

Further information about Covid-19 testing at Blackpool Sixth

Important: If a student has symptoms they must not attend college - The testing programme at college is for students with no symptoms. If a student develops symptoms at any time (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>.

The testing process

We have already facilitated testing with staff and students using this process and we are ready to do so again. Students will have the opportunity to take two tests, 3-5 days apart, before any return to face-to-face lessons.

Upon arrival for testing the student will be guided through the following stages:

Registration - to complete online registration and check consent for testing has been given.

Testing - when taking the test, students will be supervised and guided through the process by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' device tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of both nostrils.

Recording - upon completion of the test the student will be given information regarding communication of results. Results (which take around 15 minutes from testing) will be shared directly with the individual participant via an email and/or text from NHS Test and Trace.

Students will be able to make their way home after testing and do not need to wait for the result.

Information about detection rates

The rapid "lateral flow" tests that will be used in college have detection rates of between 58% to 85%, compared to the more sensitive polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests carried out in NHS test centres and laboratories.

IMPORTANT

The test gives some "false negative" results, therefore a negative result does not mean that a student is "in the clear".

The test only gives a result for the moment in time - someone could catch the virus very soon after taking the test. Students must continue with rigorous protective measures, even if the test comes back negative:

- Maintain at least 2m social distancing (where possible)
- Wash/sanitise hands frequently
- Follow good respiratory hygiene - 'catch it, bin it, kill it'
- Wear a face covering when required to do so.

However, the detection rate of the lateral flow tests increases to about 95% for asymptomatic individuals with high viral loads - this means that in these people it is more likely to detect COVID-19 and identify those who are more likely to transmit the virus. This will help to reduce the risk of transmission in college.

What if my son/daughter/ward tests positive?

Following a positive test, the student will be informed immediately by a member of staff. If not already at home, the student will need to go home and immediately begin self-isolation. Members of the student's household will also need to self-isolate.

Please note

Students who test positive will be responsible for making their own way home. They will not be able to use public transport so they must make their way home by walking, cycling, using their own transport or by collection by a parent/carer.

What if my son/daughter/ward has been in close contact with someone who tests positive?

The student will be notified that they are a close contact by NHS Test and Trace. Close contacts who do not have symptoms, will be advised to have a PCR test as soon as possible.

Adults and young people aged under 18 years 6 months who usually attend an education or childcare setting, and who have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend the setting as normal.

What if my son/daughter/ward develops symptoms?

The testing programme at college is for people with no symptoms. If a student 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>.

They should also contact their Pastoral Mentor to let them know they are symptomatic. The student's Pastoral Mentor will support them throughout and will liaise with teachers to keep them informed.