**LJMU COVID19 Outbreak Management Plan**

**1 Purpose**

The following outlines the covid19 infection prevention and control strategy and outbreak response plan for the university. This is based on the work of the now completed CAMPUS Shield project. Assumptions and proposed plans have been shared with and endorsed by the Covid Operations Group and approved by the Executive Leadership Team.

**2 Introduction and Background**

The university takes its responsibilities towards its community (including students, staff, contractors and visitors) very seriously and has invested considerably in ensuring that the environment is as safe as possible for the re-commencement of university activity (including teaching and learning, research, enterprise and community-based provision) delivered within the standard academic calendar, in September 2021. All guidance within this document follows HM Government instruction and guidance.

In some cases, the measures in place on campus may exceed the Government guidance. This is in response to particular circumstances faced by our LJMU community and are designed to keep us all as safe as possible, reflecting the university’s commitment to creating a safe and welcoming environment for all. The university wants everyone within its community to feel respected and to be able to succeed in such an environment. Covid measures require all members of the LJMU community to respect each other and to display this in our behaviours. Further information is available on Respect, Always here ( [Respect, Always | Liverpool John Moores University (ljmu.ac.uk)](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/campaigns/respect-always)).

Throughout the pandemic, LJMU has worked closely with partners across the city and this will continue as the country returns to some position of normality. There are established relationships for testing facilities, for vaccine clinics and with Public Health colleagues across Merseyside and Cheshire.

Alongside more formal relationships, the university has encouraged its staff and students to take individual responsibility in engaging and taking part in efforts to reduce the spread of COVID19 and to protect the most vulnerable in our society. LJMU is committed to effective engagement with its recognised trade unions and to continuing to work in this way.

**3 Working with Public Health and Other Local Universities**

Our campus activity is integrated with that of the regional public health system. We cannot function as a closed community in the sense that some other university campuses can. In addition, we have a civic mission to support our local community. The risk of exposure to the virus will evolve as the epidemic evolves locally, regionally, nationally and internationally – our system-embedded approach enables an intelligence-led approach to this changing situation. The University will continue to be a member of the HEI Outbreak Management Network alongside all of the other HEI providers in Liverpool, local public health and other public sector organisations. This group will report to the Health Protection Board and will act as the key liaison group between all of the universities in the city and Public Health. The group recognises that student communities from across the city are interconnected and that joint approaches will be more effective than working in isolation. We will share information about known cases to assist with outbreak identification and management.

Close working relationships have been made with the local public health team and Department for Health and Social Care. Plans are in place to scale up testing capacity in the event of a major outbreak where numbers of symptomatic members of the University community exceeds the capacity of our in-house testing and/or the Covid support team (formerly the Track and Trace team).

Alongside twice weekly testing, the university will continue to encourage staff and students to be fully vaccinated. We will work with public health to identify opportunities for vaccination sessions.

**4 Assumptions**

The following assumptions are provided as the basis for which this preventive/testing strategy and outbreak management plan have been made. They have been developed through close working with the CAMPUS Shield Advisory Group: -

* Our focus is on prevention and control of Covid 19 infection amongst staff, students and visitors.
* Vaccination, regular testing, face coverings in communal areas of the university, good hygiene, ventilation and self-isolation are the main means used by LJMU for protection against spreading this virus.
* Activity for semester one will continue to be delivered through Active Blended Learning.
* All students are expected to show some respiratory symptoms (colds, influenza like illness) at least once in the academic year, based on previous experience (with no social distancing measures in place).
* The majority of undergraduate students, due to their age, are generally at low risk of COVID disease but can act as amplifiers of transmission.
* Outbreak investigation will include contact tracing (both backwards and forwards) supported by accessible testing and rapid reporting of test results to subject and the university Covid support team. This will be done by the university but only for those contacts within the university community. NHS Test and Trace and public health teams locally will deal with contact tracing outside of the University community e.g. contacts who are members of the public. The Covid support team will advise members of the university community who test positive or who are close contacts to follow current government advice.
* The University will continue to work in partnership with the Local authority asymptomatic testing facilities and will offer symptomatic testing in partnership with the University of Liverpool and LCL laboratories.
* Results of symptomatic tests taken at the joint University test centre will made known to individuals, the university Covid support team and fed to local and national health systems.

