

## COLCHESTER INSTITUTE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) – IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STAFF

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### Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever;
- a dry cough; and
- shortness of breath

Exhibiting these symptoms does not necessarily mean that you have coronavirus. However, from 12 March 2020, if you have these symptoms:

- A high temperature / fever
- A new, continuous cough

you must now self-isolate for a period of seven days.

You must notify your line manager by telephone before you are due to start work, or as soon as possible if that is not practical.

You should avoid going to your doctor or a hospital to prevent infections from spreading. The latest government guidance is [here](#).

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Section 1: Absence, Pay and Working Remotely

#### ***Q1: What do I need to do if I have to go into Self-isolation and/or am diagnosed with Coronavirus?***

You may self diagnose as above, or be given medical (or College) advice to self-isolate if you have certain symptoms or in some circumstances in which you have no symptoms, including if you have:

- been in contact with a confirmed coronavirus carrier; or
- recently travelled to a restricted area

#### ***Q2. How do I report this?***

### Reporting Procedures for Self Isolation/Sickness Absence

1. **Notify your line manager** - explain to your line manager what medical advice you have been given and from whom; and then
2. **Email [HRCorona@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:HRCorona@colchester.ac.uk)** giving the same information you have given to your line manager. **If you are emailing from your personal email please include your Date of birth and NI number for Data Protection purposes.**

**A Fit Note from your doctor, which we would normally require after 7 days of absence will not be required for sickness absences relating to Coronavirus** - This is because public health advice is that, if you show symptoms, you should avoid going

to your doctor or a hospital to prevent infection from spreading. You may have been given medical advice via telephone from [NHS 111](#) to self-isolate.

**You will still be expected to:**

- Keep in regular contact with your line manager.
- On your return to work - complete a Return to Work Form detailing the dates and reasons for your absence.
- Ensure that your contact details are up-to-date on Select HR ie your line manager has a telephone number and email address where they can reach you if you are in self-isolation. (At the first opportunity while at work, please check your personal details in Select HR).

***Q3. If I am not ill, but self-isolating (because either the College, or 111 have told me that I must) am I expected to undertake college work during my work hours?***

Yes. This can range from checking emails, interacting on-line with students and their work, assessing work, planning resources and courses, as well as self-directed or line manager directed CPD. In many support roles it will be possible to undertake many normal tasks and duties. It is a reasonable expectation that you will check your emails every two hours at least during your normal working hours.

If you do not believe it is possible for you to work from home, notify your line manager to explain why and they will confirm that this is the case for you.

If you should become unwell whilst self-isolating then you must follow the sickness reporting procedures above

***Q4. Will I get paid if I am in self-isolation?***

If you are sick you will receive sick pay, if you are not sick but in self-isolation you will still be paid your normal pay.

***Q5. If I am not ill but in self-isolation how will this be recorded?***

There will be a special category on Select HR to record your absence as self-isolation and it will not be treated as sickness absence unless you actually become unwell.

***Q6. I am an hourly paid member of staff - will I still be paid if I go into self-isolation or the College closes?***

You will receive the same pay as if you had been working, based on your normal working pattern.

***Q7. I am hourly paid – what happens if I am off sick?***

You should follow the sickness reporting procedures above and you will be paid sick pay, based on your normal working pattern.

***Q8. I am hourly paid - how will I submit my timesheets?***

Special arrangements have been put in place during this period to ensure hourly paid staff continue to be paid. If you cannot download and print off timesheets at home, it

may advisable for you to come to the HR office and collect a small supply of forms which you could complete and scan to CIPayroll in the event you are not in work. These are also available from the Braintree and Clacton campuses. Alternatively you can do the following:

Please read the following carefully and ensure you follow all the instructions which are for hourly paid staff in the event of.

