Company name: NCG

Date assessment was carried out: 4th January 2022, Amended 11th Jan 2022

**Introduction**

As a responsible employer, NCG must take all reasonable steps to protect staff, students and others from COVID-19 with the aim of allowing all students to continue to engage and benefit from their education and training where practically possible. In line with the Department for Education requirements, and more broadly the requirements set out by the Health and Safety Executive, this risk assessment explains the actions that NCG will take / have taken to ensure the continued safety of its operations when responding to the challenges of coronavirus (COVID-19).

The risk assessment reflects the Government Steps out of Lockdown

11th January Temporary suspension of confirmatory PCR tests

People who are asymptomatic and receive a positive Lateral Flow test result will be required to self-isolate immediately and won’t be required to take a confirmatory PCR test. This is a temporary measure while Covid-19 rates remain high across the UK. The advice is that the vast majority of people with a positive Lateral Flow result can be confident that they have Covid-19.

4TH January Face coverings

Face coverings shall be worn by staff and students when moving around the premises, in corridors and communal areas and in classrooms or workshops. Face coverings do not need to be worn by staff or students when outdoors on the premises. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example during sports lessons and physical activity.

8th December Plan B

* Move to Plan B confirmed as Omicron spreads across UK, with early analysis suggesting cases could be doubling at a rate of as little as 2.5 to 3 days
* Face masks to become compulsory in most public indoor venues, other than hospitality
* NHS Covid Pass to be mandatory in specific settings, using a negative test or full vaccination via the NHS Covid Pass
* Vaccines and testing remain our best lines of defence
* People asked to work from home if they can

19 July Step 4:

* Contact tracing is no longer required to be facilitated by colleges
* All clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) students should attend their college unless they are one of the very small number of students under paediatric or another specialist care and have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend.
* Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) people (staff) are advised, as a minimum, to follow the same guidance as everyone else. It is important that everyone adheres to this guidance, but CEV people may wish to think particularly carefully about the additional precautions they can continue to take.
* Social distancing measures have now ended in the workplace and it is no longer necessary for the government to instruct people to work from home.

As part of this assessment, we have:

* Identified what activity or situations might cause the transmission of the virus.
* Considered who could be at risk.
* Determined how likely it is that someone could be exposed.
* To have acted to remove the activity or situation, or if this wasn’t possible, control the risk.

In completing this risk assessment all relevant guidance issued by HM Government, Department for Education and the Health & Safety Executive has been followed as far as practicably possible.

**General staff and student advice on preventing the spread of coronavirus in the Educational Setting includes:**

* Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend the setting.
* Where recommended, or required by regulations, use face coverings.
* Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual.
* Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach.
* Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often and the use of standard products such as detergents.
* Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible.
* Where necessary, wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
* Keep occupied spaces well ventilated
* Promote and engage in asymptomatic testing

**In responding to infection, we will:**

* Engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.
* Manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19).
* Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice.

**Review and supervision**

The risk assessment will be reviewed by the authors on a monthly basis and / or as is required (e.g. where changes to Government laws/guidelines are announced).

**Risk assessment**

The table below contains the following sections:

* Hazard – the activity or situations that might cause transmission of the virus.
* Stakeholders – The affected stakeholders to whom the impact should be considered.
* Controls – The actions undertaken to mitigate the risk of transmission of the virus.

| Hazard | Stakeholders | Controls |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Contracting or spreading coronavirus by not washing hands or not washing them adequately. | StaffStudentsContractorsVisitors | * Water, soap and drying facilities are available at wash stations.
* Information on how to wash hands properly is displayed on posters throughout our premises.
* The number of wash stations available has been reviewed and we are satisfied that the existing provision is sufficient.
* Hand sanitiser and antibacterial wipes are provided throughout the NCG estate.
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| Contracting or spreading coronavirus in common use high traffic areas such as canteens, corridors, rest rooms, toilet facilities, entry / exit points to facilities, lifts, changing rooms and other communal areas. | StaffStudentsContractorsVisitors | * Online meeting technology is in place and is encouraged (even for staff in the same building to reduce footfall in communal areas).
* Staff who are able to will work from home are required to.
* Social distancing guidelines
	+ Colleges have moved to a campaign “Keep to the left” to facilitate a reasonable form of segregation in internal travel routes.
* Face coverings shall be worn by staff and students when moving around the premises, in corridors and communal areas and in classrooms or workshops.
* Face coverings do not need to be worn by staff or students when outdoors on the premises. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example during sports lessons and physical activity.
* NCG actively participate and engage with staff and students in asymptomatic testing through provision of and monitoring of home testing
* Events are assessed to ensure they are Covid secure e.g. open evenings, enrolment
* Personal protective equipment (PPE) has been made available as required.
* Washing facilities and hand sanitiser is available and reminders are displayed on posters across the NCG estate.
* Enhanced cleaning is in operation for high-touch areas.
* People have been advised that they must not enter NCG’s buildings if they have COVID-19 symptoms or if anyone in the household is displaying symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19.
* NCG’s Health & Safety team conduct compliance inspections to ensure guidance is being followed and a record of these checks is maintained.
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| Contracting or spreading coronavirus by not cleaning surfaces, equipment and workstations. | StaffStudentsContractorsVisitors | * Cleaning responsibilities have been identified and communicated. The necessary cleaning products have been identified and what they should be used for has been communicated.
* Staff have been trained on the use of PPE, safe removal of PPE and how to clean PPE.
* Contactless payments remain in operation to reduce cross contamination with monies
* Staff have been instructed to empty bins more often (to avoid excessive contact where not emptied).
* Areas to store personal belongings are provided to staff allowing personal items to be kept out of work areas.
* NCG’s Health & Safety team conduct compliance inspections to ensure guidance is being followed.
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| Mental health and wellbeing affected through isolation or anxiety about coronavirus. | StaffStudents | Staff* Managers have been instructed to conduct regular 1:1 meeting with staff to ‘keep in touch’ and to talk about any work / personal issues where appropriate.
* Staff have been encouraged to take regular breaks, take their annual leave and agreed working hours are in place (to avoid excessive working hours being worked).
* Regular communications are issued to staff to keep them up to date with any organisational developments, with a view to ensuring staff member feel involved and reassured (this includes Coronavirus FAQs and a regular CEO recording).