**5 Measures in place to mitigate risks from COVID**

Government guidance and mitigation measures will continually be reviewed by the university, alongside local information, with active links into Public Health.

Any LJMU Faculties with students on clinical programmes will have additional measures in place and these measures should take precedence over internal, university measures. This will apply to testing requirements, evidence of vaccine and/or testing and so on.

1. **Risk Assessments**

The University has in place an institutional Covid19 risk assessment and an extensive network of departmental and team based risk assessments to enable a physical return to campus and to ensure that Covid19 secure measures are in place. Furthermore, risk assessments are in place to ensure off campus activity such as student placements, and staff/student travel (including international) are Covid-19 secure. These local risk assessments reflect and embed the Institutional Covid Risk Assessment. The risk assessment guidance requires frequent review of the content of risk assessments to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and appropriate. Recognised trade unions are routinely consulted on the institutional risk assessment and the templates for other risk assessments and have full access to all Covid19 risk assessments undertaken in the university.

The university has worked hard to ensure that all Government guidance is incorporated into the risk assessment process and into the guidelines being observed on campus. Changes to procedure, based on risk assessments, will be advised through all staff/student emails and detailed on the Covid 19 microsite. Where amendments are required on a local level, e.g. for a particular course or cohort of students, the faculty will remain responsible for communicating such changes.

1. **Vaccination**

The University will encourage all staff and students to be vaccinated against Covid 19 unless advised not to do so by their medical practitioner. The university will work with the local Primary Care Network to provide vaccination clinics on site/close to campus to maximise uptake of the vaccination and will publicise other vaccination centres and pop ups across the city.

International students who may have received vaccines which are not recognised in the UK will be provided with advice and appropriate access to vaccinations.

We will promote that vaccination status is recorded in the Covid Pass within the NHS App and that this may be required for entry to large, crowded venues.

1. **Covid Pass**

The University expects all staff and students to download the NHS app with their Covid pass which shows vaccination status and test results. Covid passes will not be required for entry to lectures or the general workplace for students and staff on non-clinical programmes.

Students and staff attending large non-curricular events may also be required to show a Covid pass. Students and staff attending off-site curriculum related activity may be required to show their Covid pass and or test results before attending.

**6 Testing on campus**

The university has access to symptomatic testing in partnership with the University of Liverpool, and is working in partnership with Liverpool Local Authority to provide access to asymptomatic testing through community sites across the city.

1. **Symptomatic** - In cases where staff and students are symptomatic, they should self-isolate and book a test following the guidance on the web site - <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/microsites/moving-forward/information-for-students/testing> . Test results will be received via SMS text and email within 24/36 hours and will also be reported to the University’s Covid support team.

Where an individual (either staff or student) uses a test service outside of the university provision, they are required to report a positive test result using HR or student absence mechanisms. For further details please read ‘Procedure for COVID19 notification policy’ ([Dealing with COVID cases | Liverpool John Moores University (ljmu.ac.uk)](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/microsites/moving-forward/information-for-staff/covid-19-symptoms-and-testing/dealing-with-covid-cases)

1. **Asymptomatic** – in cases where staff and students have no symptoms but believe that they have been in close contact with a positive individual or as part of twice weekly routine twice, testing can be done at community sites or via a home testing Lateral Flow device. Home testing kits will be available for collection on campus as well as through community locations.
2. **PCR test for those double vaccinated** – anyone who has been double vaccinated and in contact with a positive case should access a PCR test. This can be done through the symptomatic test centre at the University of Liverpool or a community PCR testing location. Those who are double vaccinated are not required to self-isolate once they have a negative result from a PCR test.
3. **Testing for international arrivals** – students and staff arriving from overseas must check and comply with relevant quarantine and self-isolation regulations. For those arriving from amber list countries, and go into self-isolation, a pre-departure test must be undertaken, and Day 2 plus Day 8 testing must be booked before arrival ([Quarantine and testing if you've been in an amber list country - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-quarantine-when-you-arrive-in-england). Arrivals from red list countries must book Government approved quarantine accommodation and testing for the duration of their quarantine period ([Booking and staying in a quarantine hotel if you’ve been in a red list country - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/booking-and-staying-in-a-quarantine-hotel-when-you-arrive-in-england).

