



East Durham College

Guidance Document

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Approved By	Committee	Date
Board of Governors	College Leadership Group	

Document Control

This document is issued and controlled by Quality & Standards and may only be modified by the designated group after proposed modifications have been accepted by the College Management Group

The latest version of the procedure will be maintained on the College Extranet

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



Scope

All College properties and operations.

All staff and students, members of the public and visitors to any College Campus.

Purpose

To ensure a comprehensive College Guidance document and action plan for all College operations, including Risk Assessment control measures to be in place to help control the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

Official Guidance Documentation

All actions described in this document are taken from the guidance documents below published by HM Government and Public Health England:

- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/98485/4/FE_COVID_operational_guidance.pdf
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): advice for pregnant employees - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees)
- [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Education, universities and childcare - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-education-universities-and-childcare)
- [How tests and testing kits for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) work - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-tests-and-testing-kits-for-coronavirus-covid-19-work)
- [Providing apprenticeships during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/providing-apprenticeships-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak)
- [Reopening businesses and venues in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/reopening-businesses-and-venues-in-england)
- [Travel advice: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/travel-advice-coronavirus-covid-19)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision/further-education-coronavirus-covid-19-operational-guidance>

Comment

As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to young people's education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to young people are extremely low, and every adult has been offered a first vaccine and the opportunity for two doses by mid-September. HM Government announced Step 4 of the roadmap to returning to normality safely and timely was to come into effect from 19th July 21. This document is intended to provide the necessary guidance required to staff and students from 9th August 21.

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



Lifting restrictions

Most legal restrictions to control COVID-19 have been lifted at step 4. This means that:

- You do not need to stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with. There are also no limits on the number of people you can meet.
- However, you should limit the close contact you have with those you do not usually live with and increase close contact gradually. This includes minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts.
- You should meet outdoors where possible and let fresh air into homes or other enclosed spaces.
- The Government is no longer instructing people to work from home.
- The requirement to wear face coverings in law has been lifted. However, the Government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport.

College Ongoing Safety Procedures

In addition to the information laid out above, the guidance detailed below is intended to allow East Durham College staff and students sufficient information to be safe, so far as reasonably practicable, whilst travelling to/from and on College premises. College Leadership Group fully accept the responsibilities it has as an employer and have taken steps to identify groups who may be at risk and taken precautionary measures to focus on staff and student safety whilst at College. It is intended that the ongoing control measures put in place will continue to reduce the risks to staff and students, protect those who are greater risk from COVID-19 and reduce the transmission of the virus. All College users have a part to play in achieving this, both as an employee and as a student. Preventative measures the College will continue to have in place include:

- Floor and wall markings with 2m spacings identified – all existing markings will be left in place for the short term to act as a reminder to all users to continue to socially distance where possible.
- An enhanced cleaning regime, targeting increased disinfection of touch points, handrails and other areas likely to see multi-touch use.
- Posters reminding College users to maintain good hand hygiene.
- The continued use of established sanitising stations around all parts of the College, with additional sanitising wipes in classrooms and offices.
- Wide availability of Lateral Flow Tests at each main reception point.
- Increased ventilation to buildings, using natural ventilation (wherever possible and safe).
- Compulsory face coverings to be worn on all College transport.
- Continue to promote the Government guidance on self-isolation, staying away if symptoms are displayed and seeking PCR tests.
- Continue to promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



Vaccinations

NHS England has rolled out the vaccination programme and, to date, over 47m first doses have been administered, with an additional 39.2m second doses. Vaccination has been based upon various group priorities, both through medical conditions and age brackets. Vaccination does not prevent transmission of the virus, only the severity of the virus. Whilst it will be some time before the majority of the student population have been vaccinated, the promoted way to continue to prevent the spread of the virus is to avoid being exposed to the virus and following the well-established precautionary measures.

Everyone aged 16 or over can now get vaccinated against COVID-19. For Students aged 16 or 17, the NHS will be contacted when its their turn to get the vaccine. 18-year-olds and over do not need to wait to be contacted. If you were contacted but have not booked your appointments, you're still eligible and can book your appointments anytime.