Students* Regular communications are issued to students to keep them up to date with any NCG, college or course specific developments.
* FAQs have been prepared and displayed on college websites.
* Teaching staff have been instructed to maintain regular contact with learners to discuss their progress, wellbeing, and provide additional support where required.
* Student support services have been made available to all students should any specialist additional support be required.
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| Contracting or spreading the virus by not social distancing. | StaffStudentsContractorsVisitors | NCG has reviewed social distancing rules. The following measures to promote social distancing have been taken:* Meetings are being held virtually wherever possible.
* Facilities are available to allow people to walk or cycle to work (e.g. bike racks).
* Face coverings shall be worn by staff and students when moving around the premises, in corridors and communal areas and in classrooms or workshops.
* Face coverings do not need to be worn by staff or students when outdoors on the premises. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example during sports lessons and physical activity
* Signage has been displayed in colleges directing staff and students to “Keep Left” to facilitate a means of preventing congestion following the removal of one-way travel routes.
* Physical screens remain in place where appropriate e.g. Reception
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| Return to face-to-face teaching  | Staff and Students | * Work placements continue taking account of Sector Covid Secure guidance and co-operation with providers, students and staff
* Education visits are conducted in line with relevant COVID secure guidelines in place at that time, such as maintaining consistent groups, and the COVID-secure measures in place at the destination. Overseas trips remain prohibited
* Reopening of commercial training facilities on-site such as hairdressing salons, gyms and restaurants are conducted in accordance with Covid Secure Sector Guidelines
* Performing arts teaching and learning is conducted in accordance with Covid secure guidelines for performing arts
* Physical Education has recommenced in accordance with sports governing body guidelines whilst ensuring that facilities; maximise natural ventilation, distancing between students and attention to cleaning and hygiene
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| Musculoskeletal disorders as a result of using DSE at home for a long period of time | Staff | * Guidance for staff has been issued on how to work from home safely (e.g. taking regular breaks, stretching exercises, equipment setup).
* Where appropriate, DSE assessments have been conducted for staff to identify necessary equipment to work safely from home.
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| Poor workplace ventilation leading to risks of coronavirus spreading | StaffStudentsContractorsVisitors | * Windows and doors (non-fire doors) to be opened to improve ventilation.
* Heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems have been switched to drawing fresh air where they can be, rather than recirculating air.
* Co2 Monitors have been received and are being utilised to assess and validate ventilation.
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| Increased risk of infection and complications for vulnerable staff and students | StaffStudents | NCG has identified and monitors who in the work force and student body fall into the following categories:* Clinically extremely vulnerable.
* People self-isolating.
* People with symptoms of coronavirus.

With regard to the categories above:* Managers / curriculum leads have been instructed to discuss with employees / students what their personal risks are and identify what they need to do in each case.
* Managers / curriculum leads, where possible, have identified how and where someone in one of these categories will work / study in line with current government guidance.
* If attending campus for work / study identify additional protection measures have been considered.
* NCG follows the latest government guidelines on the NHS Test and Trace service.
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| Exposure to workplace hazards because it isn’t possible to get normal personal protective equipment (PPE) | StaffStudents | * PPE stocks will be monitored by the local Estates teams to ensure satisfactory levels of appropriate kit are available.
* Staff have been instructed to monitor the availability of PPE within NCG’s buildings and communicate with local Estates teams where additional PPE is required.
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| Maintaining the quality of education | StaffStudents | A number of measures are in place to ensure that a high standard of education continues, whilst delivered remotely or online (not exhaustive)Contingency planning has been undertaken with plans documented should there be a local outbreak or further lockdown which impacts NCG: : * Adaptions to the NCG Quality Framework policy and procedures - many policies were updated in the summer 2020 as a contingency to maintain continuity during any further lockdowns.
* Provision (loaning) of kit and equipment to learners (where a need is genuine identified, and we are able to do so within our means).
* Use of engagement and attendance monitoring systems for checking learner participation.
* Amended schemes of learning to adjust the planned delivery, defer practical assessments and ensure continuity of content sequencing remains appropriate.
* Use of NCG platforms for synchronous (live) and asynchronous (recorded or set) delivery of lessons, use of other resources including hard copy where needed and appropriate.
* Adaptions of TLA policy to ensure that managers can continue to monitor the quality of education by occasionally reviewing learner work and occasionally visiting lessons (including online).
* Adaptions to learning support and education, health and care plans (agreed with partner local authorities).
* Ongoing progress review and formative assessment to underpin formal assessment and centre assessed grades, ongoing scheduled examinations and tests, and practical assessments in line with Ofqual and IFATE guidelines.
* Plans, risk assessments, arrangements and layouts of each college (including one-way systems, classroom and office layouts have been retained for contingency measures and assist rapid re instatement
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