



## COVID Policy

### Introduction

This company policy includes the measures we are actively taking to mitigate the spread of coronavirus. You are kindly requested to follow all these rules diligently, to sustain a healthy and safe workplace and training center in this unique environment. It's important that we all respond responsibly and transparently to these health precautions.

We assure you that we will always treat your private health and personal data with high confidentiality and sensitivity. This coronavirus (COVID-19) company policy is susceptible to changes with the introduction of additional Governmental, Awarding Body, Dfe guidelines. If so, we will revise this policy and contact everyone who accesses our premises.

### Scope

This coronavirus policy applies to all of our employees who physically work in our Academy, including visitors and learners to our premises. We strongly recommend to our remote working personnel to read through this policy as well, to ensure we collectively and uniformly respond to this challenge.

### Policy elements

Here, we outline the required actions employees, learners and visitors should take to protect themselves and others from a potential coronavirus infection.

### COVID Symptoms

The main symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

- **A new, continuous cough**
- **A high temperature**
- **Shortage of breath**
- **Loss of or change to your sense of smell or taste**

These symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness and some symptoms may vary with new variants. The Coronavirus Symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

Current guidance indicates that among those who become infected may even exhibit no symptoms (be a carrier of the disease). Of those who do develop symptoms and the illness will have a mild to moderate illness similar to seasonal flu. A minority will develop complications severe enough to require hospital care, most often pneumonia and in a small number of these the illness may be severe enough to lead to death.



## What to do if you have Coronavirus symptoms

At work (as an employee) or during your scheduled lesson (as a learner)

- If you become ill at the Academy, please speak to your line manager/tutor as quickly as possible. You should go to an area that is at least two meters away from other people and, if possible, find a room or area where you can be isolated behind a closed door, such as a staff office. If you can, please open a window for ventilation. Please try to avoid unnecessarily touching surfaces.
- If you have internet access please use the [NHS 111 online service](#) and follow the advice you receive. If you don't have internet access please call NHS 111, or 999 in an emergency. If you are advised to go home and self isolate, please tell your line manager and then make your way home as safely as possible. If you travel on public transport, please follow any instructions given to you by the NHS staff.
- If you need to go to the bathroom whilst waiting for medical assistance, please ensure you make sure you tell a Manager who will ensure that the area is deep cleaned between uses.
- If you become ill at home, please do not come into work or for your lesson. You'll need to telephone us in accordance with our usual absence policy. If you have internet access please use the [NHS 111 online service](#) and follow the advice you receive. If you don't have internet access, please call NHS 111. You need to tell us if you are advised to self-isolate and if you are being tested for coronavirus.

## What to do if you test positive for Coronavirus

- **Please advise us immediately if you test positive for Coronavirus, even if your symptoms are mild.** You will not be able to return to the premises until you are considered fit by Public Health England or any other competent authority.
- You don't need to obtain a fit note from your doctor, but please forward an image of your lateral flow test showing the positive result (either to [jades@debutacademy.com](mailto:jades@debutacademy.com) or [linda@debutacademy.com](mailto:linda@debutacademy.com))
- If you feel well enough to work, and your role is currently being carried out at home, you can continue to do so. However, you must update us if your symptoms worsen and you are unable to carry on working.
- If you usually carry out your working duties onsite at one of Debut's academies, you should seek advice relating to working remotely as an interim measure.
- We will not inform anyone else about your condition unless it's necessary to do so and we are legally able to. Our overriding obligation is to protect the health and safety of our staff and learners, and we may therefore have to speak to other individuals with whom you've been in close contact in order to protect them and advise them to be vigilant for symptoms. Any information we disclose will be limited to what is absolutely necessary to disclose.

Public Health England are responsible for 'contact tracing' (tracing anyone you have been in close contact with) and we will cooperate with them as appropriate.



## **What to do if you are advised by a medical professional to self-isolate**

- The Government's updated advice as of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 is that the country will learn to live with COVID.
- Face coverings are no longer required in teaching environments or communal areas. Should tutors, staff or learners wish to continue wearing face coverings they should wear a transparent covering to assist communication for anyone reliant on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions.
- Individuals with COVID do not necessarily have to isolate but should take responsibility individually to minimise risk of spreading COVID.
- Debut's own policy is for learners who have tested positive for COVID to not attend their lessons until they have provided two clear sequential negative test results on day 5 and 6 after testing positive. These timeframes may change if the individual who has COVID has symptoms for longer periods.
- If anyone in the household has tested positive or an individual has been in contact with someone who has tested positive, should undertake a lateral flow test and send their results into Debut.

