



AECC
University College

Keeping You Safe

AECC University College's

COVID-19 Response

Campus information and guidance

for Academic year 2022-2023

January 2022

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Introduction

We have developed this information and guidance to ensure you are aware of the risks, to help you navigate these risks and to:

- Describe what measures we are taking to keep our community safe on campus
- Explain what we expect from you in terms of your behavior, how we will operate as a community, asking all members to sign up to our community pledge
- To outline how teaching and learning will be delivered, and what will happen if a public health situation develops onsite or locally in the community
- What support we have available to you as new, returning, or returned students
- Information on vaccinations and testing
- Information specifically for international students

It is important that you familiarise yourselves with this information so please read it carefully

We have been planning for the coming year for some time, based on the latest developing information from Government including the Department of Health, the Department for Education, Public Health England, and local public health protection teams.

The current Government Covid-19 Guidance in England (11th January 2022) states that you should stay cautious to help protect yourself and others, including the following recommendations:

- Get vaccinated and get your booster dose
- Wear a face covering in most indoor places and on public transport
- Let fresh air in if you meet indoors.
- Get tested and self-isolate if required

In line with all other settings, the [latest Government guidance for universities](#) stated that they should continue to conduct risk assessments for their particular circumstances. It is recommended that universities should implement sensible and proportionate control measures to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level. The Government is also maintaining key protections, including targeted asymptomatic testing in education – including universities (lateral flow testing). It has been made clear to us that all students and staff are expected to participate in our regular asymptomatic testing program and test twice weekly, reporting their results online. This will be monitored by the Department of Health and Social Care.

The planning we have taken and decisions we have made have been discussed and agreed with staff across the institution as well as our Students' Union Executive. This is to ensure that any actions we are taking are practical and acceptable.

At the end of the guidance is a community pledge we are asking all members of our community to make, to help keep us all safe.

Please note: while we are currently operating with minimal restrictions and decisions are taken on the basis of managing risk, it is possible that the situation may change. Local contingency measures may be applied if a Covid public health situation with increasing Covid-19 rates onsite or locally in the community. The University College's approach will therefore need to adapt accordingly. This Guidance will also be subject to continuous review and update.

Guiding Principles

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic the University College has been guided by the following principles:

- 1.1. The safety, health and wellbeing of our people is our key priority and is at the heart of our planning and decision-making.
- 1.2. At all times our policies and guidance will align with UK Government, Public Health and health and safety requirements and guidelines.
- 1.3. We will communicate, engage with staff and students and work to promote a shared sense of purpose and inclusive decision-making.
- 1.4. We will provide a workplace which is safe, secure and is sensitive to the needs of all members of our community.

Keeping our community safe on campus

In line with Government guidance we have reduced restrictions onsite for the coming year and will seek to manage risk primarily by encouraging each member of our community to act in a respectful and responsible way. In particular, we will be relaxing the two-metre social distancing rule on campus which permits the sharing of spaces and equipment.

We have conducted risk assessments for all areas and activities on campus. These risk assessments have considered situations where the risk of catching or passing on COVID-19 is higher, for example:

- in crowded spaces, where social distancing is not possible or difficult to maintain or there are more people who might be infectious
- in enclosed indoor spaces where there is limited fresh air or good ventilation is difficult to provide

In some of these higher risk areas and activities onsite, additional measures have been recommended to keep us all safe, which are outlined below. These additional measures will be kept under review and you will be provided with updates if any changes are made.

All signage around the University will be updated in line with the revised restrictions, so please adhere to them.

- Hand sanitising stations are available onsite and will be regularly replenished at key locations within buildings and facilities. Soap will be available in toilets and regularly replenished.
- Enhanced cleaning schedules are in place, with an emphasis on high-touch areas. Dorguards have been installed on doors to reduce the need to touch door handles.
- Directional flows and one-way systems have been put into place for corridors, stairs and walkways, and will be one-way only in narrower routes wherever possible. Wider, two-way areas will instruct people to keep left and walk in single file. Accessible routes will take priority wherever possible.
- Where a local risk assessment has identified the need to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to undertake practical sessions and clinical activities, this will be provided to you along with training on its use.
- Although it is not a legal requirement at this time in England to wear face coverings, we have taken the decision that face coverings **must** be worn (for non-exempt individuals) in teaching spaces. Face coverings should also be worn in crowded indoor spaces onsite where limited fresh air or good ventilation is difficult to provide, for example in corridors, staircases, and some communal office spaces such as the Student Finance Office and Registry.

