

Coronavirus (COVID-19): University of Glasgow Outbreak Management Plan (v2.1)

1. Setting

The University of Glasgow (UoG) is a Russell Group university with a population of c.30,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students and c.8000 staff. The main campus (Gilmorehill) is located in the West End of Glasgow with a second major campus 3 miles away at our Garscube site. There is a third campus for approximately 400 students in Dumfries.

University-managed student residences are located close to the Gilmorehill Campus also on the Garscube Campus site. The University manages approximately 3500 accommodation bed spaces in Glasgow, close to the main campus and on the Garscube site. The University also works with partner organisations who manage the University accommodation located across the West End of the city.

The University has a strong international reputation and typically welcomes a significant number of overseas students from over 100 countries including major cohorts from China and other East Asian countries. Travel restrictions may mean that these students will commence their course through online provision initially, we hope, transitioning to on campus learning at a later Covid recovery stage.

2. University Response

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the University campuses closed to all but essential activities on March 23rd, 2020. Some essential activities have remained in operation throughout the closure period, these being primarily animal husbandry and veterinary activities, maintenance of essential infrastructure and Covid-related lab research. As lockdown restrictions have eased, some building construction work has resumed. All face-to-face teaching ceased from 23rd March 2020 and, where possible migrated to online provision. Members of staff have been supported to work from home so far as possible from that date, have been furloughed or have continued to attend on site for essential work.

Close links have been established with our local Health Protection Team *via* our Director of Health, Safety and Wellbeing and these will remain active throughout the recovery phases.

From September 2020, the University plans to offer blended learning for 2020/21 i.e. online digital and in-person face to face (including lab-based and small group teaching); Key operational measures are now being implemented as part of a phased re-opening of buildings largely aligned with Scottish Government recovery phases.

The University main campus hosts a number of embedded and associated organisations including two student unions, SRC, Glasgow University Sports Association, Glasgow International College (run in collaboration with Kaplan International Pathways) and embedded companies. The University aims to work with these organisations to ensure a co-ordinated approach to identification and management of outbreaks and will expect all parties to share information, where legally possible, to facilitate identification and contact tracing during any outbreak. All associated on-campus

organisations will be required to follow University procedures in relation to case reporting, campus management procedures and outbreak controls.

The University manages a significant number of contractors whose employees visit our sites on a daily basis. We have liaised closely with these firms throughout the earlier stages of the pandemic ensuring that essential campus activities could continue safely. Practical measures are in place to manage contractor access to buildings while maintaining appropriate physical distancing. Written guidance on contractor activity during the recovery phases has been prepared. In the event of a further outbreak we would use our existing contractor management protocols to ensure adherence to campus management rules or requirements.

The following additional elements are in place and will assist in the management of any future outbreak:

- A Campus Management Plan has been prepared identifying essential services and essential buildings that will be maintained in operation in the event of a further complete, or partial, lockdown. This has been tested during the previous lockdown phase.
- Discussions are in progress with public authorities about the siting of a walk-in test centre in a location close to the main University campus to allow symptomatic testing of members of the University community and local residents.
- Spot check temperature testing equipment has been purchased and can be deployed in laboratory, small group teaching or more general settings, if required.
- Contact details are being actively gathered from all users of University run hospitality and catering outlets as is legally required, to allow contact tracing via the Trace and Protect system, should this be required.
- More detailed work is underway on developing operational plans for management of activities on the main campus or in residences in the event of a future outbreak. This work is expected to be complete by the end of August.
- Communications from the University will recognise and include local stakeholders such as residents, business and the City Council who may be affected by the University's activities. We will issue communications direct to these groups where appropriate.
- A senior management-led Comms meeting has been held on a daily basis since early March. This will remain in place to ensure a co-ordinated response to potentially rapidly changing circumstances through the recovery phases.

3. Aims of plan

- To help students and staff who are infected, and their contacts, to follow the appropriate and current Government guidance.
- To take steps to support staff and students beyond immediate outbreak control (health and wellbeing, equality, diversity and inclusion).
- To provide reassurance for applicants and offer holders that we are operating in line with the evolving public health situation and government advice.
- To provide reassurance to stakeholders across the city and wider community that a robust and managed process is in place to respond to any outbreak affecting the University.

