

**Coronavirus (COVID-19): St George’s, University of London**

**Outbreak Management Strategy**

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| **Author:** | **Outbreak Task and Finish Group, a sub-group of the Return to Site Operational Group (revised March 2022 by the Covid Operational Group)** |
| **Owner:** | **Chief Operating Officer** |
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**About St George’s, University of London**

St George’s, University of London, is the UK’s specialist healthcare university, advancing health research and education that transforms people's lives in our community, throughout the UK and around the world.

St George’s is located in south-west London and shares its campus with a teaching hospital – St George’s University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. It is a unique research and teaching environment designed for professional and personal success.

Our community is made up of around 750 staff and 4,400 students. Of our students, over 65% are female; over 50% are Black, Asian or Minority Ethnicities; and over 67% are under the age of 25.

**Outbreak Management Strategy**

This plan sets out how SGUL would temporarily reintroduce measures to minimise disruption to face-to-face education and protect the most vulnerable in its community in the event of an on-site outbreak of COVID-19 (either on campus or in the institution’s halls of residence).

**Outbreak thresholds**

The government advises HEIs to work with their local Director of Public Health and local UKHSA Health Protection Team to identify any additional measures to put in place during an outbreak. Settings can also seek public health and operational advice by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1). The following [DfE Contingency Framework](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057141/Contingency_framework_education_and_childcare_settings_February_2022.pdf) guidance can be used by HEIs as an indication for when to seek public health advice if concerned:

* a higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences due to COVID-19 infection;
* evidence of severe disease due to COVID-19, for example if a student or staff member is admitted to hospital due to COVID-19;
* a cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff or students within the affected group.

**Actions to consider when thresholds are reached**

* Staff (Directors, academic leads) are advised to contact the University’s SPOC (details provided later in the document) if they have concerns over a noticeable rise in cases of illness amongst staff or students that could be due to Covid.
* Contact Richmond and Wandsworth Director of Public Health and UKHSA/LCRC (who may advise that distribution of LFD testing kits and mask wearing in teaching spaces should temporarily be reintroduced at the University).
* Review and reinforce hygiene and ventilation measures already in place.
* Introduce on-site attendance restrictions (students and staff) as a last resort if all other risk mitigations prove insufficient to prevent severe operational impacts or identified health risks of an outbreak.

**Response framework**

SGUL will utilise the following eight themes as a framework for its response to outbreaks on campus or in halls of residence:

1. Prevention: SGUL will continue to follow government guidelines for control and risk mitigation, including factoring Covid-19 into institutional risk assessments. The University will promote the need for individuals to take personal responsibility in accordance with the government’s ‘living with Covid’ guidance, including encouraging students and staff to get vaccinated as part of the national programme. The University’s long-term plan is to encourage students and staff with any cold/flu/Covid symptoms to stay at home and only return to campus when they are better in order to avoid spreading viral infections (reduced access to Covid testing will result in greater difficulty determining the exact nature of infections).
2. Identification and management: National contact tracing ended in February 2022 and therefore SGUL’s institutional contact tracing has also ceased. If the University identifies an outbreak by following the thresholds detailed above it will work with The London Coronavirus Response Cell (LCRC) and the London Borough of Richmond and Wandsworth Director of Public Health to support the management of emerging outbreaks (including any response to new variants). The University’s Outbreak Control Team (Head of Student Services, Academic Registrar, Single Point of Contact with UKHSA/LCRC for SGUL) will be reconvened in order to manage the outbreak and ensure additional support is in place for students if required.
3. High risk contexts: Identify and plan mitigation measures to manage high-risk University locations, staff and student communities (including BAME), including those who were previously classed as [clinically extremely vulnerable](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19). [Personal risk assessments](https://www.sgul.ac.uk/about/covid-19/resources/staff-personal-risk-assessment-COVID-form.docx) are available for anyone considered to be in a ‘high risk’ category.
4. Isolation in halls of residence and the community: Self-isolation is now only a recommendation rather than mandated. Students with urgent welfare needs to be directed to the Student Life Centre at [studentlifecentre@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:studentlifecentre@sgul.ac.uk)
5. Testing: Direct staff and students to the Universal Testing Offer until the end of 31.03.22. SGUL to provide LFD testing kits on campus if directed to by the Richmond and Wandsworth DPH in the event of an on-site outbreak (utilising existing LFD Collect stock of test kits held on-site). SGUL will work with the local authority should additional testing be introduced at any stage (e.g. surge testing).
6. Contact tracing in the event of an on-site outbreak: SGUL’s reinstated Outbreak Control Team (see point 2) to use identified sources of existing institutional information (such as timetables) to help UKHSA identify the contacts of those involved in a COVID-19 outbreak on campus or in halls of residence. See the data protection privacy notice in Appendix 3.
7. Data collection: Use secure data management systems to keep a record of those involved in an on-site outbreak and information relevant to contact tracing. See the data protection privacy notice in Appendix 3.
8. Engagement and communication: Keep staff and students informed with current university and Government guidance.

