

Chief Medical Officer Directorate  
Gregor Smith, Interim Chief Medical Officer  
E: [ceu@gov.scot](mailto:ceu@gov.scot)



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
[gov.scot](http://gov.scot)

Chief Nursing Officer Directorate  
Fiona McQueen, Chief Nursing Officer  
E: [ceu@gov.scot](mailto:ceu@gov.scot)

Healthcare Quality and Improvement Directorate  
Jason Leitch CBE, National Clinical Director  
E: [ceu@gov.scot](mailto:ceu@gov.scot)

To Students in Further and Higher Education,

10 September 2020

Dear Student,

## Common Cold, Flu-like Symptoms and COVID-19 Symptoms

We understand the last few months have been challenging and you may have suffered an interruption to your normal studies, examinations and education experience as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now that universities and colleges are returning, we are writing to provide some advice on what to do if you develop cold or flu-like symptoms during this pandemic.

As students return to further and higher education and begin to socialise with one another, it is common for colds and similar viral infections to circulate. In many cases, students will be well enough to attend class and continue their learning with little or no interruption to their education. In other cases, you may need to take a few days off to recover.

This is not the case if you have potential COVID-19 symptoms. You are then required to self-isolate and seek a test through [nhsinform.scot](https://nhsinform.scot) or by calling 0300 303 2713.

In order to ensure you do not miss out on your education, it is important to be clear about how COVID-19 symptoms differ from those of other infections that we normally see circulating.



## COVID-19 Symptoms

It is important that all of us – including those who make up the community in and around universities and colleges - are vigilant for the symptoms of COVID-19 and understand what actions we should take if someone develops them, either in class or at home.

The main symptoms to be aware of are:

- new, continuous cough
- fever/high temperature
- loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste

If you develop any of the above symptoms, you should self-isolate and book a test as soon as possible at [nhsinform.scot/test-and-protect](https://www.nhsinform.scot/test-and-protect), or by calling 0800 028 2816.

We recommend testing only for those with a continuous cough, fever, or loss of or change in the sense of taste or smell. The UK senior clinicians continue to keep the symptoms for case definition under review and will continue to use evidence to adjust these if it becomes necessary.

It is essential that people who have COVID-19 symptoms, or who share a household with someone who has symptoms, do not attend college or university classes, and they must self-isolate along with all members of their household. If they test negative, self-isolation can end for everyone. If the test is positive, Test and Protect will give you further advice.

If you are a contact of a positive case you may be asked to have a test yourself. It is important to remember that even if your test is subsequently negative, you must still continue to isolate for a full 14 days.

### Cold and flu-like symptoms

**If, however, you do not have symptoms of COVID-19 but have other cold and flu-like symptoms, you do not need to be tested and you do not need to self-isolate. You can attend university or college if fit to do so.**

The Scottish Government appreciates the huge effort being made by students and further and higher education providers to ensure the risk of COVID-19 is minimised and to support your education.

Lastly, FACTS helps us remember the key measures we all need to comply with:

- Face coverings in enclosed spaces;
- Avoid crowded places;
- Clean hands and surfaces regularly;
- Two metre distancing; and
- Self-isolate and book a test - if you have symptoms

### Further information

[www.nhsinform.scot](https://www.nhsinform.scot)

Yours faithfully,



**Dr Gregor Smith**  
**Interim Chief Medical Officer**



**Professor Fiona McQueen**  
**Chief Nursing Officer**



**Professor Jason Leitch**  
**Nation Clinical Director**