Dear student

**Important information about returning to College**

Following our recent communications to you, we will be welcoming some students and apprentices back on campus and to community venues from next week.

For some, this will be a return to classroom learning for your full timetable; for others this will be a return to a week onsite, week online model, and for some students learning will continue to remain fully online.

Your college tutor/assessor will contact you directly with what this means for you. They will also keep you informed of any further changes moving forward, in line with Government guidance.

*Clinically extremely vulnerable students should continue to shield and are advised not to attend college until after the Easter break when further communications will follow. These students will continue to be supported through remote learning.*

The health and safety of our staff, students and apprentices remains our number one priority. Included in this letter are really important details related to your health and safety whilst at college, including details of our new asymptomatic testing facility. We urge you to take time to fully read these details before returning onsite.

Please note, to participate in testing, students/apprentices are required to complete an online consent form. You will also need to book a test using our online booking system. See full details below.

For more information, please visit our FAQs page on our websites:

[N](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.accross.ac.uk%2Fnews%2Fcoronavirus-advice%2Fcovid-faqs%2F&data=04|01|Anita.Monaghan@NelsonGroup.ac.uk|7f2f9c9f58384b29131108d8df068a55|ec8185ce4f05448b828746c0185766e2|0|0|637504566466734900|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|1000&sdata=znW0gIgMYAwnNkVAmb4WCgkdFCr3GTOh9d0Od2%2BGAfc%3D&reserved=0)elson and Colne College: [COVID-19 FAQs](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nelson.ac.uk%2Fnews%2Fcoronavirus-advice%2Fcovid-19-faqs%2F&data=04|01|Anita.Monaghan@NelsonGroup.ac.uk|7f2f9c9f58384b29131108d8df068a55|ec8185ce4f05448b828746c0185766e2|0|0|637504566466734900|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|1000&sdata=UntIEBLuTg6RFo%2FyV3dxFe3At6VO0jYPDhaSC0JkrrQ%3D&reserved=0)

Accrington and Rossendale College: [COVID-19 FAQs](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.accross.ac.uk%2Fnews%2Fcoronavirus-advice%2Fcovid-faqs%2F&data=04|01|Anita.Monaghan@NelsonGroup.ac.uk|7f2f9c9f58384b29131108d8df068a55|ec8185ce4f05448b828746c0185766e2|0|0|637504566466734900|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|1000&sdata=znW0gIgMYAwnNkVAmb4WCgkdFCr3GTOh9d0Od2%2BGAfc%3D&reserved=0)

Lancashire Adult Learning: [Coronavirus Advice](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.lal.ac.uk%2Fnews-and-events%2Fadvice-for-staff-and-students-about-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus%2F&data=04|01|Anita.Monaghan@NelsonGroup.ac.uk|7f2f9c9f58384b29131108d8df068a55|ec8185ce4f05448b828746c0185766e2|0|0|637504566466724946|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|1000&sdata=TJ2StTNbb%2FzLdU0MfbYrh6WumTHe4S6yE0rxGlJJzkg%3D&reserved=0)

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**Asymptomatic testing**

*For students returning to study at our Nelson and Accrington campuses during the day*

To keep our staff, students and apprentices safe onsite, we will be supporting regular rapid testing for Coronavirus at our college campuses. These tests will support the return of face-to-face learning by helping to identify students who are infectious but do not have any COVID symptoms. The Lateral Flow Devices which will be used for the tests have received regulatory approval from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for self-use.

As part of the return to learning plan, students/apprentices will be offered a maximum of 3 tests, 3 to 5 days apart. Testing will take place for 3 weeks from 8th March. After the initial programme of testing on college sites, students/apprentices will then be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home.  Guidance for home testing will be provided nearer the time.

Taking a test is voluntary and students/apprentices not undergoing testing will be able to attend college, however, we would encourage everyone to participate in the asymptomatic testing programme to help break transmission links by identifying those who may be carrying the virus unknowingly, to keep everyone safe.

If necessary students/apprentices may book a test for a day when they are not otherwise timetabled to be on campus. In this case, students should ensure that they attend site for the purpose of taking the test only, i.e. you should come to site just in time for your test slot and depart site as soon as possible afterwards.

