



Coronavirus: A Guide for Learners

Coronavirus: A guide for learners

As your training provider, we have a duty of care to protect your welfare and safety and this document outlines the approach we are taking to delay and mitigate the risks posed to you as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This document also includes guidance about what to do if you, or someone in your household becomes unwell, or if your working situation changes. This guide applies to all individuals currently enrolled onto an apprenticeship programme with Apprenticeship Connect and has been created in line with the Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020⁶.

Introduction

This guide has been created in response to the rising cases of coronavirus in the UK which causes COVID-19, a new illness which affects the lungs and airways of those who contract the virus. As of 16th March 2020, the risk of coronavirus to the public in the UK was raised from moderate to high⁴.

NHS England classify the following as symptoms of COVID-19⁹:

- a high temperature - this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough - this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

Our approach to assessing learner risk

We take a considered approach to the risk level of all learners as a result of their individual circumstances based on their age, medical conditions and personal circumstances in order to support future decision making to safeguard learners.

The table below outlines the conditions which will be viewed as low/high risk using the guidance issued by the UK Government in relation to social distancing¹⁰:

Risk level	Condition	Explanation
High	A learner is aged 70 or over	Individuals in this category are believed to be at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) and are being asked to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.
High	A learner has one or more pre-existing medical conditions	Individuals with the following pre-existing medical conditions are believed to be at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) and are being asked to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as <u>asthma</u>, <u>chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)</u>, <u>emphysema</u> or <u>bronchitis</u>• chronic heart disease, such as <u>heart failure</u>• <u>chronic kidney disease</u>• chronic liver disease, such as <u>hepatitis</u>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chronic neurological conditions, such as <u>Parkinson's disease</u>, <u>motor neurone disease</u>, <u>multiple sclerosis (MS)</u>, a learning disability or cerebral palsy • <u>diabetes</u> • problems with your spleen - for example, <u>sickle cell disease</u> or if you have had your spleen removed • a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as <u>HIV and AIDS</u>, or medicines such as <u>steroid tablets</u> or <u>chemotherapy</u> • being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
High	A learner who has been contacted by the NHS England to inform them directly that they are at high risk.	Some clinical conditions are seen to put people at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If a learner is in this category, the NHS will directly contact them with advice about the more stringent measures they should take in order to keep themselves and others safe.
High	A learner who is caring for, or living with, someone considered as a high risk	As an organisation, we deem a learner who is caring for an individual categorised as high risk as they may pose increased risk to that individual if they are infected with the virus.
High	A learner who has been in to contact with someone known to have the coronavirus within the last 14 days	If a learner has been in contact with an infected individual, their chances of also contracting the virus is seen to be higher than that of an individual who has had no contact with an infected individual.
High	A learner who has been advised by the UK Government or NHS officials to self-isolate	The organisation will follow all official health and government guidance closely and therefore any learner requested to self-isolate by the Government or NHS will be seen as high risk. This may be as a result of their own symptoms, or the health of those they live with.
High	A learner is an expectant mother	Individuals in this category are believed to be at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) and are being asked to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.
Low	A learner who does not meet any of the criteria above	Learners who are not considered high risk.

What to do if you believe you are 'high risk'

If you believe you fall into the high risk category, please notify the Safeguarding team as soon as possible by emailing help@apprenticeshipconnect.co.uk to ensure the we are able to respond to changes in Government and health official guidance in your best interests based on your individual circumstances. If you are a 'high risk' individual, we will continue to monitor official guidance closely to ensure additional precautions are taken as required should the measures outlined by the UK Government be relaxed following the initial three-week period.

How to prevent the virus

We recommend you take the following steps to prevent you catching or spreading coronavirus:

- wash your hands with soap and water often - do this for at least 20 seconds
- always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- follow Government social distancing guidance closely and abide by all official guidance restricting the movement of people
- stay 2 metres (3 steps) away from other people, if you need to go outside

What to do if you feel unwell

1. Follow Government advice surrounding [guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).
2. Following the development of symptoms, you should notify the Safeguarding team immediately by emailing help@apprenticeshipconnect.co.uk including the following:
 - the date you started to feel unwell
 - the symptoms you are experiencing
 - whether you have been in to contact with anyone known to have the coronavirus within the past 14 days
 - the advice given to you by 111 (if applicable)
 - whether you are working from home during self-isolation or are unable to work
3. If your symptoms worsen and you feel you require professional care, you should call the NHS's patient advice service immediately on '111' for further instruction or use the [online 111 Coronavirus service](#). **Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.**

What to do if someone in your home becomes unwell

In line with Government advice surrounding [guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#), you may be required to stay at home for up to 14 days as a result of illness in your household.