**Outbreak scenarios**

The following scenarios are considered below, mapped to the eight themes.

1. Multiple people diagnosed with COVID-19 within St George’s (large-scale outbreak that may impact on the activities of the University).
2. When there is substantial community transmission and/or increased prevalence of infection locally, involving an outbreak within the wider local community and that requires interventions in the whole community, including students and staff.
3. When an infected staff member or student is classified as high risk.
4. Outbreak in student accommodation.

**Scenario 1: Multiple people diagnosed with COVID-19 within St George’s**

An outbreak will be identified and managed by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) London Coronavirus Response Cell (LCRC [lcrc@phe.gov.uk](mailto:lcrc@phe.gov.uk), 03003030450) in close collaboration with the South London Health Protection Team, St George’s University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and St George’s, University of London. LCRC will undertake a risk assessment and provide appropriate support. For media enquiries, UKHSA will provide support via their communications teams.

An outbreak is deemed to last 28 days from the last positive diagnosis.

**Scenario 2: When there is substantial community transmission**

Local area mitigation strategies will extend across organisations (e.g., schools, business, community organisations) within the community (see [Wandsworth Council Local Outbreak Control Plan](https://wandsworth.gov.uk/media/6902/wandsworth_covid_19_local_outbreak_control_plan.pdf) ). Liaison will take place with the local Director of Public Health, UKHSA, South London Protection Team, the London Coronavirus Response Cell contact ([lcrc@phe.gov.uk](mailto:lcrc@phe.gov.uk), 03003030450), the local council and St George’s University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to determine the most appropriate course of action, as instructed through an incident management team where called, for example closing buildings.

In the event of a larger outbreak we will link in with LCRC and the Local Authority to arrange / attend an IMT and where advised arrange a Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) to be set up for mass testing to take place in situ.

**Scenario 3: When an infected staff member or student is classified as high risk**

Individuals previously identified as clinically extremely vulnerable are advised to continue to follow the same guidance as the general public on [how to stay safe](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do) and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Individuals with a weakened immune system should follow [DHSC and UKHSA advice](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk) for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk from COVID-19.

If an infected staff member or student (or a contact), lives with someone at higher risk from coronavirus, signpost to [Government advice](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/guidance-for-households-with-grandparents-parents-and-children-living-together-where-someone-is-at-increased-risk-or-has-symptoms-of-coronavirus-cov). If infected student is a Halls resident, consider moving higher risk flat mates to alternative accommodation.

Implement systems for safeguarding of staff and students beyond outbreak control (health & wellbeing; equality, diversity & inclusion principles) by carrying out an impact assessment on all plans e.g. blended education and remote support.

**Scenario 4: Outbreak in student accommodation**

Staff looking after halls of residence are trained on how to protect themselves and residents from the [spread of COVID-19](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/how-to-avoid-spreading-coronavirus-to-people-you-live-with/), and on how to respond if a resident becomes ill. Advice will be provided to unwell residents based on [current Government guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance). Welfare support will be available to students in halls if required (students to be directed to the Student Life Centre). At-risk residents to be offered alternative accommodation if needed.

**Key Contacts at SGUL**

For liaison with UKHSA/Richmond and Wandsworth Council/SLHPT in relation to Outbreak Management, Incident Management Team and Mobile Testing Units:

Single Point Of Contact (SPOC) - [spoc@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:spoc@sgul.ac.uk), Beth Okona-Mensah (0203 897 2055)

Deputy SPOC – Sue David (contact as above for SPOC)

**Glossary and definitions**

**Confirmedcase of Coronavirus**

Any student, staff member or resident with an **LFD positive** or **laboratory confirmed (PCR)** diagnosis of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

**Health Protection Team**

Health Protection Teams provide support to health professionals, including local disease surveillance, alert systems, investigating and managing health protection incidents, and national and local action plans for infectious diseases.

