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English Path

COVID-19 Additional Outbreak Contingency Plan

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English Path

COVID-19 Additional Outbreak Contingency Plan

This paper provides updates on the actions taken to-date in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as a contingency plan in case of another lockdown.

Introduction and Context

English Path (EP from now on) operates across five sites in four cities – London, Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham. If a Covid-19 outbreak occurs, EP is able to move to online provision of teaching within one week. There is minimum interruption to studies and all students are able to complete their academic courses of study. The measures EP takes includes delivering lectures online (with recorded versions available for students), providing laptops for students when required, increasing access to pastoral care and welfare support, and boosting attendance and progression monitoring.

EP continues to monitor UK Government and Public Health England (PHE) announcements and guidance (locally, regionally, and nationally) and acts in accordance with lockdown restrictions.

Current Response

For the 2021-2022 academic year, EP has planned both online learning and face-to-face teaching. Face-to-face teaching has been planned for a maximum of 15 students, who will be placed in a “protective bubble”. Students will be taught in classrooms designed to accommodate 56 students. Additional time has been allocated to ensure appropriate cleaning and disinfecting of spaces takes place before a second bubble is allowed on campus.

Additionally, the following measures are now in place:

- Hygiene posters in toilets (information on maintaining personal hygiene)
- Hand sanitisers available in receptions and hallways
- Daily temperature check upon arrival (applies to all visitors and across all campuses)
- Relevant staff monitoring PHE and NHS sites for updated information
- Procedures are in place for when EP is informed of a lecturer or student self-isolating or being tested for the virus
- Prepared statements for localised (i.e., small groups) or campus-wide incidents
- Increased daily cleaning in communal areas (handrails, doorplates, handles, etc.)
- A communication plan for staff and students

Contingency Plan for the 2021-2022 Academic Year

Ongoing **(Green)**

- Continued monitoring of government guidelines
- Monitoring and maintenance of EP risk register
- Measure in place in line with current government guidelines

One positive case of COVID-19 amongst EP students **(Yellow Alert)**

In the event of one positive case of COVID-19 amongst students, the Academic Manager will immediately inform the Senior Management Team (SMT). Information to be conveyed includes the student's name, group, and bubble identification, as well as any other relevant information conveyed by the student (such as date of identification, possible contact points within EP, etc.).

The bubble to which the student belonged will then be quarantined with immediate effect (in line with government guidance) and if symptoms develop all members of the bubble will be advised to undergo testing and to report the results to EP (via the Student Services Manager).

The bubble will now be completely transitioned to online learning, and EP will ensure it communicates all timely information and support mechanisms.

The SMT will now monitor the EP risk register and make decisions as appropriate.

Following this, the bubble will be moved back to blended learning three weeks after the identification of the case – provided all students have been symptom-free for the previous two weeks.

One positive case of COVID-19 amongst EP staff or faculty **(Yellow Alert)**

Staff members will notify their line manager and HR at the first onset of symptoms. They will then be asked to self-isolate and any staff members who have been in contact with them will be notified and, if necessary, asked to self-isolate too. Affected staff members will move to working from home when appropriate and until required.

If an employee has been impacted, any students in contact with that faculty member will be informed and, if required, the relevant bubble(s) will move to online teaching, in line with the procedures above.

More than one positive case of COVID-19 amongst EP students **(Amber alert)**

In the event of more than one positive case of COVID-19 amongst students (i.e., within the same group or within different bubbles) the Academic Manager(s) will immediately inform the Head of School and the Student Services Officer. They will then consider whether the entire campus needs to move to online teaching or if more than one bubble needs to be quarantined. In case of bubbles being quarantined, the same procedures as above will apply.

If an entire campus moves to online teaching, the same measures as above will also be applied (i.e., the campus will not be open for in-person teaching and all students will be taught online). Communication will be sent to all students based at that campus with timely information and signposted support mechanisms.