You may need to isolate longer (if you are in a high risk group) to help reduce the possible spread of infection. Please follow the advice you are given. Please follow any additional advice given to you by health professionals. The period of isolation will depend on the Government guidance at that time as this may change.

The government has up to date information for individuals who have travelled overseas and returned to the UK. If you have been abroad recently, please consult this and inform us if you are required to self-isolate.

## **General hygiene rules:**

Debut will continue to maintain good control measures in respect of reducing any means of covid transfer and this includes:

- Sanitize when you enter the building and regularly throughout the day whilst on premises.
- Wash your hands after using the toilet, before eating, and if you cough/sneeze into your hands (follow the 20 second hand washing rule). You can also use the sanitizers you'll find around the building.
- Cough/sneeze into your sleeve, preferably into your elbow. If you use a tissue, discard it properly and clean/sanitize your hands immediately.
- Open the windows regularly to ensure open ventilation.
- Avoid touching your face, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands to prevent from getting infected.
- If you find yourself coughing/sneezing on a regular basis, avoid close physical contact with your coworkers and take extra precautionary measures (such as requesting sick leave).



- Debut Academy will provide visual notices in toilet, kitchen and other key areas on handwashing guidelines and our safe COVID practices.

### **Additional precautions:**

- Debut Academy will provide PPE and learners and staff, ensuring they have training on use of these items.
- Debut Academy will ensure that areas are regularly cleaned and sanitized, including deep cleaning. Cleansing equipment trugs will be available in each training room for learners to use to carry out the clean down duties after lessons.
- Debut Academy will ensure that anyone leaving the premises for short lesson breaks sanitizes their hands on return to the premises.
- Equipment that is used by more than one person will be sanitized between uses (eg., ICT equipment).
- Debut Academy will stagger class leaving/break times to minimize the numbers of learners along corridors and maintain distancing.
- Debut will minimise the numbers of outside visitors to a minimum where possible, such as during Open Evenings – limited appointment numbers will be assigned.

### **Government Guidelines**

Guideline changes will be notified to all learners and staff as they are notified by the Government and specific protocols will be complied with by Debut.

### **Training**

Safety training is an indispensable part of an effective COVID safety and we will ensure that staff are aware of local or Government guidelines/laws. Staff training will be refreshed or updated as new procedures are notified to us.

### **Work-based Environments**

Debut will ensure that any Government or local guidelines are passed onto our Apprentice Employers promptly so they are compliant in the workplace.

### **Sick Pay**

People will no longer be deemed eligible for SSP where they are self-isolating but may only have very mild or no symptoms and would therefore otherwise be considered capable of work. The consequence of this repeal is that individuals will have to be sick or incapable of work to be eligible for SSP .

### **Risk Assessments**

Debut Academy regularly reviews and completes a COVID risk assessment for our staff and learners, updating it based on any new guidance and measures to be implemented as circumstances change. The Center Manager will also carry out spot checks throughout the center to ensure compliance to distancing, wearing PPE and sanitization so that the safety of all continues to be upheld.



## **COVID Log**

The Center Manager will keep a comprehensive COVID log which will record all incidents of suspected and actual COVID cases that relate to staff, visitors and learners. Each entry is followed up to conclusion. Details regarding isolation, covid test results, contacting any at risk individuals etc is all recorded. Covid results are uploaded to the staff/learner files. If a learner has to isolate (whether has COVID or not) and is well enough, Debut will put in place remote learning and send work across to the learner for the period they are absent.

## **Remote Learning**

Debut Academy has stringent provisions in place to ensure learning continues to be delivered remotely (especially a priority for the 16-19 age group). Provision includes scheduled online tutorials for NVQ, English, Maths and any enrichment subjects. Reviews and learner support is also conducted remotely over Zoom. We have developed a learner agreement covering online learning so learners are aware what expectations they must meet. We also vigilantly monitor learner participation in all lessons so that learner welfare is regularly checked for safeguarding reasons. Our managers will also join online lessons to ensure integrity and quality of learning is upheld at all times.

