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## 4.36a Coronavirus (COVID-19) Safety

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The COVID-19 pandemic is an ongoing worldwide pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). In response to the pandemic, the UK Government has implemented a series of measures designed to stop or reduce the infection rate (R rate) of the virus. Such measures include a policy of social distancing, with the introduction of a national lockdown to limit movements of people and the closure of all non-essential industries. In line with these measures, the City of Bristol College closed to all staff and students in March 2020 and January 2021, with the exception of vulnerable cohorts.

The severity of COVID-19 symptoms can range from very mild to severe. Some people may have only a few symptoms and some people may be asymptomatic with no symptoms. People who are older or who have existing chronic medical conditions, such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, severe obesity, chronic kidney or liver disease, or who have compromised immune systems may be at higher risk of serious illness. The virus is most often transmitted airborne from an infected person to another (e.g. coughs, sneezes and exhalation), entering via the nose, mouth or eyes. The virus can also be picked up from surfaces which can then be transferred to the face.

This policy statement sets out City of Bristol College's response to the current COVID-19 pandemic but can be applied to any serious infectious disease or other outbreak that may pose major health risks, and therefore will sit alongside the infectious disease policy and procedures of the college.

The college will continuously monitor the situation as nationally reported by Public Health England (PHE) or other reputable information sources, and will use this to inform any subsequent action to this policy. With any significant developments, risk assessments and measures taken will be updated regularly with the new advice or information, which will be communicated to all college staff.

City of Bristol College is following current guidance set out by the UK government and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) for when the college is safely able to re-open to all staff and students. This includes measures such as up to date risk assessments for all college sites, departments, classrooms, vulnerable staff and individual students when required. The college has also produced a series of guidance documents and checklists for managers, outlining what actions are to be taken to comply with advice from the Government and Secretary of State for Education. The college will also continue to implement a series of practical measures to promote social distancing for safe social and working practices, including induction training.

COVID-19 and any other serious infectious disease pandemic will be considered in line with the college's Business Continuity Planning. The procedure will include the measures the college is actively taking to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and safeguard all staff, students, visitors and stakeholders.