*Please note, that for adult learners attending a college campus in the evening or one of our community venues, testing facilities are not currently available. However, we are expecting further guidance from the Department for Education at the end of March. Further information will be provided in due course.*

**\*\*Consent for testing – action required\*\***

Before taking a test on site students/apprentices will need to complete a consent form. This can be accessed by clicking this link to this [online form](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdocs.google.com%2Fforms%2Fd%2Fe%2F1FAIpQLSdSRc5eYHk7PoQXORvUnWnvO6GD9202-KIDE0-wH2BTtZDGcA%2Fviewform&data=04|01|Alison.Rushton@NelsonGroup.ac.uk|6ceb4c6adc194e53597308d8de617de1|ec8185ce4f05448b828746c0185766e2|0|0|637503857588321946|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|1000&sdata=n2FH%2B6ILXRZq3cXBcXyV%2BGGyEKoCFinRM8LrlGIi%2BDM%3D&reserved=0) – please complete this form at least 24 hours before your first test.

**\*\*Booking a test– action required\*\***

Testing will be available to students/apprentices who study onsite at our Nelson and Accrington campuses as follows;

* Nelson campus - Monday to Friday 9:30am until 4:00pm each day
* Accrington campus – Monday to Friday 9:30am until 2:00pm each day

Tests can be booked using the following links:

* Nelson campus – <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/covidbookingsncc>
* Accrington campus - <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/covidbookingsarc>

When booking a test, students/apprentices are required to add their name and email address. In order to receive confirmation of your booking, your name and email address must be added, but your home address is not required.

Students/apprentices are invited to book a maximum of three tests from Monday 8th March 2021 up to and including Friday 26th March 2021, leaving a gap of at least 3 to 5 days between each test. If necessary, you have permission to book a test during class time.

It is essential that you attend your test appointments at the times that you have booked and make sure you are available for the full 30 minutes that it takes to register and administer the test. Unfortunately, latecomers will not be admitted, and you will need to rebook.

Remember to wear a face covering (unless exempt) and sanitise your hands on arrival of each test appointment.

Trained staff will meet you at the testing centres and support through the registration and testing process.

**How the tests work**

Those students/apprentices who take a test will be supervised by trained staff. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results will be available around half an hour to an hour from testing and will be shared with students. Tests are free of charge.

**What if I receive a positive test result?**

If a student/apprentice tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will be informed immediately and will be supported by staff at college to get home. They will need to follow NHS Stay at Home guidance and self-isolate along with other members of their household for 10 days. Students/apprentices will be supported to access online learning during this time.

If a student/apprentice receives a positive test result, they should avoid using public transport and, wherever possible, be collected by a member of their family or household.

**Frequently asked questions - testing**

For more frequently asked questions on the new testing scheme, please visit:

[Accrington and Rossendale College website](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.accross.ac.uk%2Ftesting-scheme%2F&data=04|01|Alison.Rushton@NelsonGroup.ac.uk|6ceb4c6adc194e53597308d8de617de1|ec8185ce4f05448b828746c0185766e2|0|0|637503857588341861|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|1000&sdata=noNQc4Ld9LyUFbzp99%2FHOXc%2BogJTXwuP7%2BVDjRhZ4qg%3D&reserved=0)

[Nelson and Colne College website](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nelson.ac.uk%2Fcovid-testing-scheme%2F&data=04|01|Alison.Rushton@NelsonGroup.ac.uk|6ceb4c6adc194e53597308d8de617de1|ec8185ce4f05448b828746c0185766e2|0|0|637503857588341861|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|1000&sdata=djJv%2FnCnJ61VCM3vlN8SVjHWLMMcj9JKY6Z5dgqML1M%3D&reserved=0)

**Face masks – mandatory on campus**

All students/apprentices must continue to bring a suitable face mask to college, and also for those learners in community venues. As previously, these must be worn on college transport, while moving around corridors and in the classroom and/or workshops. Unlike before, the wearing of face visors or shields should not routinely be worn as an alternative to face coverings. They may protect against droplet spread in specific circumstances but are unlikely to be effective in preventing aerosol transmission. In an education setting environment they are unlikely to offer appropriate protection to the wearer and should only be used after carrying out a risk assessment for the specific situation.