**7 Test booking process and data flow**

PCR tests, carried out at the shared test centre on the University of Liverpool campus, can be booked using Simply book which is an online booking system. Users will be asked to give consent for the test to take place and for their information to be shared.

Data from the test booking and results will flow into local public health systems through the Cheshire and Merseyside Combined Intelligence for Population Health Action System, CIPHA. This means that as well as individuals and the university receiving their results, data will flow to local integrated care records, to relevant GPs, national statistics on COVID-19 and NHS Test and Trace. A copy of the Service specification is available on request.

**8 Data Privacy**

A data privacy notice has been developed and is available on the test booking web pages

**9 Track and Trace / Contact tracing**

The University’s Covid Support team will work with internal corporate systems to identify the locations that an individual has visited in the period since symptoms developed. This will inform a number of processes within the institution, including (but not exhaustive):

* Estates team who have protocols in place for differing levels of appropriate cleaning regime.
* HR who will ensure that appropriate absence mechanisms are in place. Support and guidance will be made available for line managers and individuals affected.
* Students and staff will be advised of the current requirements around self-isolation and their responsibility to inform close contacts.
* Accommodation providers will be advised, as per Public Health guidance, to ensure appropriate measures can be taken.
* JMSU as a partner organisation will be informed and will provide relevant information to support the test and trace processes.

 Please note that the LJMU Covid Support team will enhance and compliment activity undertaken by the NHS Track and Trace team. The aim of the LJMU Covid support team is to keep the university as safe as possible, and to ensure that appropriate actions can be taken internally. The activity of the team may inform NHS Track and Trace and Public Health reporting and vice versa, on request.

The Covid Support team will be in a position to interrogate data within the following corporate systems and information sources:

* Student Information System (SiS)
* Timetabling system
* Attendance data (excludes Henry Cotton which will be manual)
* Libraries booking system
* Appointments with student facing services – Student Advancement, Student Advice and Wellbeing
* JMSU – advice services and other student led activities

Relevant corporate systems and information will be requested through the following means:

* SiS check will be via FacReg@ljmu.ac.uk ;
* Timetabling through bespoke webhub report;
* Attendance data through bespoke webhub report;
* Libraries through LST\_BAT@ljmu.ac.uk ;
* Student Advancement through R.Tannett@ljmu.ac.uk ;
* SAW through Y.Turnbull@ljmu.ac.uk OR n.e.jones1@ljmu.ac.uk
* Academic face to face through ‘see my tutor’

Where liaison is required with the local Public Health team, the Covid support team will inform the Test, Track and Trace lead, who will be the key point of contact (Director of Student Advice and Wellbeing).

1. **Positive test result**

The procedure to be followed in the case of a positive test result is as follows:

* Test results will be received into covidsupport@ljmu.ac.uk on a daily basis from Liverpool Clinical Laboratories.
* Individuals who test positive will be contacted via email (to both their LJMU and personal email address) and via SMS text to ensure they have informed close contacts of the test result.
* In this context close contacts are as defined within the DfE Handbook for Test and Trace as an individual who:

• spends significant time in the same household as someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

• is a sexual partner of someone who has tested positive

• has been within 2 metres of someone, for more than 15 minutes, who has tested positive

• has been within 1 metre of someone who has tested positive for more than one minute

• has had face-to-face contact (within one metre) of someone who has tested positive, including being coughed on

• has had skin-to-skin physical contact with someone who has tested positive

• has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive or sat near someone who has tested positive in a large vehicle or plane

* Close contacts who have NOT received two doses of the vaccine should self-isolate for 10 days and book a test if they develop symptoms.
* Close contacts who have received two vaccines, should book a PCR test and self-isolate if they receive a positive result.
* Those people who have been in contact but not defined as close contact should simply monitor their health.