**COVID-19 diagnostic definition**

See government guidance on [case definitions.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-initial-investigation-of-possible-cases/investigation-and-initial-clinical-management-of-possible-cases-of-wuhan-novel-coronavirus-wn-cov-infection)

**Definition of contacts**

See government guidance for general contact:[What do we mean by a contact.](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/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person#what-do-we-mean-by-a-contact)

For definition of a contact in a clinical setting: [Contact in a clinical setting](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings)

**Appendix 1: URLs for National Guidance**

Government guidance

* [Working safely during coronavirus: office, factories and labs](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/offices-factories-and-labs).
* [How to stop the spread of coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-meeting-with-others-safely-social-distancing)
* [Higher Education Coronavirus (COVID-19) Operational Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses)

Other local and national guidance

* [Guidance from Universities UK](https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/principles-considerations-emerging-lockdown-uk-universities-june-2020.aspx)
* [Wandsworth Council Local Outbreak Control Plan](https://wandsworth.gov.uk/local-outbreak-plan/)

**Appendix 2: Key partners**

[St George’s University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust](https://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk/)

The Infection, Prevention and Control Committee are responsible for the COVID-19 outbreak plan.

Director of Infection and Prevention and Control (DiPC)

Telephone: 020 8725 1620

**David Shakespeare**

Head of Infection Control

[David.Shakespeare@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:David.Shakespeare@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

Telephone: 020 8725 0481

Kingston University

Health, Safety, Risk & BC Unit

Authors of the Kingston University coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) Outbreak Management Plan

[Wandsworth Council COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan custodians](https://wandsworth.gov.uk/local-outbreak-plan/)

**Shannon Katiyo**

Director of Public Health

[Shannon.Katiyo@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Shannon.Katiyo@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk)

Telephone: 020 8734 3014

**Ali Malvern**

Senior Emergency Planning Assistant

[Ali.Malvern@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Ali.Malvern@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk)

Telephone: 020 8871 5737

**Public Health Enquiries Richmond and Wandsworth**

Infection Prevention and Control Team

[PublicHealthEnquiries@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:PublicHealthEnquiries@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk)

**Wandsworth Council in/out of hours contact:**

Out of hours Telephone: 020 8871 7490

In hours Telephone: 020 8871 6000

Wandsworth Outbreak Control Plan: [Wandsworth Council Local Outbreak Control Plan](https://wandsworth.gov.uk/local-outbreak-plan/)

The Students’ Union

Tim Sice, Students’ Union Chief Operating Officer – [tsice@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:tsice@sgul.ac.uk)

Students’ Union President – [president@su.sgul.ac.uk](mailto:president@su.sgul.ac.uk)

British Medical Association (BMA)

The BMA is the trade union and professional body for doctors in the UK. Within St George’s the BMA represents clinical academics and is represented by:

**Patrick Boardman**, BMA Industrial Relations Officer for the South East & Eastern Centre supports the BMA at St George’s.

Further information is available on the BMA website - <https://www.bma.org.uk/>

Unite the Union

Unite represent workers across numerous industries. Within St George’s they represent the views of Professional, Technical and Support Staff and are represented by:

**Melanie Brunst**, Purchasing Administrator - [mbrunst@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:mbrunst@sgul.ac.uk)

**Lynn Plowright**, Laboratory Manager - [lplowrig@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:lplowrig@sgul.ac.uk)

In addition, **Andy Murray** is the Unite Regional Officer supporting St George’s.

Further information is available on the Unite website - <https://unitetheunion.org/>

University and College Union (UCU)

UCU represents academics, lecturers, trainers, instructors, researchers, managers, administrators, computer staff, librarians and postgraduates in universities, colleges, prisons, adult education and training organisations across the UK. Within St George’s UCU represent academics and academic related staff and are represented by:

**Iain Crinson**, Senior Lecturer in Sociology of Health and Health Policy - [icrinson@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:icrinson@sgul.ac.uk)

**Emma Catlow**, Disability Adviser - [ecatlow@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:ecatlow@sgul.ac.uk)

Further information is available on the UCU website - <https://www.ucu.org.uk/join>