How to get your COVID-19 vaccine

The COVID-19 vaccines currently available are given in 2 doses. You usually have the 2nd dose 8 to 12 weeks after the 1st dose. If you're over 18 you can:

- [book your COVID-19 vaccination appointments online](#) for an appointment at a vaccination centre or pharmacy
- [find a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site](#) to get vaccinated without needing an appointment
- wait to be contacted by your GP surgery and book your appointments with them

COVID-19 Test and Trace Procedure (from 16 August 2021)

HM Government guidance around testing is to follow the Test and Trace procedure. In summary, should someone display symptoms, they are to immediately isolate and order a test immediately at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access.

If your test is positive, you must complete the remainder of your 10-day self-isolation.

For everyone with symptoms, they should avoid using public transport and, wherever possible, be collected by a member of their family or household. If a student is awaiting collection, they should be left in a room on their own if possible and safe to do so. A window should be opened for fresh air ventilation if possible. Appropriate PPE should also be used if close contact is necessary. Any rooms they use should be cleaned after they have left.

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



Close contacts and self-isolation

People fully vaccinated or under 18 and 4 months old **will not** need to self-isolate after close contact with someone who has COVID-19. Evidence of full vaccination will be required by HR to allow staff or students to continue to attend College premises.

Close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace and the College will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case to identify close contacts. Contacts from a setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. You may be contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases.

It must be clear that should you display symptoms, you would still be required to take a PCR test and self-isolate should the result be positive. If anyone in your setting develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, you should send them home and they should follow public health advice. They should then seek a PCR test.

Testing

Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within settings.

Over the summer, staff and students should continue to test regularly if they are attending settings that remain open. The College will provide tests for twice weekly asymptomatic testing for staff over the summer period if they are attending FE settings. Upon return to College, we will offer students two on-site lateral flow device tests on return, 3 to 5 days apart, in the autumn term. Testing will commence at the start of term and further detail will be provided in due course.

Students and staff should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed by Government. All tests should be completed at home by staff and students. We will still provide a small on-site capability for those unable to test themselves.

Staff or students who receive a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They will also need to get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID-19. Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive LFD test, and is negative, it overrides the LFD test result and the student can return to their setting, as long as the individual does not have COVID-19 symptoms. Those with a negative LFD or PCR test result can continue to attend college.

From August 1st, 2021, NHS Test and Trace are introducing new types of test kits for at home weekly testing of staff and students. Acon-Flowflex tests involve double nasal swabbing only – a throat swab is not needed. The instructions on how to use each of these types of self-test kits for use at home can be found in the test kit packaging.

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



Staff and students who previously were advised to shield:

Although the advice to shield has ended, clinically extremely vulnerable people must continue to follow the guidance that is in place for everyone. We are also advising clinically extremely vulnerable people to continue to take extra precautions to protect themselves. College users who are in the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or Clinically Vulnerable groups should have already had contact with HR and their line managers to ensure a Risk Assessment has been carried out and any additional control measures put in place. It is expected that staff will work from College premises. There is no curriculum area that cannot conduct face to face teaching on site.

Please communicate with your line manager/Director in the first instance if you are unsure, or have any concerns, about the arrangements for your area.

Pregnant College Users:

For those College users who are pregnant, a Pregnancy Risk Assessment must be completed following the normal procedure. College users beyond the 28 weeks pregnancy stage are at a slightly increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (although no greater risk of contracting it) and are to follow all usual precautions around COVID, including the strong advice to get vaccinated. Normally, appropriate control measures, already in place, will be sufficient but strict advice will be provided by both HR and H&S staff, and if required, a specific Covid Pregnancy risk assessment will be conducted. The advice is no longer to work from home for the remainder of the pregnancy duration <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy/>. The College will seek to discharge its duty appropriately and ensure a safe working environment.

This guidance will remain under continuous review and will be amended following further notice from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

Face coverings

In line with Government guidance, face coverings will no longer be advised for students, staff or visitors, either in classrooms or communal areas. However, the Government expects and recommends they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where an individual may come into contact with people they do not normally meet. This includes public transport and College dedicated transport.