Negative test results will be recorded but with no further activity. They will be stored for the entirety of the academic year to ensure continuous and appropriate Management Information is available.

The Covid Support team will then pull together a picture of university locations accessed in the 48 hours prior to symptoms developing – and post-symptomatic if self-isolation did not occur immediately.

# Process Flowchart: Student Develops Symptoms of COVID-19

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# Process Flowchart: Staff Member Develops Symptoms of COVID-19

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\*Close Contact is defined as:

* Having face to face contact with someone (less than 1 metre away) without any form of mitigation – e.g. such as a protective screen.
* Spending more than 15 minutes within 2 metres of someone.
* Having skin-to-skin physical contact (such as a handshake)
* Travelling in a car or other small vehicle with someone (even on a short journey).

## Document references

**Ref 1:** [Guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection)

**Ref 2:** [NHS Test and Trace instructions](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youre-contacted-after-testing-positive-for-coronavirus/)

**Ref 3:** [Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection who do not live with the person](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person)

**10 Outbreak Management**

A COVID-19 outbreak is defined as:-

Two or more test-confirmed cases of COVID-19 among individuals associated with a specific non-residential setting with illness onset dates within 10 days, and one of: -

identified direct exposure between at least 2 of the test-confirmed cases in that setting (for example under one metre face-to-face, or spending more than 15 minutes within 2 metres) during the infectious period of one of the cases

or

when there is no sustained local community transmission - absence of an alternative source of infection outside the setting for the initially identified cases.

On receipt of more than one positive and related test result, the Covid Support team will inform the Director of Student Advice and Wellbeing (or alternate) and follow the procedure as detailed in the ‘Procedure for Covid19 notification’ policy document available on the Policy centre. This will include completing the Minimum Data set (MDS) as defined by Public Health England (see appendix 1)

The Covid Support team will provide information relating to the positive cases to the Director. This will include locations/buildings visited, whether staff or student and accommodation provision.

Discussion of outbreaks and cases of concern will take place as required to ensure swift response.

* In instances of **single**, unconnected cases, the University may seek support and advice from Public Health Liverpool using CovidTestTrace@liverpool.gov.uk . There is no requirement to contact Public Health if advice and guidance is not needed in this instance.
* In instances of **more than one confirmed case** within 10 days and where there is a common location (teaching, research activity or accommodation) (classed as an outbreak) the University is required to inform Public Health England. Details can be relayed to the Local authority team in Liverpool using CovidTestTrace@liverpool.gov.uk

All HEIs in Liverpool are working together under the Campus Shield project banner, alongside local GPs and Public Health. This will enable effective communication to other HEIs and across the city where necessary. A Student Community Pledge has been developed to ensure that students understand their responsibilities in the current environment and to provide reassurance to local communities ([students-of-liverpool-community-pledge-21222-ljmu-final.pdf](https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/~/media/ljmu/content-creator-files-and-images/filesroot/documents/students-of-liverpool-community-pledge-21222-ljmu-final.pdf) ).

1. **Outbreak Management in partner halls**

Positive test results will be shared by and with accommodation partners, where the university has a formal, contractual agreement in place with the provider. The university will work closely with partner providers to ensure that outbreaks are managed according to Public Health guidelines and that students are advised appropriately.

Outbreaks will be reported to the weekly Outbreak management network meeting to ensure connectivity of communications across all HEIs using shared halls.

1. **Outbreak Management on campus**

Where an outbreak (as defined above) is detected, and as part of the Covid Support team process, swift action will be required.

**Cleaning** - spaces that have been used on campus, by those subsequently testing positive, will be identified and cleaned according to the required guidelines in place for the university Estates team. Where spaces require a deep clean, this may mean that rooms cannot be used for a period up to 72 hours. Estates will use fogging technology for effective and swift resolution. Rooms are accessible from 20 minutes after fogging is completed.

