TEMPORARY ACCESS TO ONLINE STUDY: PRINCIPLES AND PROCESS

Because Covid carries a potential impact on both individuals and our community, the College has taken a rigorous view on health and safety process; including testing, social distancing, improved ventilation and monitoring, wearing face coverings, and self-isolation. As much as possible we have followed government guidance as a solid basis for activity (or industry guidance in specific cases or classes and situations such as performing arts).

In Education terms this has meant a revised version of ‘Hands, face, space, ventilation, vaccination, test’ policy on campus. There are also, due to travel restrictions, a number of students who can only reach us through online contact. Their access to education is dealt with by the ‘Late Arrivals’ process.

There remain questions around accessing short-term online education when students are required to isolate or are ‘pinged’. This set of principles covers those instances.

The current Government guidance on self-isolate is outlined here and below and there are further links to symptoms, and on the nature of self-isolation here.

Please do use this material as guidance and circulate widely among colleagues. Because this is written for community use, and as we have sent our own messaging to students about their specific situations, this is not suitable material for students (or may confuse), although the principles apply.

Core principles

- Students are expected to attend on-campus teaching wherever possible unless they have completed a late arrival form.
- Students arriving in the UK from abroad and required to quarantine should use the late arrival process which will give them access to online education for a pre-established time period.
- Any student who is required to self-isolate – whether because they have symptoms and are testing, awaiting test results, or have been in contact with someone with the virus and are
not fully vaccinated – may access online activities on a temporary basis. Schools should provide an appropriate mixture of recording, live streaming, podcasts and so on.

- For causes of absence unrelated to the need to self-isolate, Schools should return to the pre-Covid advice: Ask the student to complete a notification of absence form (link) and support the student to catch up with the missed session (e.g., access to Learning Resources including lecture recordings where applicable; use of module/staff drop-in office hours.) Attendance and Engagement monitoring will identify students who are causes for concern.
- While online learning provides an opportunity for those self-isolating who feel well to continue to access their classes, students who are self-isolating but are too unwell to participate should not feel obliged to attend online. Instead, they should follow the process above to register a class absence for reasons of illness and for longer periods should apply for Extenuating Circumstances. If there are specific health difficulties that require discussion then please alert the School Office so this can be discussed by the School, the Wellbeing Department, and Student Administration. In such individual cases, we will look at short-term adjustments to support students in getting back to studying in-person, and not longer-term arrangements.

Process

- Because of the variation in teaching approaches between disciplines, it will be up to departments and tutors to establish how online access is to be achieved, but School Education Committees are expected to monitor this to achieve equity. Please bear in mind we are likely to be asked by OfS to provide details of how we have assured equity of access and quality of provision for online students.
- An exemplar process and form to deal with short duration online access that operates very successfully in LSS is attached, and schools are encouraged to follow this system.

There are a number of other issues for a small number of students around anxiety, commuting and other blocks to attendance, and students should be pointed towards the correct sources of advice via the quick links on the [student information hub](#) and via support from their School Helpdesks and to support the student in managing their concern. We’d ask everyone to be empathetic and sensitive in dealing with these concerns, especially for members of our student community who have been affected in a wide and unpredictable range of ways (e.g., unexpected loss of childcare, caring commitments, waiting for a test, etc.).

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