The SMT will then monitor the risk register and make decisions as appropriate and in line with local conditions and local government guidance as required.

The campus will be reopened once the SMT have assessed all the risks and deem it appropriate and safe to do so.

Regional or National lockdown as per government guidelines (Red alert)

If the government issues guidelines for a regional or national lockdown, EP will be able to enforce this with immediate effect. Infrastructure is in place for a smooth and immediate transition to online delivery. EP has invested in improved systems and software to ensure that student learning continues uninterrupted and smoothly.

The SMT will continue to monitor the risk register and make decisions as appropriate. Students will be kept informed of developments and decisions in a timely manner and will be provided with support mechanisms.

Appendix 1: Communication plan – Internal and External

Event	Initial Response - Responsibility	Escalation - Responsibility	Mode	Timeframe
Incident reported to Student Services Manager by student	Academic Manager to inform Head of School	Head of School to inform SMT	WhatsApp, or Email	Immediate
Incident reported to line manager	Line manager to inform HR	HR to inform SMT	WhatsApp, Teams or Email	Immediate
Inform student(s) in contact with affected individual	SMT to inform Head of School of extent of quarantine/lockdown	Head of School to confirm to Student Services who will liaise with Relevant Academic Manager	WhatsApp/Text/VLE/Email/Phone	Immediate
Inform staff, faculty or support staff who have been in contact with the affected individual	SMT to inform Head of School and HR of extent of quarantine/lockdown	Head of School to confirm to Academic Manager who will liaise with relevant Student Services	WhatsApp/Text/Teams and Email	Immediate
EP-wide communication in case of campus-wide lockdown (internal/external comms)	SMT to inform CEO and HR	Students and staff to be sent prepared statements by HR and PM	WhatsApp/Text, Email and Intranet, Teams VLE	Immediate
EP shuts down one school (internal/external comms)	SMT to confirm decision	Students and staff to be sent prepared statements by HR and PM	Email; appropriate form WhatsApp/Text, Email and Intranet, Teams VLE	Within 24 hours

EP students to be signposted to support mechanisms	Student Services Managers to Inform Head of School	Student Services Managers to send out appropriate prepared statements	Email, VLE, WhatsApp	Within 24 hours
Inform Facilities to ensure that ongoing remedial actions take place	Head of School	Facilities Manager	Email and WhatsApp/Text, Teams	Immediate
Communicate any update from government	Head of School /HR	SMT	Email and Phone	Immediate
Review Communication plan	Head of School	SMT	Email, Intranet	Monthly; to be modified as required

SMT = Senior Management Team, AM = Academic Manager, SS = Student Services

Appendix 2: Action Plan

Activity/ Scenario	Currently	Yellow	Amber	Red
Teaching	Blended delivery	Affected bubble to be quarantined and advised to be tested. Online delivery only for affected bubble. Blended delivery for the rest of the students.	Blended delivery for affected bubble or entire campus lockdown – SMT to monitor risk register and make decision as appropriate	All delivered remotely
Student Support	Services provided on-site, with appropriate safeguards in place	Services provided on-site, with increased safeguards in place	Services provided on-site, with increased safeguards in place	All delivered remotely
Technical IT services and systems	Services provided on-site, with appropriate safeguards in place	On-site systems supported; Majority of staff working off-site	On-site systems supported; Majority of staff working off site	All systems/services and staff online
Libraries	Services provided on-site with click-and collect-service	Services provided on-site with click-and-collect service (unless affected)	Library remains closed	Library remains closed
Grounds and building	Student access to classrooms and toilet facilities only. Student common areas closed until further notice	Some temporary classroom closure due to affected bubble No change to student common Areas	Further temporary classroom closure due to affected bubble(s) Campus will not be open for in-person teaching, and all students will be taught online	All buildings remain closed; services are provided remotely
Office-based working	Work on campus	All staff working remotely where Necessary	All staff working remotely where possible	All staff working remotely