**Health and Safety Guidelines in relation to Covid, Flu and other respiratory diseases for academic year 2023-24**

Covid-19 is no longer designated a global pandemic, and all government restrictions have been lifted. However, the University intends to retain some control measures to promote good hygiene and reduce the prevalence of Covid-19, flu and other respiratory diseases within the Hope community. Government / NHS guidance for Covid-19 remains similar to that given for flu and respiratory outbreaks each winter.

The risk of a Covid-19 outbreak on campus remains a threat to the Hope community. Unlike other respiratory infections, the challenge with Covid-19 is that someone can be infected, but remain asymptomatic. As testing is no longer mandatory, people may not be aware they are infectious. Therefore, the following guidance and precautions have been retained to reduce the risk of a major outbreak.

1. **Classrooms.** Cleaning materials continue to be provided in all classrooms with monthly application of Zoono cleaning spray. This provides an anti-microbial surface shield to prevent the spread of germs for up to 30 days. Room capacity and classroom arrangements remain unchanged from 2022/23 and still includes a 2 metres space at the front of each room.
2. **CO2 monitors**. CO2 monitors will continue to be used within the naturally ventilated classrooms as good practice to monitor air quality and ventilation.
3. **Residential accommodation**. Any staff that need to regularly enter residential buildings will have PPE made available to them, should they wish to use it. This includes Domestic Services, the Residential Life team and Campus Services.
4. **Student Facing services**. Screens have been removed in all areas. The screens have been retained and can be quickly reinstated should an outbreak in future require it.
5. **Hand sanitisers**. These remain stocked and available on all campuses. The additional cleaning protocols introduced in shared or communal areas, such as shared offices and security lodges are to be retained.
6. **Staff absences**. If a member of staff has a positive Covid test, or does not feel well enough to continue working due to a respiratory illness, their sickness absence will be recorded in the normal way. Staff are advised to remain at home for **five days** following a positive Covid-19 test. Staff should be mindful and seek to avoid interaction with colleagues known to be at greater risk from Covid-19 infection for 10 days.

All teaching is to be done face to face and Heads / Deans will be required to find alternative solutions to covering classes for colleagues that are ill.

1. **Vaccination.** Staff are encouraged to take advantage of flu and Covid-19 vaccinations when offered by NHS England. This particularly applies to those considered to be in a higher risk category. This autumn/winter, the University will again fund Flu vaccinations for those who do not qualify for free vaccinations from the NHS.
2. **Free Tests.** The University will continue to keep a supply of Covid-19 tests at all the Security Lodges of all three campuses for the testing of staff or students that feel unwell.
3. **Masks.** Masks are no longer required; however, individuals are free to wear masks to protect themselves from infection if they wish.
4. **Student illness / Hall Outbreaks.** Students are encouraged to remain at home for **five days** following a positive Covid-19 test and not attend University. If living in halls, students should try to remain in their own room as much as possible during this period, limit contact with other students and use separate sanitised cutlery while eating. Students should practice high levels of good hygiene when using shared bathroom spaces, cleaning and sanitising after use where possible. Wellbeing Assistants should be informed of any illnesses within their halls and escalate to the Residential Life Co-ordinator, Laura Seddon.

The University will continue to closely monitor Public Health England and Government advice and will act promptly should guidance change or in the event of a major outbreak on campus. In the event of a spike in infections the University will quickly revisit these rules and make changes as appropriate.