching Related Questions– Spring 22

1) What are the measures to help make face-to-face teaching Covid-19 secure in our classrooms?

- Hand sanitiser at every entrance, in computer labs, library and offices
- Ventilation systems checked (also consider opening a window to allow air circulation).
- Enhanced cleaning of classrooms and high-touch surfaces
- Availability of sanitiser, wipes, and spray in the classrooms to allow individuals to clean tables and keyboard, etc.
- Students required to wear face coverings in class.
- Student Affairs actively encouraging students to be vaccinated

In line with government guidance and sector practice, classrooms are operating at normal capacities

If you have any queries or concerns about the above classroom arrangements, please contact reception@richmond.ac.uk.

2) Will PPE equipment be provided to faculty/staff/students? Will face masks and visors provided to faculty?

The government advice is that medical grade PPE is not required for workplaces and to reserve PPE for those who need it, e.g., NHS staff and carers.

For peace of mind and environmental reasons many individuals will prefer to use their own washable face coverings. However, we do retain a stock of face coverings where individuals prefer to use these.

There are face visors available primarily for classroom environment, however these have been regarded as less effective for controlling the virus and should generally be worn in addition to a face covering.

3) When do we find out which room we are teaching in?

Registry has finalised the classroom allocation and it is available for faculty to view through their self-service.

4) Who will be responsible to ask/remind student to wear face coverings in class?

This should be done as part of classroom management. Students will be made aware of the requirements to wear face coverings in the classroom and repeated offenders will be managed through the Student Code of Conduct.

5) Can I continue to teach if I am displaying Covid-19 symptoms?

You must not come into campus if you are displaying symptoms. If you are unable to attend campus to teach, please inform your manager who will arrange either for a replacement to teach your class or for the class to be postponed.

6) How often will the classrooms/labs be cleaned? Can we be provided with cleaning products so we can do some additional cleaning if we wish?

Enhanced cleaning is in place for classrooms including a thorough morning clean. Wipes and sanitiser are available in classrooms for faculty/staff/students to wipe keyboard, tables, etc. and colleagues are also asked to clean shared equipment at the start and end of each class. There are sanitation stations available throughout the University.

7) Will we be provided with our own keyboard/mouse for the on-campus teaching?

There is no need for faculty to have their own keyboard/mouse as classrooms will be cleaned regularly and sanitising wipes will be provided in classrooms. However, faculty may use their office keyboard/mouse if they wish.

8) What kind of activities can we organise in classrooms? Can we move around the classrooms? Can we use the white boards?

All standard classroom activities may resume but we recommend that you risk assess any non-standard activities.

9) Can I take students on field trips to museums?

There are no restrictions on educational trips and visits within the UK, but we recommend that the trip risk assessment includes assessment of Covid 19 risks. For international visits please follow the local Government guidelines in the UK and abroad.

10) Will students be allowed to leave the classroom to use the toilet or go to canteen and come back?

Yes, this should be managed as part of a regular classroom management.

11) Will students be allowed to eat and drink in the classroom?

We do not generally encourage the eating of snacks in classrooms, but academic colleagues may use their own judgement of the situation.

12) How is the Wi-Fi working in the classrooms?

IT continues to work on improving the Wi-Fi and each classroom will be tested. If specific IT equipment is needed, please discuss with your Head of Department.

13) Can we use Zoom to teach?

Currently no teaching is planned online as the expectation of both the Office for Students and Middle States Commission for Higher Education, is that we deliver face-to-face teaching. The US Department of Education had previously provided a temporary derogation allowing online teaching, and the University is submitting a request to continue provision of distance learning but, until this is approved, it will not be an option from January 2022. If you consider that you need to deliver the class from home, please contact your Head of Department/School requesting to do so. Please also note that Blackboard and Microsoft Office are the main platforms that the University supports and that Blackboard Collaborate is recommended to make recordings.

