

ICON COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

COVID-19 POSIITON STATEMENT FOR RE-OPENING IN ENGLAND

INTRODUCTION:

The British government has determined to abrogate its legal responsibilities imposed on the country in terms of how people behave in the light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. From Monday 19 July 2021 there will be no legal compulsion for people in England to wear a face covering and to maintain social distancing measures. Many commentators have found this advice confusing because at the same time as lifting legal regulations the government is appealing for people to continue to wear masks and engage in social distancing. Indeed, the BMA (British Medical Association) has implored central government to continue with the legal measures that are in place at a time when the number of virus cases is massively on the increase and there is a rise in the number of people being admitted to hospital.

However, it is not simply the rise in the number of cases being admitted to hospital that is the only measure by which society should determine how it now goes about its daily business. With the virus now rapidly on the increase again, many more people, especially younger people, can be transmitting the virus to others without themselves knowing they have the virus. The wearing of a face mask in public and elsewhere has been shown to help reduce virus transmission as have the social distancing measures that have hitherto been required. There has been a drop off in the number of young people stepping forward to receive a vaccination. Until the majority of adults (young and old) have been immunised, it is crucial that people maintain a personal and responsible approach to Covid-19 to protect both themselves and others! A further complication is 'Long Covid'. This term covers the severe illnesses that can result from catching Covid-19. Examples of such on-going illnesses include diabetes, thyroid problems, extreme fatigue, liver and kidney problems and chest infections. There are incidents of people becoming ill with Covid19 and Long Covid even after having had two vaccinations.

POST 19 JULY AT ICON COLLEGE:

Just as central government is urging people to take personal responsibility for their own conduct during the continuing Covid-19 crisis, so ICON College, as an entity in itself, must determine what measures need to be in place to protect both staff, students, visitors and others who will be coming back into ICON College.

At the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, the College established a special group of staff and students to regularly monitor all matters relating to the virus and the College's operation. This Covid-19 Advisory and Action Group (C19AAG) has met (and continues to do so) every ten working days. C19AAG considers advice and regulations issued by central government and the local health authority officials of the Borough of Towers Hamlets where the College is located and where the virus continues to rapidly progress at a time when too few local inhabitants are coming forward for their virus vaccinations.

Having considered the information and data available to it, the College C19AAG has recommended that the College Board of Management implements the following protocols from 19 July until further notice:

1. **ON COLLEGE PREMISES:** Everyone must continue to sign in to indicate they have had a negative lateral flow test or PCR test prior to entering the premises. Each person must also sign out when leaving the premises and there should be no congregating in groups in classrooms or in corridors. All signage must be followed and systems and procedures currently in place will remain so for the time being, including social distancing measures. Sanitiser stations will be available around the College premises

2. **WEARING OF FACE MASKS:** All staff and students are advised to wear a face mask when travelling on public transport to College and going home again. The wearing of face masks, unless exempt for medical or some other satisfactory reason, will be required at all times when on College premises and during classroom sessions. The physical layout of the College premises makes it necessary for safety measures to remain in place, together with the provision of good ventilation. In summary, masks will be worn:
 - In all College teaching spaces
 - In all lecturers and administrative offices
 - In the library and social learning spaces
 - In any food outlet, including the canteen
 - In all communal toilets
 - In such areas where social-distancing practices are not available

3. **COVID-19 VACCINATIONS:**

All staff and students, unless there are clear medical or belief objections, are urged to have two vaccinations.

4. **PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS ATTENDING ADMISSION INTERVIEWS:**

Where a potential new student is asked to attend for a face-to-face interview at the College premises all the protocols listed above must be complied with by those being interviewed and staff conducting interviews/language tests.

NOTE THAT OTHER PROTOCOLS MAY BE INTRODUCED OVER TIME DEPENDING ON THE ADVICE THE COLLEGE RECEIVES FROM LOCAL AND EXTERNAL HEALTH AUTHORITY ADVISORS. SUCH CHANGES WILL BE POSTED HERE SO PLEASE CONTINUE TO REVIEW THIS PAGE ON THE WEBSITE AT FREQUENT INTERVALS.

Updated on **19 JULY 2021**