Should the College have an outbreak, County Durham Director of Public Health might advise that face coverings should temporarily be worn in communal areas and/or classrooms (by students, staff and visitors, unless exempt). This will be published and communicated immediately after receiving notice from DCC. For more information:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/984846/FINAL_Face_coverings_in_education_guidance.pdf

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



In areas such as commercial training environments (hairdressing, beauty salons and barbering, sports and fitness facilities or restaurants) they must comply with the relevant industry/sector guidance regarding face coverings. The College is no longer legally required to collect customer contact details but doing so will support NHS Test and Trace to contact those who may have been exposed to COVID-19 so that they can book a test. Each area that hosts public facing activities will still display an [NHS QR code poster](#) which will allow individuals to choose to 'check in' to that venue. The College staff are under no liability to ask people to check in or turn people away if they refuse. Each area displaying a QR code should also have a system in place to record contact details for people who want to check in but do not have the app <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/shops-branches-and-close-contact-services>

Choice to wear - East Durham College guidance is clear that if staff or students wish to wear a facemask or covering, they are permitted to do so. All College users are reminded that the use of face coverings is mandatory on public and dedicated College transport. Any changes to Government policy on the use of facemasks will be reflected in future amendments to this document.

Ventilation

Good ventilation reduces the concentration of the virus in the air, which reduces the risks from airborne transmission. This happens when people breathe in small particles (aerosols) in the air after someone with the virus has occupied an enclosed area. When the setting is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and a comfortable teaching and learning environment is maintained. This can be achieved by a variety of measures including:

- mechanical ventilation systems – these have been adjusted to increase the ventilation rate wherever possible and checked to confirm that normal operation meets current guidance and that only fresh outside air is circulated. Where possible, systems will be adjusted to full fresh air or, if not, then systems should be operated as normal so long as they are within a single room and supplemented by an outdoor air supply
- natural ventilation – opening windows (in cooler weather windows should be opened just enough to provide constant background ventilation and opened more fully during breaks to purge the air in the space). Opening internal doors can also assist with creating a throughput of air
- natural ventilation – if necessary, external opening doors may also be used (as long as they are not fire doors and where safe to do so).

The Health and Safety Executive guidance on air conditioning and ventilation during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/equipment-and-machinery/air-conditioning-and-ventilation/index.htm> and CIBSE coronavirus (COVID-19) advice <https://www.cibse.org/coronavirus-covid-19> provides more information.

To balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature, consider:

- opening high level windows in colder weather in preference to low level to reduce draughts
- increasing the ventilation while spaces are unoccupied (for example, between classes,

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



during break and lunch, when a room is unused)

- providing flexibility to allow additional, suitable indoor clothing
- rearranging furniture where possible to avoid direct draughts

Heating should be used to ensure comfort levels are maintained particularly in occupied spaces.

Each reception area will hold a non-touch laser thermometer to help ascertain extreme body temperatures (37.8°C) should staff or students become unwell whilst at College. This will provide an indication only and the person will be required to leave College to seek further professional medical confirmation and assistance. Thermometers are not a reliable or accurate measure of infection.

Fire Safety

Although the prevention of COVID-19 infection is the main aim of this guidance document, all College users must still comply with College Emergency Procedures and Fire Evacuation. The principle remains the same; evacuate the building calmly and safely using the nearest emergency exit ensuring all doors and windows are closed on exit to prevent the spread of fire. Fire Assembly Areas are still a place of control and in the unlikely event of an evacuation, College users must still comply with social distancing guidelines whilst in the Fire Assembly Areas. Fire Marshals and staff are to ensure the guidelines are complied with. Those users with a personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEP's) are to notify Estates staff if they are not with their usual tutor or colleague.

Re-occupation of buildings after any evacuation will be conducted in a controlled manner ensuring 2m distancing is followed. Staff will be returned to buildings first before any other users are allowed. Fire Marshals will ensure that appropriate distancing is maintained during reoccupation.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where activities require the normal use of PPE, this should be worn as previously arranged. All College staff who have a requirement to wear PPE (such as cleaners) have been provided with FFP2 or FFP3 face masks. Curriculum staff requiring PPE for their role should ensure they use the appropriate standard of PPE relevant to the task.

First Aid provision

All accidents on College premises resulting in an injury will be dealt with by a qualified first aider. In order to help protect the first aider, PPE packs will be held in the First Aid rooms/points at each Campus. These will consist of disposable gloves, masks, eye protection and plastic aprons. Yellow hazard bins will be available in each first aid room/area.

First aid will not be applied for minor injuries, such as scratches or bangs to the elbow. Injured personnel will be directed to self-administer either a plaster or icepack. Serious injuries will require emergency service attendance, and this should be called through in the normal manner.

