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29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Students, Parents, and Carers,

### **Lateral Flow Testing in Highlands College**

I am writing to you today to update you formally on our plans to offer regular rapid coronavirus testing to all students in Highlands College Sixth Form, to help keep them as safe as possible and to be able to continue to access face-to-face learning while feeling reassured.

Currently we have 900 students in the age range of 16 to 19 years old in Further Education. Some students are receiving 100% face-to-face teaching (apprentices), and some are a mixed economy of face-to-face and online to maintain “bubbles” and split groupings to reduce contacts. As CV-19 positive cases fall, we will look to increase the time students spend on campus, but only when it is safe to do so, and step-by-step.

The introduction of Lateral Flow Testing is another tactic in our armoury to reduce risk.

Up to a third of individuals who test positive for COVID-19 have no symptoms at all and can spread the virus unknowingly. Therefore, this form of testing those without symptoms is vital.

The rapid regular testing, also called Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) will also be offered to all college staff.

The tests will be self-administered under supervision at College and any positive cases will self-isolate and then take an urgent PCR test.

These tests will be offered weekly once the roll out is completed and will run on top of the current PCR workforce testing programme for staff. The staff PCR testing is also being increased from every eight weeks to every six weeks.

#### **Lateral Flow Tests: The Highlights**

- Rapid results without the need for a laboratory
- Studies show they will identify up to three-quarters of any positive cases, including those students or staff showing no symptoms
- Participating in testing is voluntary
- Safe, simple, and easy to use
- Testing is on site in college
- Help to keep college safe and students in education
- Core age range for testing in schools and colleges is 16 to 19 years

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## **The Roll out at Highlands College**

LFT at Highlands College is currently being rolled out to all students in Further Education (Sixth Form) and all College staff.

Staff have been undergoing training on how to administer the tests this week in preparation for conducting self-tests on Friday 29 January.

From Monday 1 February, trained staff volunteers will supervise students as they conduct self-tests. Students will be allocated a date and time slot for testing based on tutor group.

To ensure that all tutor groups can book, slots for students will be allocated:

- 09:00 – 13:00hrs Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- 12:00 – 16:00hrs Tuesday and Thursday

Meanwhile, we have included a couple of links to videos that you may find helpful below:

- You can watch a step-by-step instructional video of the LFT process here: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=MgA603N7ruU>
- A student at Haute Vallée School gives a step-by-step guide of the Lateral Flow Testing process: [https://youtu.be/b-3\\_2Jsx5G4](https://youtu.be/b-3_2Jsx5G4)

You will find further attachments accompanying this letter with additional information about the Lateral Flow Tests, including a list of frequently asked questions.

Should you have any questions or feedback related to this process, please do speak directly to the personal tutor contact. Alternatively, you can contact the Highlands Information Centre (HIC) on 01534 608608 or by email on: [info@highlands.ac.uk](mailto:info@highlands.ac.uk)

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jo Terry-Marchant'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jo Terry-Marchant  
**Principal**