

Request – 2021-33

I refer to your Freedom of Information request received on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

### Your Request

You asked:

#### Question 1

Will face masks / face coverings be mandated for students and staff in September term 2021 - 2022?

#### Question 2

Will new students and returning students be mandated to carry out lateral flow tests at the start of and during September term 2021 - 2022?

#### Question 3

Please provide information detailing the efficiency / false negative rate as a percentage for the lateral flow test when self-administered in a none sterile environment, i.e. not in a medical laboratory.

#### Question 4

Please provide referenced research documentation and produced risk assessments detailing the risk - benefit analysis for the mandating of face coverings in lowering the potential spread of Covid19 within Newcastle college, against any potentially negative psychological and physiological health effects which an individual student, visitor, staff member may be subject to.

#### Question 5

Please provide details (insurer, policy section, paragraph) of liability insurance held by Newcastle college and or Newcastle college group (NCG) which provides sufficient legal cover for any potential litigation arising from personal injuries, resulting from the mandating of lateral flow tests and the mandating of face coverings.

### Our Response

We confirm that the information requested under Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “Act”) is held by NCG and is provided below:

#### **Question 1**

*Will face masks / face coverings be mandated for students and staff in September term 2021 - 2022?*

**Response:** NCG have implemented a “mask on the move” recommendation for staff and students for the September term 2021-2022, which requests that face coverings are worn whilst traveling in common areas, pedestrian traffic routes, staircases and lifts.

**Question 2**

*Will new students and returning students be mandated to carry out lateral flow tests at the start of and during September term 2021 - 2022?*

**Response:** NCG have recommended to both staff and students that lateral flow tests are conducted twice weekly, with initial onsite tests to be conducted at the start of term for students and home tests thereafter. For staff it has been recommended that staff continue prior to commencing the Autumn term, twice weekly thereafter. Both in accordance with DfE Operational Guidance.

**Question 3**

*Please provide information detailing the efficiency / false negative rate as a percentage for the lateral flow test when self-administered in a non sterile environment, i.e. not in a medical laboratory.*

**Response:** Analysis of test results undertaken by staff and students within the home environment have resulted in a 0.002% of void tests.

**Question 4**

*Please provide referenced research documentation and produced risk assessments detailing the risk - benefit analysis for the mandating of face coverings in lowering the potential spread of Covid19 within Newcastle college, against any potentially negative psychological and physiological health effects which an individual student, visitor, staff member may be subject to.*

**Response:** Newcastle college has followed the advice and guidance provided by the DfE, HSE and other bodies in developing risk assessments together with consultation with trades unions.

**Question 5**

*Please provide details (insurer, policy section, paragraph) of liability insurance held by Newcastle college and or Newcastle college group (NCG) which provides sufficient legal cover for any potential litigation arising from personal injuries, resulting from the mandating of lateral flow tests and the mandating of face coverings.*

**Response:** NCG has Public and Employers Liability with indemnity limits of £50million and £25million respectively. These policies will cover the Group in the event that they have been deemed to have been deemed negligent or in breach of duty. The policy wording is not specific as to the tasks identified.

If you have any further enquiries about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact.

Kind regards,

David Balme  
Executive Director and Secretary to the Board