4. Strategy Themes

The plan focusses on eight themes that form a framework for our response to various scenarios:

1. **Prevention:** put in place mitigation measures in accordance with Scottish Government guidelines.
2. **Identifying and managing a positive diagnosis of COVID-19:** work with PHS and Trace & Protect teams to support the identification of individuals and emerging outbreaks: taking steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among students and staff should community transmission be identified in accordance with Government guidelines.
3. **High risk contexts:** identifying and planning mitigation measures to manage high-risk University locations and staff and student communities (including international and BAME students) in culturally sensitive ways.
4. **Isolation in halls of residence and the community:**
 - i) providing practical support (food and medicines) to students to self-isolate in their living circles in halls of residence;
 - ii) providing information and advice on government and health protection guidance to students and staff living in the community.
5. **Testing:** facilitating national and local (PHS, NHS) testing policies for contacts.
6. **Contact tracing:** Use identified sources of existing UoG information (such as timetables) to help identify the contacts of person diagnosed with COVID-19. Contact details gathered in hospitality venues.
7. **Data collection:** Ensure that secure and GDPR compliant data management systems are used to keep records of who is a confirmed case and information relevant to contact tracing (held as special category data for legitimate specified purposes). Ensure these data are collected ethically and securely, with the appropriate governance, regulatory and security measures in place.
8. **Engagement and communication:** Using relevant conventional and social media communication routes to keep staff and students informed and familiar with relevant current Government guidance and University arrangements. Addressing the potential concerns of stakeholders across the local community.

5. Strategy Summary

1. Prevention	2. Identification & management	3. High risk contexts	4. Isolation	5. Testing	6. Contact tracing	7. Data collection	8. Comms
<p>Follow UoG COVID19 procedures. These are based on Scottish Government advice. Key documents include: Campus Management Plan, Managers' Guide, risk assessments and other related documents.</p>	<p>Confirmed positive cases usually identified by NHS Test & Protect scheme or by verbal/email notification to manager or supervisor. A formal mechanism to report and record confirmed cases is provided via UofG Helpdesk website Covid Reporting Tool.</p> <p>Staff HR database is used to record staff sickness absence related to Covid. This may include non-confirmed/symptomatic cases/self-isolating.</p> <p>Information detailing the action to take in the event of a suspected case is provided in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) FAQ section of University website and ii) Within a set of 3 Guides targeted at staff, students and managers. <p>Associated organisations such as SRC, GUSA, Glasgow International College, GUU, QMU and other embedded, on campus entities are expected to report any identified cases they become aware of with potential on campus contact.</p> <p>Contractor management protocols are in place.</p>	<p>Current Scottish Government and NHS advice on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable is being followed.</p> <p>The University does not work directly with clinical patients known to be Covid positive. Any such contact would be via NHS support activities and subject to NHS procedures.</p> <p>Covid research and testing is undertaken by University staff in labs across our campuses. These are subject to normal biological risk control measures mandated by legislation with compliance monitored by a specialist Biological Safety Adviser.</p>	<p>The University will be guided and instructed in this by the local NHS Health Protection Team.</p> <p>Staff and students who have had close contact with case(s) will be asked to self-isolate at home. In some cases, a larger number of other staff and students may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure.</p> <p>Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, the local HPT will take this into account in determining whether closure of the whole setting will be necessary.</p> <p>Isolation space is available within accommodation premises to allow separation of vulnerable individuals from a group, if required.</p>	<p>Information on how to access the NHSinform website and to request a test if symptomatic is provided within the Manager, Staff and Student guides. A web link is also provided.</p> <p>Temperature testing equipment is available.</p> <p>Arrangements are in progress for a public test centre to be sited close to the University.</p>	<p>If there is reason to suspect a COVID-19 outbreak, this should be reported to the Director of Health, Safety & Wellbeing immediately who will inform our local NHS Health Protection Team (HPT). The university may be then contacted by them, as they may get additional information from NHS Test & Protect or other sources.</p> <p>Contact tracing details are gathered within hospitality venues as legally required.</p>	<p>Data collection and retention will be managed in accordance with current data protection procedures. Privacy Notices are attached to relevant data collection forms.</p> <p>Data will be gathered via the Covid reporting Tool in relation to confirmed cases and from the CoreHR system in relation to sickness absence.</p>	<p>The University will continue to communicate with staff and students using techniques that have been show to work well throughout the pandemic. This includes extensive webpage information, use of social media and more targeted communications including podcasts, video and live online Q&A sessions.</p> <p>Communications will seek to include both the University community and the wider local community to help address any concerns over how they may be affected by the University's activities.</p>