Many of these communal spaces in our unique AECC University College setting are used by several groups including students, staff, visitors, patients and service users. We do not yet know what proportion of our community moving through many of these spaces are fully vaccinated and / or clinically vulnerable. Using face coverings can also help reduce the spread of colds and flu, helping you stay fit and healthy. Face coverings are largely intended to protect others, not the wearer, against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of virus that causes coronavirus as well as other

diseases. Face coverings are available in the main reception.

Wall signs indicate the areas on campus where the wearing of face coverings is mandatory.

- Face coverings must also be worn (for non-exempt individuals) in teaching spaces
- Some students may wish to wear face-coverings in in spaces where it is not mandatory. It is entirely your personal choice to wear face coverings in these spaces if you wish.

Face covering exemptions

Some students and staff will have health or disability reasons for not wearing a face covering. No student will be asked to seek advice or request a letter from a medical professional about their reason for not wearing a face covering. While it is not compulsory, some students may feel more comfortable showing something that says they do not have to wear a face covering. Students in this category are invited to collect an exemption card and a hidden disabilities lanyard from reception if they wish to do so. They are also welcome to wear other items if they wish such as a badge or even a home-made sign.



- While on campus everyone is expected to practice good hygiene by:
 - CLEANING HANDS ON ARRIVAL for 20 seconds using soap and water, or using hand sanitizer
 - CLEANING HANDS FREQUENTLY throughout the day, after handling materials and after visiting a different area
 - Maintaining a CLEAN AND TIDY WORK / STUDY AREA
- Temperature screening has been installed through our CCTV at key points of entry onto campus. If someone appears to have a very high temperature, they will be required to undertake an enhanced health questionnaire before they are permitted to

enter the campus.

Becoming infected with Covid-19

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 whilst at home (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or sudden loss of taste or smell) you **must not** come onto campus and you **must self-isolate** in line with Government guidance. Please take a lateral flow test and if positive you must inform the University College by completing the [Student Reporting](#) questionnaire so we can support you whilst you are isolating and understand and manage infection rates on campus. You can also contact covidconcerns@aecc.ac.uk for advice and support.

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 whilst on campus (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or sudden loss of taste or smell) you must immediately inform your tutor, stop your activity, and return home to take a test. If you have a positive test you must self-isolate in line with Government guidance and report your absence to AECC University College using this [form](#).

Other services on campus

Catering

A catering service is available on-site, opening times are usually 08.30-15.30 but times may vary on occasion. Please refer to the local signage which will be updated regularly. Students are encouraged to order online (<https://foodorders.aecc.ac.uk>) but you may also visit the café or via the telephone (extn.302)

A take-away service is also available onsite in the Campus Café. The refectory and Toggles bar area dining area will both be open for use during the day. Diners will be required to follow locally-directed cleaning and hygiene procedures. Cleaning materials will be supplied for this purpose.

Students should not share food, drinks, crockery or utensils.

Student Bar

The student bar will be open Monday to Friday from 17.00-23.00. Students will be expected to vacate the building by 23.30

There will be a queueing system and a cleaning procedure in place to mitigate the spread of Covid-19.

Student Gym

The Student Gym is open from 7:30am-9pm Mon-Fri and 10am-6pm at weekends

Registry

The Registry office is open on the following times:

Monday	08.45: 17.00
Tuesday	08.45: 17.00
Wednesday	08.45: 17.00
Thursday	09.30: 17.00
Friday	08.45: 17.00

Face coverings are required on entering the office.

Student Finance Office

The Student Finance Office is now located on the first floor of the main building at the end of the north corridor (above the Café).

If your query can be dealt with remotely then please email studentfinance@aecc.ac.uk, quoting your student number if possible, and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

If you need to speak to the Student Finance Team face- to-face, please visit the office. Face coverings are required on entering the office.

Library Services

- Browsing of books will return
- Click and Collect will be closed
- The self-service machine is available for students to issue books independently
- Library will revert to the pre-pandemic postal service for students who are unable to attend campus
- Booking seats will no longer be mandatory, however, some seats on the ground floor will still be available for online booking
- Study pods will return to group study pods
- Face coverings must be worn in the library, when moving through the building, but do not need to be worn at study desks when seated

For opening times and further information about the services see <https://libguides.aecc.ac.uk/> and if you have any questions email the team at learningservices@aecc.ac.uk.

