

26 February 2021

Information Sheet

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and learners

We are working to keep the London Design and Engineering UTC as safe as possible for those learners and staff that are on site currently. You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and learners to remain in college safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our college open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but we would encourage everyone to take it.

Further to my letter in on 8 January, we began testing of all staff and learners who were on-site during the national lockdown and wanted to take part. As part of re-opening the College from 8th March 2021 we are expanding this facility so that all learners can access the rapid tests on-site (at UEL SportsDock) in accordance with the letter I sent on 26 February 2021. After this initial on-site testing, in accordance with government guidance, we will be phasing all learners onto at-home testing, but we will maintain a small testing facility on-site.

If you/your child is under 16 then a parent/carer must provide consent.

If you are a learner over the age of 16 you may provide consent yourself after discussion with your parents / carers.

If you are a member of staff/other adult, you may provide consent for yourself.

To give consent please complete this electronic consent form by [clicking here](#) or visiting our website COVID-19 page (ldeutc.co.uk/key-info/college-life/coronavirus-covid-19.aspx).

Those taking the test on-site will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 18s, staff can oversee the swab process.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and learners participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed if the test is positive.

We know these tests work - in validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, they were shown to be as accurate in identifying a case as a PCR test (99.68% specificity). The tests have lower sensitivity, but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently.

Testing will be offered free of charge.

What if someone tests positive?

Participating staff and learners who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Learners will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). LDE UTC will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home, or you can go to www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourselves, they should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a positive result you will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

They will be able to stay in college and resume their activities as normal. You will only be told if you test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative. A small number of staff and learners may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

What if a close contact at college tests positive?

At present the government has advised schools and colleges to "pause" on serial testing of close contacts. As such all close contacts of positive Covid cases will need to isolate for 10 days in accordance with government guidelines.

What if I / my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at college is for people with no symptoms. If you / your child develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Further information on rapid testing both on-site and at-home can be found on our website (click here). We will support our staff and learners throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions. You can call the office on 0203 019 7333 or email our Covid dedicated line on covid@ldeutc.co.uk.