The responsibility for providing masks lies with the student/apprentice/parent and not the college. Although, a small supply will be available for instances where an individual may have forgotten their face covering, be struggling to access a face covering or are unable to use their face covering as it has become damp, soiled or unsafe.

We appreciate that a small number of students/apprentices may be medically exempt from wearing a face covering. This only applies to those who:

 • cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical impairment or disability, illness or mental health difficulties

• speak to or provide help to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate

Please contact als.ncc@nelsongroup.ac.uk or als.arc@nelsongroup.ac.uk  if you fall into this category and have not previously applied for this, so that the relevant support can be provided.

**Shielding for clinically extremely vulnerable individuals**

Clinically extremely vulnerable young people should not attend school or other educational settings.

The new information below includes additional guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable people, to help protect you from COVID-19.  These new formal shielding measures will apply across the whole of England until at least 31 March.  For further information, click on the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19#education-settings>

**Preventing the spread of COVID - behaviours and expectations**

In addition to the wearing of face coverings and lateral flow testing, there are a number of other steps all students/apprentices and staff need to take to help prevent the spread of COVID 19:

* **If a student/apprentice is experiencing one or more symptoms of coronavirus**, they must not come into college. Symptoms of coronavirus are:
	+ A new, continuous cough
	+ A high temperature
	+ A loss/change of smell/taste

Arrange to book a test with a government test site [https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fget-coronavirus-test&data=04|01|Alison.Rushton@NelsonGroup.ac.uk|6ceb4c6adc194e53597308d8de617de1|ec8185ce4f05448b828746c0185766e2|0|0|637503857588351814|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D|1000&sdata=Rb%2BOa1VkPeGdhHAXO5DH8u5IBZtQG2Lx%2FrN9l1qXXVY%3D&reserved=0) or ring 111 if a test cannot be booked online. Inform college of the absence by ringing 01282 440293 or emailing absence@nelsongroup.ac.uk. Once a test has been taken individuals must not come into college until a negative result has been received.

Students/apprentices attending the college site displaying coronavirus symptoms will be required to return home to self-isolate and arrange a test.

* **Students/apprentices receiving a positive test result** ,must inform college as soon as possible. Email health@nelsongroup.ac.uk and a follow up call will be made.
* **If a student/apprentice has been asked to self-isolate**, either because a family member has coronavirus symptoms or received a positive test, they have been identified as a close contact of a positive case or informed by NHS Test and Trace, college must be notified. Ring 01282 440293 or email absence@nelsongroup.ac.uk
* **Clean hands thoroughly and more often than usual**with either soap and water or hand sanitiser. There are plenty of sanitising stations throughout the college. Students/apprentices should clean hands on arrival, when entering classrooms, returning from breaks and before/after eating.
* **‘Catch it bin it kill it’**. Tissues are provided in classrooms and students/apprentices should make sure they put used tissues in one of the many bins in college.
* **Learning Bubbles.**All students/apprentices should remain within their designated learning bubble. You should not mix with other students/apprentices outside your bubble, even during break periods.
* **Social distancing**- all students/apprentices and staff should aim to keep 2m apart while on campus. Social distancing includes not congregating in any public spaces, hugging other people, shaking hands or any physical contact.  Students/apprentices and staff should keep to the left-hand side when walking through corridors and up and down stairs as indicated by Covid safe signage throughout the campus.
* **Maintain enhanced cleaning, including frequently touched surfaces**. Disinfectant wipes are available in all classrooms.  Students/apprentices must use the disinfectant wipes available to clean down their desk before and after lessons or as instructed by a member of staff.
* **Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.**Windows must remain open to allow for fresh air to circulate throughout the day and therefore students/apprentices may wish to wear additional layers of clothing.

**Students/apprentices who have been issued with a College laptop**

Students/apprentices who have been issued with a College laptop are encouraged to bring these into College with them on the days they are timetabled to attend classes so that they can be used in classrooms to support with learning as required. Please note the safety of laptops would remain the responsibility of the individual during this time.

The safety of our staff, students and apprentices remains our number one priority and we thank you for your cooperation with our onsite guidance. We look forward to welcoming you safely back to college shortly.

If you have any further queries, please contact your tutor.

Yours sincerely,



Amanda Melton CBE

Principal/CEO

Nelson and Colne College Group