What we expect of you

Students are expected to read and comply with the guidance provided. We are also asking all members of our community to commit to a **pledge** to be kind, considerate, respectful and supportive to each other during these unprecedented times. You can find the pledge at the end of this document.

Main reception will be fully open from 08.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday. All students will be required to enter through a staffed entrance – either main reception, clinic reception or Cavendish House reception so that appropriate temperature checks and screening can take place as required. Students will also be required to check themselves onto site using a card reader. It is therefore essential that you have your ID card with you at all times for this purpose.

Outside of the reception hours, access to the main building (via swipe card entrances) will be available from Monday-Friday, 07.30-23.30

If you require any specific guidance or have concerns about coronavirus matters, you can contact covidconcern@aecc.ac.uk If you are aware of a serious breach or non-compliance with safety restrictions you can escalate your concerns by reporting your concerns to covidconcern@aecc.ac.uk

Supporting your health and wellbeing

We are aware that starting a new university and returning to campus during the pandemic can be a stressful experience. Some of us will be continued to be worried about family and friends, and perhaps our own safety at this time. It is understandable to feel anxious and here at AECC University College you are part of a small caring community.

In addition to your personal tutor and course teams, we have a range of highly rated student services here to support you as outlined below. Based on last year's experiences, some services will continue to be available online in the coming academic year.

Student Services

- Student Services reception desk will be located in Cavendish House
- Wellbeing and Counselling sessions will continue in-person, online or by phone, as requested by students
- Academic Skills sessions will continue in-person, online or by phone as requested by students

Developments in Mental Health

- AECC University College, Arts University Bournemouth and Bournemouth University Student Services are collaborating on a joint 'Suicide Safer' Universities strategy which will be launched in November

The University College is committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of our students and there is a wealth of resources and support available to assist you:

If you are feeling concerned, anxious or overwhelmed at this time please contact your Student Services Team via email to book an appointment for a friendly chat studentservices@aecc.ac.uk

Teaching and learning arrangements

What we are doing and why

At AECC University College we are committed to continually improving your student experience. We have reflected on the last few years and on the feedback, you provided on your experiences during this time. We recognise how important it is for you to spend time on campus for your own wellbeing, to spend time face to face with each other and academic staff, and to ensure your learning experiences are high quality.

We understand that you found some on-line lectures challenging and hard to engage with (so did our staff!) We also noted that you appreciated being able to spend time revisiting online content at your own pace and in your own time. As a result, we have made changes to our teaching this year. We have made the decision to focus the time you spend on campus in smaller group seminars and practical skills classes rather than in large group lectures.

What are the advantages to you as students?

With a large group lecture or even a Zoom lecture, we understand it can sometimes be difficult to ask a question or to speak to your tutor to get the information you need; numbers are potentially up to 160 students. In addition, large group lectures are traditionally focused on delivering theoretical content (facts) and are acknowledged as promoting 'superficial' learning, encouraging the memorising of facts which can be hard to understand.

We believe this this factual content can be delivered better using **asynchronous learning techniques**. This means that you will be provided with access to online resources which you can access and engage with on your own schedule, within a certain timeframe. This mode of delivery allows the theoretical content to be provided in more creative and engaging ways. This may include a range of resources such as pre-recorded content, reading material, quizzes and other online resources. You will be able to explore and absorb this material at your own pace which is impossible of course in a traditional lecture.

The key areas of learning from the asynchronous content will then be teased out during your on-campus, smaller grouped face to face seminars where your learning can be contextualised and strengthened. Smaller group seminars are more interactive and focused on developing and applying theoretical knowledge in a more dedicated way. They help you to understand meaning in what you are learning - known as 'deep' learning.

How will this appear in your timetable?

In your timetable next year, you will see more seminars than in previous years and these will be in small groups so you have more opportunity to interact with your tutor. We have also made practical class sizes smaller, again to allow you the opportunity to spend more time with your tutors.

The asynchronous learning will not be scheduled since you will undertake this flexibly in your own time so you will not see this in your timetable. You will be provided with information on how much time to spend on this learning during each week – available in your unit guides.

Will this have any impact on your safety on campus?