- ***Self-Isolation***
- ***Sickness Absence due to Coronavirus***
- ***College closure***

1. Unless the College is closed, follow the Reporting Procedures for Self Isolation/ Sickness Absence
2. Email [CIPayroll@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:CIPayroll@colchester.ac.uk) and your line manager with either a completed (and attached) Hourly Paid Claim Form, for hours you have already worked and/or a Claim Form for hours you are scheduled to work during your period of absence. Claim forms are available to download on the HR portal page or on the main website. If it is not possible to complete a claim form on line, please put the following information into your email:

***Name:***

***Payroll Number (if known):***

***Date of birth:***

***NI Number:***

***Department:***

***Type of Staff e.g. Business Support, FE Teaching, HE Teaching***

***Week Commencing:***

***Date:***

***Day of Week:***

***Hours Claimed:***

***Total Hours for Week:***

Please note if you are emailing from a private email, you must include your date of birth and NI number for data protection purposes.

On your return to work your timesheet(s) will be authorised by your line manager or if you have submitted an email you will need to complete a timesheet.

Notes:

1. **In the event of workplace disruption, the payment of holiday pay to hourly paid staff may be delayed**
2. **Please also note that this temporary process may mean an under or overpayment of salary which will be corrected at the earliest practicable pay run.**

***Q9. What will happen if I cannot attend work because, for example, my child's school is closed?***

In these circumstances the College's policy on Dependents leave will apply. This is intended to allow staff to take a reasonable period of time off work to deal with an unexpected or sudden problem and make any necessary or longer term

arrangements. This time off is usually one or two days and is unpaid. You may also take annual leave or, in agreement with your line manager, in certain circumstances, you may be able to work at home.

***Q10. I have another query to do with my pay or conditions whilst away from work, what should I do?***

If your query is not answered below and/or you need immediate advice– please email [HRCorona@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:HRCorona@colchester.ac.uk)

***Q11. During this time of heightened risk due to Coronavirus, can I work more flexibly?***

As long as the College's operational needs continue to be met, you may be able to:

- adapt your working patterns, for example to allow you to travel on public transport at less crowded times; or
- work from home if your role allows for this, for an extended period without having to follow our formal procedure. You can agree informally with your line manager to these changes.
- work from an alternative CI location, and in some cases, you might be asked to do this

You should speak to your line manager if you wish to take advantage of any of these options, or any other flexible working options that may help you at this time.

However, the decision as to whether or not to agree to your request for flexible working remains with your line manager.

Once agreed, the temporary flexible working arrangement will continue until further notice. If circumstances change, your manager will discuss with you any adaptations to, or the withdrawal of, the flexible working arrangement, with the final decision remaining with your manager.

***Q12. What happens if the College closes or certain operations cease, or certain campuses are closed?***

Given the current global health situation, you may be asked to work remotely at short notice. This could be the case if the College closes unexpectedly as a precaution or public health measures, such as an area-wide lockdown, are introduced.

This could mean working from home, although you may have the option to work remotely from one of our other work sites if it remains open.

Working from home could include checking emails, interacting on-line with students and their work, assessing work, planning resources and courses, as well as self-directed or line manager directed CPD. In many support roles it will be possible to undertake many normal tasks and duties. It is a reasonable expectation that you will check your emails at least every two hours during normal working hours.

If you do not believe it is possible for you to work from home, notify your line manager and they will confirm that this is the case for you.

You should ensure that, where possible, if you have one, you take your laptop home with you after work each day. You can access your emails remotely from most devices and computers by clicking on this link or pasting into your browser <https://mail.colchester.ac.uk>

***Q13. How will managers and colleagues communicate with me whilst I am working remotely?***

Most commonly, communication will be through the college's email system, though sometimes managers might phone a colleague.

Colleagues are asked to check work emails at least once every two hours during their normal work hours, as the situation might change quickly.

In checking work emails, please try to do so using the web based mail service, do this by visiting <https://mail.colchester.ac.uk>

It is also possible to access emails, and other work, from the [VDI desktop](#), but there is a limit on user numbers and so the web based link above is a better choice when only email is needed. If you use the VDI desktop, please log off, if taking a break from using it to allow others access.

If you need assistance in using the VDI, please click on this [link](#) for an instruction document

***Q14. Can I contact students to support them with College matters while I am not at work during this period?***

Yes. Use the College's own systems. If using email, use your college email address to contact student email addresses. Do not use personal email addresses with students.