If you are requested to stay at home as a result of household illness you may be able to continue your studies remotely as all training has been digitalised to support distance learning during this time. If you become unwell yourself and are unable to study, please notify the Safeguarding team as soon as possible by emailing help@apprenticeshipconnect.co.uk.

Changes we're making

In order to protect your health and welfare, we are following Government guidance on [staying at home and away from others](#)¹¹.

The Government guidance states¹¹:

“You should only leave the house for one of four reasons:

- Shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
- One form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.
- Any medical need, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- Travelling to and from work, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home.”

As a result of this guidance, all Apprenticeship Connect employees, regardless of their age, medical condition or personal circumstances have been requested to work from home until further notice. These changes will remain in place for a minimum of three weeks from 23rd March 2020. If the position of the UK Government changes in relation to the timescales of enforcement of such measures, we will make further changes to procedures in line with official guidance. The table below outlines the adjustments to Apprenticeship Connect operations from 23rd March 2020.

Adjustment	Explanation	Timeline
Closure of offices	All Apprenticeship Connect staff have been moved to remote working but remain contactable through the usual lines of remote communication including email and telephone contact.	Until further notice
Placement support	If you require re-placement as a result of changes to employment, our recruitment team will continue to support replacement into alternative employment as usual. However, all activity will be conducted remote.	Until further notice
Inductions	If you require a course induction, this will continue as usual via remote induction with the Training Centre Team.	Until further notice
Teaching and learning	All teaching sessions will take place via video conferencing, no face-to-face tuition will take place and all tutors will be contactable as usual.	Until further notice
Learner and/or employer meetings	Should a meeting be required with you or your employer, aside from teaching, this will take place remote via video conferencing only.	Until further notice
Assessments and examinations	All assessments and examinations will be moved to remote assessment where possible and awarding body guidance followed closely. Should adjustments be required to assessments and/or examinations, you will be contacted to outline the specific adjustments on a case-by-case basis.	Until further notice
Certification	Due to reasons beyond our control, we are unable to issue certificates of completion until further notice. If you complete during this period you will be issued a 'Confirmation of Completion' letter and you will be contacted directly about the status of your certificates. All queries relating to certification should be sent to certificates@apprenticeshipconnect.co.uk	Until further notice

If you are unsure of how these adjustments will impact you, please contact the Safeguarding team by emailing help@apprenticeshipconnect.co.uk.

What to do if your situation has changed

If you experience changes to your working status such as reduced working hours, temporary lay-off, redundancy or dismissal, please contact the Safeguarding team as soon as possible following notification of changes by emailing help@apprenticeshipconnect.co.uk. You do not need to inform us if you are temporarily working from home as a result of coronavirus.

Guidance if you are planning to travel outside of the UK

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) is currently advising against all, or all but essential travel outside of the UK⁸. Therefore, we strongly suggest you refrain from travelling outside of the UK for the foreseeable future. We encourage you to observe travel restrictions issued by the UK Government and official health authorities in relation to the destination of travel. We also recommend you safeguard against any potential impact of travelling overseas and purchase appropriate travel insurance ahead of travelling which covers health and emergency situations. Travel insurance terms and conditions should be scrutinised closely to review any potential adjustments to cover as a result of the coronavirus.

Disclaimer: All sources referenced below and the information contained within this policy is believed to be accurate as of 24th March 2020. The organisation makes every effort to ensure information is provided with fatal accuracy. Please note, the gov.uk website is continually updated and therefore sources of this nature may change frequently. Official guidance will be observed daily and required adjustments implemented timely.

Sources

² Information about the virus (gov.uk) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-covid-19>

³ COVID-19 Virus Infection and Pregnancy (Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists) - <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy/>

⁴ Returning travellers (gov.uk)- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public#returning-travellers>

⁵ Sick pay from day one for those affected by coronavirus (gov.uk)- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/sick-pay-from-day-one-for-those-affected-by-coronavirus>

⁶ Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2020/129/contents/made>

⁷ Travel advice: coronavirus (COVID-19) (gov.uk) - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

⁸ Foreign travel advice (gov.uk)- <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

⁹ Coronavirus COVID-19 (NHS)- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

¹⁰ Guidance on social distancing for everyone in the UK (gov.uk)- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

¹¹ Full guidance on staying at home and away from others (gov.uk)- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others>