



NPTC Group of Colleges – 16 March 2020

FAQ Coronavirus (also called COVID-19)

This update includes the new advice provided by Public Health Wales and information from the World Health Organisation on protecting our mental health.

What are the symptoms of Coronavirus?

Coronavirus (aka COVID-19) causes symptoms similar to other illnesses such as the flu. These may include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fever

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, or older people and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

How do I prevent the spread of the infection?

Public Health Wales (PHW) guidance is:

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#) ¹
- put used tissues in the bin straight away
- wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel (with an alcohol content of 60% minimum) if soap and water are not available. See [hand washing guidance](#)
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

What will happen if there is a confirmed case of Coronavirus in College?

If a confirmed case is identified in the College, Public Health Wales/NHS will advise the College management, staff and students of the action to be taken. Information will be posted on the NPTC website.

(*Contacts* are not considered cases and if they are well they are very unlikely to have spread the infection to others).

How will I know if the College is closed?

We will put information about any campus closures on our College website www.nptcgroup.ac.uk. This is the official source of information and you should not take instruction from any social media site.

If my college campus is closed – will I get my EMA or WGLG?

If the college is closed, nobody will be disadvantaged in the short-term. You will not need to ring the Absence Line. Longer term, we will take advice from the Student Loan Company who administer these funds.

What should I do if I become unwell in college and I believe I have been exposed to Coronavirus?

If you become unwell, in college inform your tutor and go straight home. Then call the Absence Line on **01639 648640**. You will be advised when to phone in again.

How do I tell College about my absence if I am required to self-isolate, and will I be paid any EMA or WGLG?

The College Absence Policy will cover 'Self-Isolation'. You need to ring the Absence Line on **01639 648640** and explain that you are self-isolating. You will be asked to state your name and student ID number the time and date you sought **online** Public Health Wales (PHW) advice and;

- If you self-isolating because you are ill
- If you are self-isolating because a member of your family is ill
- If you are isolating because you have **been tested** and have a **confirmed result for coronavirus**

We will tell you when to phone in again, you will not have to ring every day.

Can I do assignments from home during a period of self-isolation?

If your course permits, working from home will be agreed with your Tutor. You can contact your tutor using the email address they gave you when you started at College. All College email addresses use the following format - forename.surname@nptcgroup.ac.uk

What if I need to take time off to care for somebody else - will I get paid?

If you have a relative who is ill or your children's school is closed for example, then you need to contact the Absence Line on 01639 648640.

The best way to reduce any risk of infection is good hygiene, washing your hands with soap and water and avoiding direct or close contact (closer than 2 metres) with any potentially infected person. Anti-bacterial gel with an alcohol content less than 60% is ineffective.

Links to helpful resources:

<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101/resources/5016>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866065/Handwashing_techniques.pdf

The World Health Organisation has released some helpful advice on protecting our mental health during the coronavirus outbreak

1. Stay connected with people

Increasing numbers will join those already in self-isolation so now might be a good time to make sure you have the right phone numbers and email addresses of the people you care about.

- Agree regular check-in times and feel connected to the people around you.
- If you need to self-isolate in the future, strike a balance between having a routine and making sure each day has some variety.
- It might end up actually feeling like quite a productive two weeks. You could work through your to-do list or read a book you'd been meaning to get to.

2. Avoid burnout

With weeks and months of the coronavirus pandemic ahead, it is important to have down time. Mind recommends continuing to access nature and sunlight wherever possible. Do exercise, eat well and stay hydrated.

3. AnxietyUK suggests practising the "**Apple**" technique to deal with anxiety and worries.

- **Acknowledge** - Notice and acknowledge the uncertainty as it comes to mind.
- **Pause** - Do not react as you normally do. Do not react at all. Pause and breathe.
- **Pull back** - Tell yourself this is just the worry talking, and this apparent need for certainty is not helpful and not necessary. It is only a thought or feeling. Do not believe everything you think. Thoughts are not statements or facts.
- **Let go** - Let go of the thought or feeling. It will pass. You do not have to respond to them. You might imagine them floating away in a bubble or cloud.
- **Explore - Explore** the present moment, because right now, in this moment, all is well. Notice your breathing and the sensations of your breathing. Notice the ground beneath you. Look around and notice what you see, what you hear, what you can touch, what you can smell. Right now. Then shift your focus of attention to something else - on what you need to do, on what you were doing before you noticed the worry, or do something else - mindfully with your full attention.

Further support and guidance is also available from the following links;

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_10

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/blog/health-and-other-forms-of-anxiety-and-coronavirus/>