 Where a room is temporarily unavailable for this purpose, an alternative will be sought in the first instance. If this not possible, the following will take place:

* Teaching and learning activity will be temporarily delivered remotely and students will be advised accordingly.
* Delivery of professional services will revert to remote methods for the duration of the cleaning period.

**Suspension of face to face teaching activity**– where an outbreak occurs within a specific module/programme or research cohort, face to face teaching may need to be moved to online methods to ensure a break in transmission. Discussion of all outbreaks will be held on a daily basis within the Covid Support team and a request will be made to the Module/Programme leader or research supervisor/s on the basis of known and potential infection rates. Academic Registry will develop a reporting tool for this purpose. The request to suspend face to face activities will come from discussion between the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer (interim), the Director of Student Advice and Wellbeing, the relevant Pro-Vice Chancellor for the Faculty and the relevant School Director.

In the event that the teaching activity cannot delivered in person then one of the following approaches should be taken:

1. Asynchronous instruction using materials that can accessed from Canvas at a time that is suited to students;
2. Synchronous instruction (live teaching) delivered through Canvas via Zoom at the officially scheduled time (available in the timetable); and
3. A hybrid of synchronous and synchronous.

In selecting the most appropriate approach programme teams should consider the feasibility of students having access to the necessary technology at the officially scheduled time.

**JMSU –** will maintain their own records of student interactions including clubs and societies, advice work and other face to face meetings. JMSU will record and monitor internal activity and requests for information should be sent to JMSU-MT@ljmu.ac.uk

**11 Welfare Support**

The university recognises the importance of practical and emotional support for students who are quarantining and those who are required to self-isolate. The Covid Support team will supply generic support materials to students who test positive. The information for these groups is detailed at appendix 2.

In addition, the team will staff a telephone helpline (7 days) for anyone requiring support at this time. Information and referral will be available on support services, isolation food packages, and academic concerns. There are clear escalation routes in place where there are concerns for an individual’s wellbeing

**Appendix 1**

**Minimum Data Set required by Public Health in connection with outbreaks**

| Information Required | Details |
| --- | --- |
| Name of University |  |
| Name and Job Role of Notifier |  |
| Contact details for notifier/university |  |
| Number of suspected cases |  |
| Number of confirmed cases (i.e. with a positive test result) |  |
| How many cases are students? |  |
| How many cases are staff? |  |
| How many cases are other faculty staff? |  |
| Date of symptom onset or positive test in the first case |  |
| Date of symptom onset or positive test in the most recent case |  |
| Number of contacts identified |  |
| Do the cases share an address/hall of residence? If so please provide full details including full address and number of students/staff members in the same residence |  |
| Do the cases share a tutor group or class?If so please provide full details including last date if attendance and the number of students in the class/group |  |
| Do the cases share a friend/social group, a uni society group or a sports group? Is so please provide full details including last date of attendance and the numbers of students/staff who attended the same group |  |
| Where do the cases believe they acquired COVID-19? Please provide full details (e.g. house party, pub visit, etc) |  |
| Other relevant or significant details (including any hospitalisations) |  |
| Please provide details of any actions taken to date(e.g. cases contacted, cases confirm they are self-isolating and they are not leaving accommodation), contact tracing commenced/completed,  |  |

**Appendix 2 – Draft letters to Staff and Students**

Dear Student

The university has been informed of your positive COVID19 test result, and you are now required to self-isolate for 10 days. The 10 days begin the day after your symptoms started or the day after the test date if you have no symptoms, in accordance with NHS guidelines. This means that you cannot leave your house or accommodation for any purpose. You may find that you need some support during this time as your house/flatmates may also be self-isolating. The following information is intended to assist you. If you need help please ask any of the contacts below.

