



Coronavirus Contingency Policy March 2022

Date established:	March 2020
Updated:	March 2022
Reviewed:	Feb 2022
Purpose:	This policy aims to set out MITSkills’ position on the support of learners, staff, and employers during the period of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the United Kingdom and in line with Department of Health Guidelines.

MITSkills will ask all staff and subcontractors to review updates from the Department of Education and Public Health England. Due to the scope of this document, we would advise this should be reviewed regularly – at least weekly during the outbreak. MITSkills will follow this advice and require staff to do so.

The ESFA have indicated from the 21 Feb 2022, following government guidance effectively Covid -19 restrictions have come to an end for “most” educational settings.

There was an update on the ESFA guidance on living with Covid -19 published March 2nd, 2022.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-2-march-2022/esfa-update-further-education-2-march-2022>

This does not however, mean that there may be no local outbreaks – where such an outbreak occurs, we will be guided by the then guidance be it local authority or Department of Education.

MITSkills has tests available to support such an outbreak in line with ESFA guidance. We have been asked to cease issuing kits outside of an outbreak, but have taken the position that we will issue kits on where learners or staff have difficulties accessing lateral flow devices.

The ESFA has advised the Government will continue to support staff and learners continuing to test on a voluntary basis twice a week. The advice is they should order kits via the national ordering link or from their local Pharmacy.

Staff and students may choose to access test kits, if required, from their local pharmacy or by [ordering online](#).



Current policy is that Staff are required to report if they test positive, and to follow current advice on self-isolation from the Government, please contact HR to agree your status. The following is the current NHS guidance – staff should check for updates on the NHS online site as this guidance was valid on the 2nd of March 2022

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

How long to stay at home

If you have COVID-19, you should stay at home while you're infectious to others.

This can be for up to 10 days from when your symptoms start. Many people will no longer be infectious to others after 5 days.

You can do a rapid lateral flow test from 5 days after your symptoms started (or the day you had the test if you do not have symptoms) and another the next day.

If both tests are negative and you do not have a high temperature, you're less likely to pass COVID-19 to others and you can go back to your normal routine.

If your test result is positive on day 5, you can carry on doing rapid lateral flow tests every day until you get 2 negative test results in a row.

Where learners declare themselves as testing positive, they must follow current advice on self-isolation this must be recorded on registers.

Staff should flag this to their line manager on the day it occurs as we will need to monitor current local authority reporting requirement as they change.

The announcement on the 21 February detailed:

“From today, Monday 21 February, the Government is removing the guidance for staff and students in most education and childcare settings to undertake twice-weekly asymptomatic testing.

Given we now know that the risks of severe illness from COVID-19 in most children and most fully vaccinated adults are very low, and our successful vaccination programme has achieved a high rate of take-up, we can remove this advice, bringing education into line with wider society.”



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From Thursday 24 February, the Government will remove the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. Adults and children who test positive will continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 full days, and then continue to follow the guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days. In addition, the Government will:

- No longer ask fully vaccinated close contacts and those aged under 18 to test daily for 7 days and remove the legal requirement for close contacts who are not fully vaccinated to self-isolate.
- End self-isolation support payments, national funding for practical support and the medicine delivery service will no longer be available.
- End routine contact tracing. Contacts will no longer be required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests. Staff, children, and young people should attend their education settings as usual. This includes staff who have been in close contact within their household unless they are able to work from home.”

MITskills may reintroduce lateral flow - twice weekly or single spot testing for learners where and when required to do so or where there has been a reported case in their class group. We reserve the right to ask staff to test twice a week or single spot where there has been an outbreak or a reported case amongst their classes or other staff they have been working closely with as part of keeping our employees and learners safe. We ask for staff to support us in these measures.

We also recognise that some employers may also have to restrict access in line with current local authority or Government guidance where this occurs, we will work with the employers.

For Apprentices

1. Where possible we ask you to work with employers to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged.
2. What to do if an employer restricts access for delivery, assessment, or reviews?
 - Firstly, ask for confirmation in writing and send a copy to MITskills.
3. Access to a site is restricted by employer
 - If an employer requests that visits are discontinued, please send the specific evidence of that request to MITskills Admin. This will be required for the learner file.
4. Delivery and restricted sites
 - For delivery purposes, work with the employer and learner to see firstly if the learner can come to an agreed access site to work on delivery.

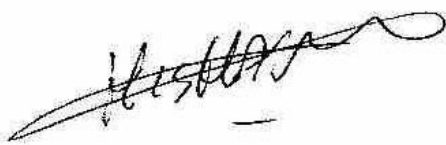


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- Where this is not possible, if remote delivery can be planned and agreed, the aim should be to ensure the off the job hours are met, and the learner supported to achieve and not be disadvantaged.
 - Where learning takes place online, via skype or other electronic medium, a restructuring of delivery will be required to ensure off the job hours are met.
 - Where delivery is agreed in this format, please inform MITSkills to enable us to keep the ESFA aware that changes have been made as requested by the employer.
5. Assessment
- Assessment will depend on the criteria and requirements of the assessment.
 - Where possible use the advice of your IQA on how assessment can be achieved, against the background of site restriction and the requirement of the qualifications, they may have to refer to the EQA and Awarding Organisation, whose advice should be followed.
6. Exams
- Work with the employer, learners and awarding organisations.
 - Firstly, arrange for the learner to come to the examination centre away from their site.
 - If this is not possible, can you agree on suitable examination conditions with the awarding organisation and the employer?
 - Any changes to exams will have to be planned in advance.
 - Please follow the policies and procedures of the awarding organisation. (Most require 10 to 15 days' notice of changes to format or invigilation).
 - Please ensure no exams requiring special arrangements are taken without the written agreement of the awarding organisation.
7. Reviews
- Where an employer has restricted access to their sites for reviews, we will accept remote reviews, providing evidence of the site restriction from the employer has been provided.
 - The review should then be summarised on paper or electronically and signed by the employer and learner.
 - MITSkills require a copy of the recording and the paper or electronic summary, this must be submitted via a secure format such as an electronic portfolio or secure email.

If an employer and learner both request a suspension for the period of an outbreak to reduce risk, documentation must be completed for a break in learning and submitted to MITSkills' Admin. The employer and learner must be informed that currently the ESFA only allow a maximum of six months suspension.

Date Reviewed	02/03/22
Reviewed	Annually
Version Status	Approved
Approved By:	



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	Company Director: Date 02/03/22
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