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| **Contact details for UKHSA South London Health Protection Team:**  Floor 3C Skipton House, 80 London Road,  London,  SE1 6LH  Email [PublicHealthEnquiries@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:PublicHealthEnquiries@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk); [phe.slhpt@nhs.net](mailto:phe.slhpt@nhs.net)  Email [slhpt.oncall@phe.gov.uk](mailto:slhpt.oncall@phe.gov.uk)  Phone: 0344 326 2052  Fax: 0344 326 7255    **The London Coronavirus Response Cell** can be contacted on 0300 303 0450  e-mail [LCRC@phe.gov.uk](mailto:LCRC@phe.gov.uk)  **Wandsworth Council in/out of hours contact:**  In hours Telephone: 020 8871 6000  Out of hours Telephone: 020 8871 6000  **DfE helpline** – University advice for a single confirmed case of coronavirus:  0800 046 8687 option 2 |

**Appendix 3: Data Protection and Privacy Notice**

Overview

If you test positive for COVID-19 you will be contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service. You are also asked to contact the University so that we can assist in ensuring that people you have been in contact with at the University can be identified and informed. St George’s, University of London is obligated to assist the NHS Test and Trace service in order to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Anybody who is identified as having been in contact with you will not be informed of the name of the person who has tested positive but will be informed that they have been in close proximity to somebody who has tested positive. Clearly if you wish to inform people yourself you are free to do so.

Please keep your details up to date on MyWorkplace or e:Vision to assist us with test and trace.

Privacy Notice - COVID-19 Outbreak Plan

St George’s, University of London is the data controller of the personal data that you provide us with. The University is committed to ensuring that your information is processed in line with the requirements of UK Data Protection Legislation.

This privacy notice applies to staff, students and visitors. Privacy notices related to the collection of personal information for other purposes can be found [here](https://www.sgul.ac.uk/about/our-professional-services/information-services/information-governance/data-protection/privacy-notice).

* What information we collect from you and why

In order to support the UK Health Security Agency in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak and also the NHS Test and Trace service we may process personal information about you. The lawful basis for processing your information under data protection legislation is that it is required for reasons of a legitimate interest in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the welfare and wellbeing of staff, students, visitors and the wider community.

The information we may be required to collect and share includes:

* + Name
  + Contact details, including address, postcode, telephone number and email address
  + Details of your attendance at St George’s, University of London including dates and times of arrival/departure
  + Dates of COVID-19 tests and results (if known)
  + Whether you are self-isolating
* How we obtain your information

Personal information will be obtained via staff/students/visitors directly, our staff and student records, swipe cards, timetabling, attendance and accommodation systems.

* Where we store your information

All personal information collected for test and trace purposes will be held securely by Student Services or Human Resources in electronic and paper files. In paper, personal information is stored securely in locked cabinets on campus.

* How we share information

Personal information will be collected and processed primarily by staff within St George’s, University of London and limited only to those with a legitimate need to see the date for the purposes of supporting test and trace systems.

In addition, your information may be shared with the UK Health Security Agency and the NHS Test and Trace service. This will only occur where it is necessary, either because you have tested positive, have contacted us to inform us that you have COVID-19 systems or you have been in contact with somebody who is believed to have COVID-19. Any information shared would be done so securely via encrypted email or using St George’s, University of London's secure file transfer service, [iDrop](https://idrop.sgul.ac.uk/). For further information on how NHS Test and Trace will use your personal information please see their [privacy notice](https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk/help/privacy-notice).

* How long we keep your information for

In line with Government guidance your personal information collected for test and trace purposes will be held for 21 days, after which it will be securely disposed of/deleted. Personal data held for other business purposes will be kept in line with University retention schedules.

* What your rights are

You are strongly encouraged to cooperate with the NHS Test and Trace system. You have a right to request access to your personal data, to object to the processing of your personal data, to rectify errors or omissions, erase out of date or irrelevant information, restrict and port (ie transfer) your personal data. To request a copy of the personal data we hold for you please contact the Data Protection Officer via dataprotection@sgul.ac.uk.

* How to contact us

The University‘s Data Protection Officer can be contacted at:

Email: [dataprotection@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@sgul.ac.uk)

Tel: 020 8725 0668

Address: Data Protection Officer, Information Services, St George’s, University of London, Cranmer Terrace, LONDON SW17 0RE.

* How to make a complaint

If you are unhappy with the way in which your personal data is being processed you may, in the first instance, lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Officer.

If you continue to have concerns thereafter you have the right to contact the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted as below:

Helpline: 0303 123 1113

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/raising-concerns/>