We are aware however that Covid-19 rates remain quite high in England, and that the virus itself remains a serious health risk. The current Government Covid-19 Guidance in England (11th January 2022) states that you should stay cautious to help protect yourself and others. Given the continuing uncertainty with Covid, avoiding large group lectures reduces the infection risks for students so that you can continue to learn safely, reducing the possibility of having to self-isolate away from the University College.

Rather than taking away opportunities to learn, we have listened to student feedback, and we are facilitating more opportunities for higher quality engagement with staff and other students.

As always, our courses are monitored annually through surveys and Course Boards, so we will keep the changes we have made this year under review.

What will happen to our teaching if a Covid-19 public health situation develops onsite or locally in the community?

We are working closely with Public Health Dorset and the other local universities in Dorset to keep abreast of local Covid-19 infection rates. If cases rise at AECC University College or locally, we will work with the local Director of Public Health in Dorset to control and manage any outbreak, including agreeing which measures identified in the outbreak planning should be implemented, based on an assessment of the risks.

We have plans in place to respond in the event that there is an increase in the number of cases, or an outbreak associated with our setting.

Our plans have considered proportionate actions to reduce transmission in the following scenarios:

- increased prevalence of infection locally that requires interventions in the whole community, including students and staff
- a large-scale outbreak that may impact on the activities of the university
- a localised outbreak in student accommodation
- a localised outbreak involving a particular student or staff member, faculty or department

The Government's [contingency framework](#) describes the principles of managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 in education and childcare settings.

We will continually check, revise and update our outbreak plan, especially when there is new advice and guidance.

Measures which may be introduced include:

- Additional testing – more frequent asymptomatic testing may be advised to identify additional numbers of students who may need to self-isolate in order to reduce local transmission of Covid-19
- The use of face coverings in all communal areas / seminar rooms for students and staff (with exemptions)

Other measures may include:

- Moving to virtual open days
- Online outreach sessions
- Attendance restrictions – as a short-term measure and as a last resort in extreme cases face to face seminars may be moved online. This would only happen where other recommended measures have not broken chains of in-setting transmission; or across our local area, on government advice in order to suppress or manage a dangerous variant and to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS
- The reintroduction by Government of shielding for individuals on the shielded patient list (SPL)

Covid-19 vaccination and testing

Vaccinations

The efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine is now well-established. We are seeing real world evidence that the COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing hospitalisations and reducing adverse outcomes from COVID-19. In addition to reducing the health risks associated with Covid-19, there is some evidence that vaccines also reduce the transmission of the disease.

The University College remains is strongly committed to encouraging all students and staff to get vaccinated against Covid-19. Vaccination uptake in conjunction with our other Covid safety measures, will help to minimise transmission and infection rates, keeping our community safe. If you are able to do so, you are expected to be double vaccinated against Covid-19 before starting your studies. You do not need to have both doses of the vaccine administered at the same venue. You can [book your appointment online](#) or [visit a walk-in](#)

[clinic](#). There are walk-in clinics across the UK, many opening early and closing late. You do not need to be registered with a GP to be vaccinated.

Fully vaccinated individuals and under 18s will no longer need to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of someone with Covid-19. That means that if you're not fully vaccinated, you'll be required by law to self-isolate if you're identified as a close contact of somebody that tests positive for Covid. We appreciate you've all probably had enough of having to self-isolate and the unwanted disruption to your academic and social experiences.

As students studying health sciences degrees, we expect the majority of our students to be fully vaccinated in line with our public health responsibilities. However, we also respect your personal choice to be vaccinated and that some of you may have health reasons for not getting vaccinated. Please bear in mind that there may be settings in which full vaccination status may be required which sit outside of our control such as some placement settings.

In line with the Department for Education guidance in England, we will be asking you to disclose your vaccine status since we are obliged to report the proportion of students at university who are partially or fully vaccinated. Thank you in advance for your co-operation with this.

If you have concerns about getting vaccinated and wish to discuss the matter with someone, please contact your personal tutor or course leader. They will provide a confidential space for you to discuss your worries about getting the vaccine.

Onsite asymptomatic testing - Test and Report:

All students and staff will be expected to take **twice weekly** lateral flow tests and should register their test results online, selecting the education provider code 'AEUC'.

