



FE England joint trade unions: five tests to be met before any onsite learning or working can begin

Test 1: Much lower numbers of Covid-19 cases

The new case count must be much lower than it is now, with a sustained downward trend and confidence that new cases are known and counted promptly. And the government must have extensive, open and transparent arrangements in place for testing, contact tracing and isolating those with Covid-19 symptoms.

Test 2: A national plan for social distancing

The government must have a national plan in place which includes parameters for both appropriate physical distancing and safe levels of social mixing in all further education settings. To help ensure physical distancing during travel and at colleges, all staff and students who can work and study from home must continue to do so.

Test 3: Comprehensive testing

Comprehensive access to regular testing for students and staff, with isolation for all suspected cases, to ensure colleges don't become hotspots for Covid-19. In addition to routine testing, protocols to be in place to ensure testing across whole college sites and other non-college work-based learning sites whenever a confirmed case of Covid-19 occurs.

Test 4: A whole college strategy for health and safety

Risk assessments and safe ways of working for all tasks and spaces within a college should be established with relevant staff and unions in advance. This should include regular deep cleaning and stringent hygiene measures. Where PPE is identified as required by risk assessments, supplies of these are secured before re-opening of affected areas. Strategy to be clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

Test 5: Protection for the vulnerable

Vulnerable staff, and staff who live with vulnerable people, must work from home, fulfilling their professional duties to the extent that is possible. Plans must specifically address the protection of all staff, students and members of their households who are vulnerable to Covid-19.