

To: All students/staff

From: Nelson College London

Subject: Participation in new national Covid-19 testing programme

Dear Students/staff,

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, your health and wellbeing has always been our top priority. We've worked hard to make sure all the necessary measures are in place for you to be able to enjoy everything our campus has to offer in the safest way possible.

Today, we would like to let you know about a new national testing programme, taking place at [university] over the coming weeks, which we believe will directly support the fight against Covid-19 for our staff, students and society as a whole.

Supporting the Government's Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) the university will host an NHS Test and Trace facility on campus, giving staff and students an opportunity to participate in regular Lateral Flow antigen tests.

What are Lateral Flow antigen tests?

Lateral Flow antigen tests are a new kind of technology that could be used to test a higher proportion of asymptomatic people (those who are infectious, but not aware of this). This would better enable the Government/NHS Test and Trace to identify asymptomatic cases who are at high likelihood of spreading the virus and break the chain of transmission. The technology has already been validated – clinical testing phases are all complete and the Government has been rolling out different field tests and testing activity to identify how to best use this new technology at scale.

Lateral Flow antigen tests detect the presence or absence of coronavirus by applying a swab or saliva sample to the device's absorbent pad. The sample runs along the surface of the pad, showing a visual positive or negative result dependant on the presence of the virus. The tests have been validated by Public Health England. They are safe and offer reliable results.

How is this different from the more commonly used Covid-19 test?

The test currently more commonly used in the NHS is the PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test. All positive LFTs will require a confirmatory PCR test in accordance with current public health guidance. These are readily available to all individuals showing symptoms of Covid-19.

Why and how is Nelson College London involved?

As a responsible Higher Education Provider, we are keen to do everything we can to support the local, national and international effort to reduce the spread of Covid-19. We are proud of the positive contribution we make to society, including during the pandemic, and are pleased to be participating in this project.

How is the test taken?

Staff and students will receive guidance in how to take the test, supported by trained on-site staff. The test involves applying a swab to the [throat and nose](#). The sample is processed on-site, and the results are available in 20 to 30 minutes.

How can students/staff take part?

Members of the College's administration team will be going to each classroom to get you registered and book a test on the NHS Test & Trace site. Our testing site is located on the second floor in Ilford Campus and on the First floor in Gants Hill Campus.

Is this compulsory?

Participation is entirely voluntary, on an "opt in" basis, and individuals may withdraw from the testing activity at any point.

What happens if students/staff return a positive LFT result?

They will be required to self-isolate, [undertake a PCR test](#) and follow [Government](#) and Nelson College London guidance.

Any student tested positive will be able to carry out their learning online using MS Teams. Our academic support team and the student welfare team will be on hand to provide any additional support you may require.

Any staff tested positive will be supported by the HR team throughout the self-isolation period.

What happens if students/staff return a negative LFT result?

Students and staff will continue as normal unless a member of their household tests positive. In this case, their whole household would be required to self-isolate and follow [Government](#) and Nelson College London guidance.

How has the testing activity been reviewed and agreed?

The LFT testing activity has been reviewed and supported by the [Board of Directors of Nelson College London Ltd](#).

What happens next?

Subject to a successful outcome, the testing may be rolled out more broadly across the College and asymptomatic students and staff may be invited to take part in repeated testing on a regular basis. Any rollout would be subject to further consultation and agreement by Board of Directors of Nelson College London Ltd.

Best wishes,

Athiquil Islam
Director
Nelson College London Ltd