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Guidance



If cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is required, a “dynamic risk assessment” would be made and appropriate precautions for infection control adopted. In adults, it is recommended that rescue breaths or mouth-to-mouth ventilation are not performed, and chest compressions are only conducted. Compression-only CPR may be as effective as combined ventilation and compression in the first few minutes after non-asphyxia arrest (cardiac arrest not due to lack of oxygen). Cardiac arrest in children is more likely to be caused by a respiratory problem (asphyxia arrest), therefore chest compressions alone are unlikely to be effective.

If a decision is made to perform mouth-to-mouth ventilation in asphyxial arrest, use a resuscitation face shield where available (these are available within the Defibrillator packs around College). Should you have given mouth-to-mouth ventilation there are no additional actions to be taken other than to monitor yourself for symptoms of possible COVID-19 over the following 10 days.

College Transport

Where there is a need for transport between College campuses, each minibus will operate at normal capacity of that vehicle. However, face coverings **MUST** be worn at all times when in the buses. Bus capacity is limited by the legal vehicle capacity only. Each minibus is provided with sanitising wipes/sprays/single use cloths and the buses must be sanitised prior to return.

Gym and shower facilities

The Sports Centre and gym is now opened to all College users, including public, for all activities. The gym and sports hall may also be used. There is no limit on the use of shower and communal changing areas.

Subject specific risk assessments

Some vocational courses may pose particular risks of aerosol, droplet and surface transmission and therefore warrant increased consideration of control measures. All subject area tutors/PAL's must ensure a teaching activity risk assessment, reviewed and updated specific to COVID-19 and following the guidance the measures laid out in this document, is conducted prior to any teaching beginning. Risk Assessments must be retained and in-date. The main control measures for any risk assessment are contained in this document and risk assessments should only require to be specific to the activity carried out. Activities should be conducted to prevent and reduce crowding or large numbers in enclosed spaces.

External Work Placements

There is no restriction upon External Work Placements for students and, indeed, they are essential in providing the necessary and relevant experience required by a student. Staff involved in work placements arrangements should work with employers to ensure all necessary precautions are in place and to follow any local arrangements. The work placement can be delivered flexibly over the full programme duration.

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



Cleaning procedures

Cleaning regimes will continue to be enhanced for the foreseeable future. In all areas of common use, the following level of cleaning is to apply. This is in addition to routine daily cleaning processes:

- Classrooms, libraries, labs, office areas and hallways: Ensure regular cleaning of handrails, water fountains, door and window handles, light switches, desks, chairs, tables and teaching aids
- Restrooms and locker rooms: Begin cleaning less dirty surfaces and end with the toilet and floor. Ensure door handles, light switches, dispensers, sink taps and handles, toilet seats and flushers are cleaned. Use more than one wipe to prevent spreading germs. Mops and sponges can harbour germs, so consider disposable solutions
- Refectories, kitchen and staff areas: Ensure door handles, light switches, food and high-touch surfaces, sink taps, utensils, sneeze guards, tables, chairs, countertops and registers are cleaned regularly. Focus first on the least dirty surfaces and end with the floor. Greasy or oily surfaces need to be cleaned with hot water and detergents before sanitizing
- Provide suitable and sufficient rubbish bins in these areas with regular removal and disposal
- Areas area to be cleaned hourly and recorded

Cleaning staff will be issued with appropriate and adequate PPE as determined through existing controls. Training on donning/doffing PPE has been conducted and further guidance can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877658/Quick_guide_to_donning_doffing_standard_PPE_health_and_social_care_poster_.pdf

Visitors and meetings

There is no restriction to casual visitors to the College. Business meetings can now be held face to face in COVID-Safe environments.

Reporting and Raising Concerns

In accordance with Regulation 8 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, staff have the right and duty to remove themselves from an area of serious and imminent danger to a safe area. Serious and imminent danger could be in any form but for the purposes of this document, it is relating to the risk of contracting COVID-19. Examples of serious and imminent danger within College could be:

- Persons deliberately coughing or spitting at another person/tutor and failing to stop.
- Persons deliberately failing to adhere to the social distancing measures within the College to the point where they have increased the risk of contracting COVID-19.
- Classrooms and/or equipment that have clearly not been cleaned between users.

Serious breaches of established control measures will be dealt with in accordance with established disciplinary policies and procedures.