6. Scenario planning

A number of possible scenarios may be anticipated and are considered below.

Scenario 1: Someone is unwell but unconfirmed with COVID-19.

Detailed advice on the actions required is provided within the University website within a series of 3 guides directed at managers, staff and students. These set out the actions required in various situations, including procedures regarding self-isolation. Similar advice is contained within the FAQ section of the University website.

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/news/coronavirus/uofgcommunity/guides/>

Scenario 2: An infected staff member or student is classified as high risk or lives with someone within a University residence who is classed as extremely vulnerable/vulnerable.

The current Scottish Government guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically vulnerable is used as a benchmark. If an infected student (or a contact), lives with someone who is at higher risk from coronavirus, it will be necessary to implement additional systems for safeguarding of the vulnerable individual. This may mean moving the infected individual or vulnerable individual to alternative accommodation to achieve isolation. Practical operational plans to manage the isolation process and to provide pastoral support are in place within Accommodation in relation this this.

Scenario 3: Two or more people are diagnosed with COVID-19 as linked cases on a UoG campus, student residence or in connection with a University event.

An **outbreak** will be identified and primarily managed under instruction from the NHS Health Protection Team (HPT) following positive test results. HPT may establish an Incident Management Team (IMT). The University will report any identified cases coming directly to the University's notice to the HPT via the Director of Health, Safety and Wellbeing who will liaise with HPT and the IMT in the first instance. HPT/IMT will undertake a risk assessment and provide direction and support to the University on the actions required. Isolation of staff and students and cleaning may need to be implemented. Contact tracing will be a key element and University data will be made available to support this. Local outbreak management operational plans may need to be put in motion, particularly if the incident is within a residence. Some temporary local closure of areas/ cancellation of activities may be required.

Scenario 4: There is substantial ongoing transmission in the wider Glasgow community beyond the University.

Mitigation strategies will extend across the Institute and within the wider community. It is highly likely that a local lockdown will be imposed and a need to cease most non-essential on-campus activity. This will essentially be a return to procedures followed during the initial lockdown and the operating practices of earlier recovery phases. This may entail closure of non-essential buildings, a return to home working for some staff, reducing/cessation of on campus face-to face teaching and non-essential research activity. This would in effect be a repeat of the shutdown exercises undertaken in March 2020. Student residences will need to remain operational for those students present if travel is not possible and will reintroduce previous operating arrangements in place during the spring lockdown phase.

7. Glossary - Covid-19 definitions

Confirmed with COVID-19: laboratory test positive with COVID-19 with or without symptoms

Possible COVID-19: one or more of the following symptoms:

- High temperature.
- New, continuous cough.
- A loss of, or change to, sense of smell or taste (anosmia).
- Infectious period 48 hours before onset of symptoms to 10 days after onset.
- If a person has no symptoms but a positive test, infection may have been acquired during the 48 hours prior to the test.

Direct close contacts:

Face to face contact with a person with COVID-19 for any length of time, within 1m, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, unprotected physical contact (skin to skin). This includes exposure within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer.

Proximity contacts: Extended close contact (within 2m for more than 15 minutes) with a person with COVID-19. 3. Travelled in a small vehicle with a person with COVID-19.