Testing kits are available free from reception for all students and staff. Please follow the instructions on the box which explains how to register your results. It is really important that all tests are registered to AECC – by being able to prove that a high proportion of students and staff are testing regularly at AECC University College, we will be able to start removing restrictions on site. Also, if we have an outbreak on campus, we will be able to contain it quickly and remain open. Testing itself is not enough – we must all report our results. If testing numbers are not high enough, we may need to start bringing in measures such as spot checks to ensure those on campus have had a recent negative test.

We will be receiving data back on our testing levels which will help to inform our risk assessments and health and safety decisions on campus.

What happens when I go to collect my home test kits on campus?

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) requires the University to collect certain information about people collecting test kits, and we are processing this on their instructions. We may need to contact you if, for example, any faulty home test kits need to be recalled. [View the DHSC privacy notice](#).

How do I report my result?

The home lateral flow test usually takes around 15 minutes to produce a result. If you take a test at home it is very important that you [report your test result on the government website](#) - whether it is positive or negative. The government will be closely monitoring university participation in the home testing scheme to inform further decisions about future activities on campus.

Please register your results via gov.uk/report-covid19-result selecting the education provider code 'AEUC'.

We recommend you create an account on the government website so which will make it quicker to report your test results each time.

What should I do if I test positive/negative using a home test kit?

If you test positive, you should self-isolate immediately. . Your isolation period starts immediately from when your symptoms started, or, if you do not have any symptoms, from your test result...

If you test negative, please still [report your result on the government website](#).

Information for International Students – Covid-19

The information and requirement for international students entering the UK varies. It is important that you keep up to date via the UK government website:

Any tests you may need and the quarantine rules for travel are available here:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-to-england-from-another-country-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Once you arrive in the UK you are entitled to free Covid vaccines if you are not already vaccinated. All of the advice you need on this subject is available here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2021/06/C1317-COVID-19-vaccination-FAQs-students-in-Higher-Education-Institutions-.pdf>

If you have any concerns about any of this before or on arrival please see our student FAQs on our website or contact covidconcerns@aecc.ac.uk

AECC University College Community Pledge – COVID-19

We have worked brilliantly as a community throughout this difficult period. We ask staff, student patients and visitors to respect and support each other, to behave appropriately and to treat each other with kindness and compassion.

We ask everyone at the University College to commit to the following pledge:

- I will follow the latest University College Guidance and UK Government guidance relating to reducing the spread of Covid-19.
- I understand that this guidance is likely to change regularly so I will take personal responsibility for ensuring I am up to date with the latest information.
- If I experience Covid-19 symptoms I will report these according to the University College guidance, follow guidance to self-isolate and get a test.
- I accept that I have an individual responsibility in making sure that the areas where we all live, work, and study are as safe as they can be. This may include participating in mass testing if required to do so.
- I will show empathy, respect and due consideration to others – my friends and peers, my colleagues and all members of my community
- I note that this pledge sits alongside the University's policies around [Dignity, Equality and Diversity](#), and [Harrassment](#) (for students) and that I have a duty to assist in establishing an environment in which harassment, bullying, and victimisation are regarded as unacceptable.
- I understand that for some this can be an anxious and concerning time which may require periods of isolation away from others. I will look out for others in my communities. If I have a concern about someone, I will raise this with an appropriate person (personal tutor, line manager, etc.) so that help and support can be offered.
- I will be inclusive and supportive of those around me. If I see others behaving inappropriately and contrary to the COVID-19 guidance, I will raise my concerns directly with those people in an open, constructive, and polite manner. Where I feel unable to safely challenge, I will raise the concern within the University College by contacting covidconcern@aecc.ac.uk
- If I am challenged about my behaviour I will respond in an open, positive, and respectful manner – listening carefully to those raising the concern and changing my behaviour to remove it if I am able. I understand and accept that wilfully and repeatedly breaching University guidance is an act of misconduct and could lead to me being subject to disciplinary processes. If I see situations that are contrary to guidance, I will remove myself from those situations as soon as possible.

If you require guidance and support in relation to Covid-19 please contact University college colleagues at covidconcern@aecc.ac.uk

If you have a concern about the behaviour of others but feel unable to raise this with them directly, please contact covidconcern@aecc.ac.uk providing the following information:

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Location of incident:

Name of persons involved:

Name(s) of individual (s) you communicated your concerns to (if any):

We will provide you with support and take the necessary steps to positively resolve the concern.