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



This regulation does not provide a right to leave campus. Examples of safe areas include:

- Atrium or other communal areas.
- Another classroom away from the danger.
- Outside the buildings.

Any staff that consider themselves to be in a position of serious and imminent danger are to remove themselves from that danger and alert any others who are in danger. They must then report immediately any concerns to the Duty Manager. During College opening times, there will be a member of College Management Group acting as Duty Manager. Should Duty Managers not be able to deal with the concern, the Director of Estates, Services and Resources or Health and Safety Officer should be contacted for further advice. A record of the incident should be made in all cases using the College Incident Report Form.

Any suspected or reported case of case of COVID-19 should be reported to a member of the College Management Group and logged on the College COVID-19 tracker. Access to the tracker has been limited to CMG members, PALs and Progression Coaches. The College Health and Safety Officer or Director of Estates, Services and Resources should also be informed at the earliest opportunity for onward reporting to PHE and to ensure deep cleaning arrangements are be put in place immediately.

Contingency planning

The College may be required or directed to step control measures up or down following direction from Government, DfE or Local Authorities, depending on the situation. These measures will only be considered as a last resort and will be kept to the minimum duration or number of people. Contingency plans in the event of future Covid-19 outbreaks would be established based on the current advice from Gov.uk, DfE and NHS websites. Plans will consist of the following elements: -

- Prioritising education – Establish remote learning where possible by providing live teaching and support for learners who need to attend F2F classes
- Support – For vulnerable students or learners who are unable to access remote classes or require additional support.
- Safeguarding – ensure safeguarding processes are robust and fit for purpose.
- Staff safety – Remote working considered for staff who are able to work remotely
- Shielding – Protect clinically extremely vulnerable or pregnant staff and students
- Mental health and wellbeing – identify and establish control measures.
- Testing – Increase the use of home testing by staff and learners
- That is why, whilst some measures are relaxed, others will remain, and if necessary and in response to the latest epidemiological data, we all need to be prepared to step measures up or down in future depending on local circumstances.

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



Supporting Documents and Records

- All publications issued by HM Government as listed on page 2 of this document.
- All linked documents within the text of this document.
- College Health & Safety Policy 2.1 (Extranet/policies and procedures/section2/Health and Safety).
- College Incident Report form (Extranet/policies and procedures/section 2 Health and Safety).
- College LFT Risk assessment (Extranet/section2/Health and Safety).

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



First Aid	College Users	Serious injury	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazard waste bins to be available in each first aid room Qualified First aiders to be at each campus during operations. Appropriate supply of first aid equipment and consumables. Defibrillators positioned around College campuses. First Aid procedure to be strictly followed 	1	4	4
							1	4	4
		Spread of the virus	1	4	4				
			1	4	4				
			1	3	3				
Use of College transport	College users	Spread of the virus	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face coverings to be worn when using College transport College driver to conduct training in COSHH and PPE use Touch areas, seats and door handles to be cleaned by College driver after each use 	2	4	8
							1	4	4
							1	4	4
Cleaning	Cleaning staff	Spread of the virus	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate PPE to be worn and training provided Cleaning procedures to be followed and sufficient training to be undertaken. Issued FFP2 face masks to be worn when required. Disinfectants and disposable cloths to be used and COSHH training undertaken. COSHH data sheets to be made available for viewing. 	1	4	4
							1	4	4
							1	4	4
							1	4	4
							1	4	4

2.1.13 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance



Risk assessment Matrix:

Likelihood	4	4	8	12	16		Likelihood		Severity	
	4	3	3	6	9		12	4	Likely – Occurs repeatedly	Severe injury or fatal
3	2	2	4	6	8	3	Probable – will occur several times	Major injury or disease		
2	1	1	2	3	4	2	Possible – could occur sometimes	Minor injury		
1	0	1	2	3	4	1	Remote – Unlikely though conceivable	No injury		
0	Severity					0	Improbable – so unlikely that possibility is almost zero	Low impact plant or environmental		

Additional Control measures

- It is unlikely that further control measures, other than described in the risk assessment above, will be possible. These are in addition to the information available as described on page 2 of this document and are to be read in conjunction with existing procedures and risk assessments for fire safety, evacuation and cleaning protocols.
- Any additional control measures will be subject to further scientific and Government guidance.
- All control measures will be under constant review for currency and suitability.