Avoid direct phone calls with students, unless from a college phone. Do not use your own personal phone. If you perceive an absolute Safeguarding emergency that means you must use a personal phone, involve your manager.

If using a Social Media messaging group (say, Facebook) ensure at least one other colleague is also a member of that group. If using a video conferencing facility, such as Skype, ensure that more than one other person/another staff member is a party to the discussion.

Use common sense and your Safeguarding training to communicate in a way that keeps you and students safe.

**Please note that any abuse of the temporary arrangements for pay and/or absence from work during this period, will result in disciplinary action.**

## 2. Events, Travel and Trips (College-related and personal)

### ***Q15. Should I still attend external meetings/training courses/conferences?***

It will be better to look at alternatives to attending external meetings ie video conferencing. If you are booked onto a training course or conference and have concerns, please contact Staff Development.

### ***Q16. Are events and trips still going ahead?***

Each trip and event will be assessed on a case by case basis following a conversation between the trip or event organiser and their SLT/CE member. Presently curriculum managers are being advised not to plan further new trips or events.

### ***Q17. Are visitors still allowed on college premises?***

Yes, but they should read and comply with the notices in reception areas and confirm that under current guidance, they are fit to enter college premises. Larger events and gatherings will be kept under review.

### ***Q18. What happens if I have been or plan to go to a restricted area?***

If you have been in a restricted area you must inform your line manager and email the [HRCorona@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:HRCorona@colchester.ac.uk) immediately.

Travel to restricted areas is strictly inadvisable, but unusually an area could become 'restricted' whilst you are away. If you travel to an area at risk of becoming restricted for example on a holiday or for family reasons, you must inform your line manager and [HRCorona@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:HRCorona@colchester.ac.uk) before you depart of where you are going.

If you return from a restricted area, you must not come straight back to work. Even if you have no symptoms, we will ask you to follow current FCO guidance which could be to self-isolate for 14 days after your return from the restricted area.

On your return from a restricted area, your first step should be to visit the [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) website, where you can get further medical advice via telephone. You should do this even if you do not have any symptoms.

If possible, you should avoid going to your doctor or a hospital to prevent infection from spreading.

### ***Q19. How do I cancel my annual leave?***

During the coronavirus situation, you may change your mind about travelling, or be unable to travel to your planned destination, and may wish to cancel or change annual leave that you have already booked.

If you would like to cancel or change planned leave, please speak to your line manager. They will need to email SelectHR to cancel the leave

### 3. Queries relating to students

#### ***Q20. What if a student or parent asks for advice because they or their son/daughter are feeling unwell?***

1. Take a brief description of their symptoms and/or the details of any place they may have visited.
2. Advise the student to go home if their symptoms match COVID-19 and stress they follow government advice, using the website (rather than phoning 111). Currently this is that they must self-isolate for seven days if they have a new, persistent cough or a high temperature.
3. Ask them to update the College on their status using the 'Coronavirus Update' banner link on the website
4. If it is confirmed that they do not have COVID-19, they should return to college when they are feeling better.
5. Report the student name, ID via the 'Coronavirus Update' banner link on the website

#### ***Q21. How should I mark a student absent if they are self-isolating?***

They should be marked as 'O' in this instance and set work via moodle. Alternatively if the student is too ill to work from home they should be marked as 'S' (Sick)

### 4. Other questions

#### ***Q22. How will I know a campus is temporarily closed?***

Information will be posted on the college's website and this will be for students and for staff, including about a planned re-opening when that is known

#### ***Q23. Should I be concerned if I witness cleaning staff in full PPE?***

No. The College will deep clean areas whenever it is notified of a person who may have shown some of the symptoms associated with COVID-19, as a precaution.

#### ***Q24. What can I do to reduce infections spreading?***

You should wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water. In particular, you should wash your hands after going to the toilet, before eating or handling food, and when you get to work/get home. We also provide hand sanitiser dispensers throughout our work locations, for use when soap and water are not available.

In addition, please ensure that you:

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze;
- put any used tissues in the bin straightaway and wash your hands immediately after handling used tissues;
- try to avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth if you have not washed your hands recently; and
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- avoid shaking hands or greeting people with physical contact