



Richmond upon Thames College

Dear Student

Following the government announcement that schools and college should begin to re-open for teaching from 8th March, we are currently undertaking a great deal of work and preparation to ensure that the re-opening of the college campus is done carefully, safely and in the best interests of students and staff.

We intend to operate a phased return by gradually bringing students back for face-to-face teaching from 8th March, through to the Easter break, when we will fully review our initial plans.

Students will be invited to attend at an appointed time during the week commencing 8th March for the first of three lateral flow COVID tests that will be administered on site prior to students being able to carry out subsequent testing at home. Please note that, owing to the large numbers of students we have at the College and the need to stagger the testing process to take account of capacity, not all students will be invited in on 8th March. However, all will have been invited to attend for their first COVID test by Thursday 11th March. (Details of what you need to know before attending your test can be found at the end of this email).

Consent must be given before students take their first test (insert here).

- **For pupils and students younger than 16 years** - this form must be completed by the parent or legal guardian. Please complete one consent form for each child you wish to participate in testing.
- **Pupils and students over 16 who are able to provide informed consent** - can complete this form themselves, having discussed participation with their parent / guardian if under 18.
- **For any pupil or student who does not have the capacity to provide informed consent** – this form must be completed by the parent or legal guardian. Please complete one consent form for each child you wish to participate in testing.

Until you are notified of your return date, online learning will continue to allow for a phased and safe return to college. Please note that, during the week commencing 8th March, all teaching and learning will continue remotely and no teaching and learning activities will take place on site (other than for vulnerable students, as in lockdown). Because of the implications of the first round of COVID tests for student and staff timetables, there will be no LIVE remote lessons, but remote learning activities will be set and reviewed in line with planned learning content for the week. **On-site teaching and learning will then commence from 15th March – further details will be given.** Second and third COVID tests will be administered on-site during the college day – again, students will be given advance notice of the dates/times for their tests.

In line with the Government guidelines, 16-18-year old students with higher needs, vulnerable students and those who need to undertake additional on-site teaching and learning, especially to complete practical work and/or require further input to complete assessments and exams will be the first groups to return to face to face teaching and learning. This will include any adults or apprentices who fall in the above categories.

For most 16-18 year old students, the mixed approach of online and face-to-face learning in college, which was successfully implemented prior to the latest lockdown, will continue with a review at the Easter break. This will allow us to maintain safe practices, such as social distancing on college premises.

Work-based tutors with prior approval from both the college and employers will be allowed to visit employer premises to undertake essential assessment activity with apprentices. Staff visiting employer premises will be issued with a home Covid testing kit for administration prior to any visit.

The college has its own fully operational Covid Lateral Flow testing centre on site. Students will be tested on college premises in their first week of return and have two further tests in the following weeks, thereafter students will receive home testing kits to administer their own tests at home. A testing centre in the college will remain open to support any students who require assistance with the administration of the lateral flow tests.

Social distancing, hand washing and sanitisation are still in operation to prevent the spread of Covid and mask-wearing on campus will be mandatory in all areas, including classrooms, unless the student has been issued with a College exemption card.

The Government has announced that GCSE and A Level exams will be replaced by teacher-led grading. Evidence for grading will be undertaken through a variety of assessment methods including course work, in-class assessment and assignments. Those requiring a license to practice and other vocational qualifications will continue as planned with external assessments and exams. It is therefore essential that students continue to fully engage with all learning activity, both online and face-to-face, to maximise grades for progression.

What you need to know before attending your test

Before you arrive

Please:

- wear a face covering
- limit the amount of belongings you bring with you
- bring a smartphone if you have one*
- bring your student ID badge
- bring evidence of your consent email (either on a mobile device or paper version)

When you arrive

When you arrive, you will be directed to our Registration where your ID, consent forms and contact details will be checked. You will then scan your QR code to register yourself with the NHS.

**staff will have a device to register anyone without a phone or who needs support*

Testing

Our staff will be on hand to supervise the test. **Please note, staff are unable to administer tests.**

For information of how to do the test download:

This guidance will also be available at the testing facility.

Results

You will receive your results within half an hour of the test.

If you are negative: you can carry on with your day on campus. Students will be tested again between 3 and 5 days after the first test.

If you are positive: you will need to go home immediately and self-isolate, following the government guidelines. Next of kin will be informed if you are under 16, the isolation room will be used where appropriate. Please avoid public transport where possible.

If the test is void: you will need to re-book and take the test again as soon as possible

Further details relating to the re-opening plans and Covid testing for all students and apprentices will be continue to be communicated. This will include details for onsite catering facilities and details relating to student support.

We thank you in anticipation of your patience and support whilst we prepare to welcome everyone safely back to college. The safety and wellbeing of our college community remains our absolute priority.

Yours sincerely

Elaine McMahon
Interim Principal and CEO