

Solihull Sixth Form College
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1st March 2021

RE: College Reopening and Testing

Dear <<Student Name>>,

I hope that you and your family are safe and well at this time. The government announced at the start of this week that schools and colleges across our country will be opening to all learners from 8th March 2021. We have continued to be updated with additional guidance around this wider opening and are now in a position to share with you our plans for welcoming you back to college.

We will continue to work to keep our college as safe as possible. You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms will be taking place across all schools and colleges in the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'. Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in college safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our college open as safely as possible. The testing is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone who will be attending our college to take it and we will be testing those who want to participate before their return to college from 8th March 2021. Testing will be offered free of charge and everyone who has consented should attend our site for a test on the day detailed below.

Testing day

Students are to arrive at the college site at your allotted time and day which will be shared very soon in a separate communication. You will enter the site wearing a face covering (unless you have an exemption and are wearing your white lanyard) and will be guided to the testing area which is located in the Sport Hall, where you will administer your test with direction from our qualified team. Once you have completed your test you will leave the college site and go home. Students will socially distance themselves from all staff and students during their time on site and we ask that you socially distance yourselves from others not in your home bubbles on the way to and from the college. Notification of the test result will be emailed to you.

Return to College day

From your return to College day, you will follow your timetable.

Face coverings

You will be expected to wear face coverings when in internal areas of the college which now includes classroom areas where you are not able to socially distance yourself from others. These are mandatory at our college unless you have an exemption and are wearing your white lanyard.

Calendar for return

	Testing Day (at allotted time/day)	Return to College – Day you return to following your Timetable in College
Friday 5 March 2021	BTEC Year 13	
Monday 8 March 2021	BTEC Year 12	BTEC Year 13
Tuesday 9 March 2021	A Level Year 13 Group (whose last Name letters – A to L)	BTEC Year 12
Wednesday 10 March 2021	A Level Year 13 Group (whose last Name letters – M to Z)	
Thursday 11 March 2021	A Level Year 12 Group (whose last Name letters – A to L)	A Level Year 13
Friday 12 March 2021	A Level Year 12 Group (whose last Name letters – M to Z)	
Monday 15 March 2021		A Level Year 12

An instructional leaflet with some more information around how the testing process works is available on Moodle

Consent

You must complete our online consent form so that you can be tested. It can be accessed here

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=q72lcr06CkiojHMrAn49yMPk2pcdgOxArLfEG4_3vHFUQ0VQTKw3MkM2NVdMUVI0VDU4RIdNWTvQti4u

Through returning this form electronically, we will be able to swiftly prepare for testing. If you require any support in completing this form please contact your Academic Coach.

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. As usual, you are not allowed to bring anyone else on site with you, and only students with valid parking permits are allowed to bring their vehicles on site.

What if the test completed in college is positive?

We will contact students to discuss arrangements around them and members of their home bubble needing to self-isolate for a 10-day period.



What happens if the test completed in college is negative?

If the test result is negative then students will be welcome to attend college from the return to College day for their year group. A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

What if a close contact at college tests positive?

We are carrying out a safety-first approach to testing to avoid this scenario, as if a close contact at college tests positive, they will also have to self-isolate for 10 days. Measures will be put in place to mitigate against students coming into close contact with other students and staff members while on the College premises and we ask that you ensure that this does not happen during your journey to and from college for testing.

What if I develop symptoms?


This testing programme at college is for people with no symptoms. **If you develop symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste) you must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.**

Remote learning

To allow us to fully prepare for the wider opening of our college, remote learning will continue for those students who are awaiting their return until Friday 12th March 2021, with all students attending the college from Monday 15th March 2021. To support us with testing and our preparations, there will be no live lessons on Wednesday 3rd March or during the week beginning the 8th March, but work will be set to ensure remote learning continues during these times and teachers will be available during this period.

We are really looking forward to welcoming you back to college and thank you for your support in ensuring that we can keep all of our community as safe as possible.

Yours faithfully,



Martin Sullivan
Principal