* Food shopping should be done online unless a friend or family member who is not self-isolating can shop for you.
* Medicines can be included in online shopping if you need any none prescription items, or alternatively some pharmacies will deliver if your prescription is emailed to them.
* You should not attend any face to face sessions. Please contact the relevant tutor and they will be able to send you any work that you may miss due to self-isolation.
* If you have paid employment, you should refrain from this for the period of self-isolation.
* If you live in a Hall, please let your reception team know that you are self-isolating. They may be able to offer help and support.
* The Students Union has developed a Buddy scheme to assist in cases such as this. Please contact jmsuvolunteering@ljmu.ac.uk for further help and information.

Public Health England are asking that individuals with COVID19 symptoms do not travel whilst unwell. Please stay in your usual term time accommodation and seek help or advice if needed.

In addition, you must also inform any close contacts of the following:

* Those who have NOT received two doses of the vaccine will need to self-isolate for 10 days and if they develop symptoms, to obtain a test.
* Those who have received two doses of the vaccine should access a PCR test as soon as possible and if positive, self-isolation for 10 days will be required.

A close contact is defined as:

• spends significant time in the same household as someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

• is a sexual partner of someone who has tested positive

• has been within 2 metres of someone, for more than 15 minutes, who has tested positive

• has been within 1 metre of someone who has tested positive for more than one minute

• has had face-to-face contact (within one metre) of someone who has tested positive, including being coughed on

• has had skin-to-skin physical contact with someone who has tested positive

• has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive or sat near someone who has tested positive in a large vehicle or plane

Useful contacts

covidsupport@ljmu.ac.uk – this team will be able to advise on general matters to do with test and trace systems. They will also be able to provide general advice and signposting to other areas of the university.

Studentwellbeing@ljmu.ac.uk – the Wellbeing team are here to help if you have any concerns about your course and the impact this might have on your wellbeing. Drop them an email with some details and the team will come back to you with relevant support and advice.

JMSUAdvice@ljmu.ac.uk – the advice team within the Student’s Union can help with a range of concerns and support

Kind regards

Yvonne Turnbull

Director of Student Advice and Wellbeing

Dear Colleague,

The result from your recent COVID-19 test has now been received and I can confirm that you have tested positive for COVID-19. Due to this test result you are required to self-isolate for 10 days. The 10 days begin the day after your symptoms started or the day after the test date if you have no symptoms, in accordance with NHS guidelines

The NHS advice regarding self-isolation is that you should not leave your home for any reason – if you need food or medicine you should order it online or ask friends or family to drop if off at your home. You should not have visitors to your home and try to avoid contact with anyone you live with as much as possible. This period of absence will be classified as sick leave, however, it will not be counted for sickness absence monitoring purposes and you will continue to receive full pay during this period.

If you are well enough to resume work during the self-isolation period then you should discuss this with your line manager and agree whether you can work from home.

Your line manager has been informed of the positive test result and will contact you to discuss if you have been in close contact with any colleagues or students. A close contact is defined as someone who:

* spends significant time in the same household as yourself
* has been within 2 metres of you, for more than 15 minutes
* has been within 1 metre of you for more than one minute
* has had skin-to-skin physical contact with you
* has travelled in a small vehicle with you or has sat near you in a large vehicle or plane

Any individuals who has been in close contact with you, including people you live with, must self-isolate for 10 days and if they develop symptoms should obtain a test. If double vaccinated, they should seek a PCR test as soon as possible and self-isolate if the result is positive. Once you have discussed this with your line manager, they will then contact any colleagues or students and advise them to take the necessary action. It will not be necessary for your line manager to inform these individuals who has tested positive.

You should also be contacted by the NHS Track and Trace Services who will ask for details of individuals you have been in close contact with and will follow up with contacts outside of the University.

Useful contacts:

covidsupport@ljmu.ac.uk – this team will be able to advise on general matters to do with test and trace systems. They will also be able to provide general advice and signposting to other areas of the university.

hradvice@ljmu.ac.uk – the HR team are here to support if you require any further advice or support please email and the team will come back to you with relevant support and advice.

Finally, we hope that you do feel better soon and we would like to thank you in advance for your co-operation with this requirement. If you do have any concerns regarding this please do not hesitate to contact your line manager or HR Business Partner

Kind Regards