14) What about classroom equipment as some items cannot be wiped down easily? We will need to put equipment aside for a period of time. Also, what about the cleaning of laptop keyboards, remote controls, mouse as well as mask wearing in classrooms?

Specialist equipment is likely to have specific manufacturing cleaning instructions that should be followed, including how to clean considering Covid-19 precautions.

For general IT equipment (laptops, mouse, etc.) sanitiser and wipes will be provided in classrooms. Colleagues should clean shared equipment at the start and end of each session. Classrooms will be cleaned at the start of each day.

Covid-19 symptoms and self-isolation

1) What should I do if I am displaying Covid-19 symptom?

The [Covid-19 symptoms](#) include:

- High temperature
- New or continuous cough
- Loss or change to your sense of taste or smell

If you feel unwell and are experiencing other symptoms, you may wish to take a lateral flow test as a precautionary measure.

If you are at home and you experience any of the above symptoms you should not come onto campus and arrange a Covid-19 test <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

If you are on campus and you begin to experience any of these symptoms, then you should:

- Find a vacant room (ideally not a classroom) to isolate immediately that is away from anyone.
- Notify HR of your situation and await further instruction (0771 505 1523/HR@richmond.ac.uk)
- We will arrange for you to go home when it is safe for you to do so.

2) Asymptomatic testing

Employees are encouraged to take rapid lateral flow tests twice weekly to check for Covid-19. You can [order the rapid lateral flow tests](#) for free on the government website and they will be delivered to your home address.

The self-test kits are also available on campus from Reception. If your lateral flow test result is positive, you should start self-isolating immediately and report your result on the Government site.

3) How should I ensure I protect myself and others from possible infection?

The most effective way to prevent the spread of respiratory infections is by practising good hygiene, such as:

- avoiding direct hand contact with your eyes, nose, and mouth
- maintaining good hand hygiene; washing hands with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser, after coughing or sneezing, after going to the toilet, and prior to eating and drinking
- when coughing or sneezing cover your nose and mouth with disposable tissues and disposing of them in the nearest waste bin immediately after use.

4) What is 'close contact' when considering whether I should self-isolate?

A 'close contact' is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for Covid-19. You can be a contact anytime from 2 days before the person who tested positive developed their symptoms, and up to 10 days after. This is when the virus can be passed to others.

A contact can be anyone who:

- lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19
- has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19:
- face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within 1 metre
- been within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer without face-to-face contact

- been within 2 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over 1 day)
- travelled in the same vehicle or a plane

Where an interaction between 2 people has taken place through a Perspex (or equivalent) screen, this would not be considered sufficient contact, provided there has been no other contact such as any of those indicated above.

The wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE) as a mitigation when assessing whether a recent contact is likely to have risked transmitting the virus is likely to be considered insufficient by NHS Track & Trace.

5) Do I need to self-isolate if I am in the 'close contact' category?

Close contacts do not need to self-isolate unless they are displaying symptoms and/ or are requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace or a public health professional, but they should:

- Avoid contact with people at high risk of severe illness from coronavirus, such as people with pre-existing medical conditions or have previously shielded.
- Take extra care in practicing social distancing and good hygiene.
- Watch out for symptoms and self-isolate if they also show signs of coronavirus.

More information relating to the NHS Test and Trace system can be found via this [link](#).

6) When should I self-isolate?

The NHS guidance on their Test and Trace system stipulates that you must self-isolate if you:

- are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for the Omicron variant (even if you are fully vaccinated)
- have coronavirus symptoms and are waiting for a test result
- have tested positive for coronavirus, either by lateral flow or PCR test
- are a member of the same household as someone who has symptoms or has tested positive for coronavirus, and are not in an [exempt category](#).
- have been in close recent contact with someone who has tested positive *and* received a notification to self-isolate from NHS Test and Trace (unless NHS Test and Trace confirm with you directly that you are exempt)
- have recently returned from a country that requires a period of quarantining

From 16th August 2021, certain exemptions to self-isolation requirements apply, for example if you are fully vaccinated and have not been in contact with someone with the Omicron variant. However, this should be confirmed with NHS Track and Trace who will also provide advice on managing the spread of Covid and getting a PCR test.