Outbreak

Current Scottish Government guidance advises that universities should suspect an **outbreak** if there is either:

1. two or more linked* cases (confirmed or suspected) of COVID-19 in a setting within 14 days - where cross transmission has been identified
- or
2. an increase in staff absence rates, in a setting, due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19

*Linked cases is not defined but should be assumed to be cases where individuals are known (by the individuals) to have been in close contact or who have been working or studying in the same space or have been in contact through social activities such as being in the same household, taking meals together, attending the gym together etc.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Guidance and Local Arrangements

8.1 Primary University Covid Guidance (These web links are current but are subject to changes)

[Main information landing page](#) (web link)

(<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/news/coronavirus/>)

[Campus Management Plan](#) (web link)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#) (web link)

8.2 University Guides on action in the event of suspected or confirmed cases of Covid-19

[Guidance for Managers](#) (web link)

[Guidance for Staff](#) (web link)

[Guidance for Students](#) (web link)

8.3 University advice provided to students in residences

If you have symptoms, however mild, you should remain in your accommodation and arrange to be tested at the first possible opportunity by visiting this website:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-access-to-testing-for-coronavirus>

You should not leave your accommodation for any reason other than to attend for a test and you should minimise contact with others in your 'household'. You should notify all other members of your 'household' as they will also be required to quarantine for 14 days, unless you subsequently get a negative test result.

The definition of 'household' will depend upon your accommodation but would normally include those students living in the same 'clusterflat', or those on the same floor who share cooking or washing facilities, or both. This will have been communicated to you at check-in, but if you are unsure you can contact your residence site team for clarification. The student induction for University of Glasgow residences will also cover protocols for residents around what constitutes a household for the purposes of isolation if required.

*You should notify **accom@gla.ac.uk** and the local site reception that you have symptoms and that your household is in isolation - and also let them know your test result.*

Appendix 2 - Scottish Government advice to Universities on outbreak management

(Source: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-universities-colleges-and-student-accommodation-providers/>)

Outbreak management

Institutions and providers should suspect an outbreak if there is either:

- two or more linked cases (confirmed or suspected) of COVID-19 in a setting within 14 days - where cross transmission has been identified; or
- an increase in staff and student absence rates, in a setting, due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.

If an organisation suspects a COVID-19 outbreak, they should immediately inform their local NHS board Health Protection Team (HPT). The college, university or provider may be then contacted by them, as they may get information from NHS Test & Protect or other sources.

In the event of an outbreak:

- continue to follow the general guidance above to reduce risk
- institutions and providers should not make unilateral decisions about managing situations where they suspect an outbreak is occurring but should seek urgent advice from their local Health Protection Team about issues relating to testing of suspected cases and contacts and taking steps such as closing parts of facilities
- the local Health Protection Team will undertake a risk assessment and conduct a rapid investigation. They will advise on the most appropriate action to take
- staff and students who are identified by the test and protect service as having had close contact with case(s) will be contacted and asked to self-isolate at home/ place of term time residence. depending on the risk assessment by the local Health protection team In some cases, a larger number of other staff and students may be asked to self-isolate as a precautionary measure. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, the local health protection team will take this into account in determining whether closure of parts of or a whole setting will be necessary
- depending on the risk assessment outcome, the Health Protection Team may establish a problem assessment group (PAG) (e.g. if there is a single confirmed case to determine what action is required) or an Incident Management Team (IMT) (e.g. if there is more than one case or an outbreak is suspected) to help manage the situation
- the Incident Management Team will lead the Public Health response and investigations, and work with the organisation to put appropriate interventions in place
- the organisation will then put these appropriate interventions in place.

To control an outbreak the Health Protection Team and Incident Management Team will work with the institution or provider to put appropriate interventions in place. Other measures may include:

- cleaning in the setting: for cleaning and waste management, refer to guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings
- consider who should be prioritised for testing among students and staff in line with advice from the Health Protection Team, ensure that staff (and other relevant people) are aware of what has happened and the actions being taken
- closure: may be done following advice from the Health Protection Team and Incident Management Team or the institution or provider may make their own decision on closure ahead of this advice as a precaution or for business continuity reasons.

The Health Protection Team or Incident Management Team will declare when the outbreak is over.