You should always isolate if showing Coronavirus symptoms and arrange a PCR test by calling 119. You must also isolate if not symptomatic and have a positive lateral flow test.

Please inform HR@richmond.ac.uk and your line manager on the first day of isolation that you are self-isolating.

7) Can I continue to work if I am self-isolating?

If you are well and your role allows you to work from home whilst self-isolating, you should speak to your line manager about putting in place the necessary provisions for working from home. Where it is not possible to work from home you would normally need to take sickness absence leave. You should contact your line manager to discuss further (your line manager may then seek advice from HR where needed).

If you are self-isolating and cannot work because of coronavirus (COVID-19) you can get an 'isolation note' online from NHS 111. You do not need to go to you GP or a hospital.

8) I am planning to go to a country that requires (or may require) a period of quarantining on my return, what should I do?

There are no longer any restrictions on leaving England to travel internationally, however to protect public health in the UK and the vaccine rollout, you should not travel to countries or territories on the Government's red list. You should also check local requirements in your destination country, even if you have visited that place before, and be mindful of isolation/PCR test requirements on your return following any international travel. You can find more information [here](#).

If you book travel to a location that does require quarantining on return (whether that was at the time of booking or subsequent to travel) you will generally be required to take annual or unpaid leave on your return. Exceptions to this are only likely to be considered where the trip is work related and agreed in advance with your manager.

9) How do we arrange transport for someone to get home or a student to be tested for suspected Covid-19? Who does it?

The individual should contact HR (staff/faculty) or Student Affairs (student) who will take a record of close contacts and help arrange transportation.

10) What are the processes if someone tests positive? How will this be communicated to the wider community?

NHS Test & Trace are the primary route for identifying and contacting anyone who has been in contact with an individual who has tested positive for Covid-19. Individuals who were contacts do not need to self-isolate unless contacted by NHS, or if they display symptoms. Our records of team rotas will also assist in contact tracing and speaking with potential close contacts.

You are legally obliged to self-isolate as soon as you show symptoms of Covid-19 and must book a PCR test as soon as possible. If you get a positive test result, you must self-isolate for 10 days from the day your symptoms started. By self-isolating when told to do so by

NHS Test and Trace, you are protecting your family, friends, and local community, and helping to stop the spread of the virus.

If you are not symptomatic, and get a positive lateral flow test, you must report this via the NHS site and also self-isolate immediately

If an employee tests positive for Covid-19, they should contact HR and notify them of the first day the employee showed symptoms of Covid-19 and any close contacts that they had contact with.

11) Does the University have an outbreak plan?

Yes. As part of the 'London Coronavirus Response Cell (LCRC), the University is working with Kensington & Chelsea Council and Richmond Council, as well as Public Health England. The Councils have each established local Covid-19 working groups, comprising local HEIs and FEs, Council health professionals and PHE representatives. We are also working with Richmond's Director of Public Health on our Campus Outbreak Management Plan.

12) Will the University provide Covid-19 testing to employees and students?

Employees showing Covid-19 symptoms should arrange a free PCR test via the [NHS website](#).

Employees not showing symptoms are encouraged to get twice a week rapid lateral flow tests to check for Covid-19. You can [order the rapid lateral flow tests](#) for free on the government website and they will be delivered to your home address.

The self-test kits are also available from local pharmacies and on campus from reception.

13) Will the University's guidelines change if there are a certain number of cases on campus?

We are closely monitoring the situation and would be guided by NHS and Public Health England advice. As part of the 'London Coronavirus Response Cell (LCRC) we are working with local councils who have each established local Covid-19 working groups, comprising local HEIs and FEs, Council health professionals and PHE representatives.