Please refer to our safeguarding policy for further information.

## **Vulnerable or Learners at Risk during COVID**

We do not want any of our learners to be at a disadvantage. Whether they are in the vulnerable category or do not have access to resources from home to continue learning, Debut will evaluate each learner's situation and put in place any necessary measures so that their learning can continue. This may include separate 1:1 tutorials (whether teaching remotely or on site) and providing learners with loan kits, laptops etc. Vulnerable individuals may be provided with the opportunity to study or work from home. This includes pregnant or clinically at risk individuals who may be recommended by a medical professional to shield.

## **Lock Down**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the Prime Minister announced a lock-down of the UK in an attempt to slow the spread of Coronavirus. The country were advised about additional lockdowns and specific restrictions. Currently there are no lockdowns in place, however, Debut will ensure that if any such guidance is relayed again they will ensure compliance and take measures to ensure that learners are not severely affected and delivery can continue in a remote way until face to face tutoring can resume.

The designated COVID Health & Safety personnel are:

Carla Hales

Director of Tuition & Health & Safety Lead

01268 560552

[carla@debutacademy.com](mailto:carla@debutacademy.com)



Linda Edwards  
Centre Manager & Health & Safety Deputy  
01268 560552  
[linda@debutacademy.com](mailto:linda@debutacademy.com)

### **At Risk groups**

Current advice is that the risk of severe illness increases amongst people aged 70 and over and those with underlying health risks, such as diabetes, heart disease and lung disease and those with weakened immune systems. Pregnant women are also included in the "at risk" group.

Please tell us if you think you are at risk:

- Because you are in one of the high risk groups or you or you care for someone who is considered to be high risk; or
- You have been in contact with, or live in the same household as, someone who is being tested for, has tested positive for Coronavirus or has been advised to self isolate because they have Coronavirus symptoms.
- We will conduct an individual risk assessment for anyone we believe to be in a high risk group and will put in place appropriate safeguards.

### **Sick leave arrangements**

- If you have cold symptoms, such as cough/sneezing/fever, or feel poorly, it is advisable that you take a COVID test as a precaution. Please refer to the paragraph on sick pay above.
- If you have a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, you can return to the office only after you've fully recovered and sent in two consecutive lateral flow negative test results.

### **Work/Study from home requests:**

- If you are feeling ill, but you are able to work, you can request to work from home (this will only be approved depending on your job role and if this is suitable). If you have been provided with a medical certificate by your GP you cannot perform work duties.
- If you have recently returned from areas with a high number of COVID-19 cases (based on CDC announcements), we'll ask you to stay at home for 14 calendar days, and return to the office only if you are fully asymptomatic. You will also be asked not to come into physical contact with any colleagues or other learners during this time.
- If you've been in close contact with someone infected by COVID-19, with high chances of being infected yourself, you can request to work from home (this will only be approved depending on your job role and if this is suitable). You will also be asked not to come into physical contact with any colleagues or learners during this time.
- If you're a parent and you have to stay at home with your children, you can request work from home (this will only be approved depending on your job role and if this is suitable). Follow up with your manager or departmental leader to make arrangements and set expectations.
- If you need to provide care to a family member infected by COVID-19, you can request work from home (this will only be approved depending on your job role and if this is suitable).



You'll only be permitted to return to the office 14 calendar days after your family member has fully recovered, provided that you're asymptomatic or you have a doctor's note confirming you don't have the virus. You will also be asked not to come into physical contact with any colleagues/learners during this time.

### **Traveling/commuting measures:**

- If you normally commute to the office by public transportation and do not have other alternatives, you should follow government guidelines on wearing a mask and distancing.
- Debut will try to stagger start times for lessons (for learners) so they are travelling outside peak travel hours.

### **Linked Policies**

Please refer to Debut's linked policies below for additional information regarding Admissions and Application Standards:

- Apprenticeship Expectation Policy
- Code of Conduct – Learner Policy
- Code of Conduct – Staff Policy
- Confidentiality & Disclosure Policy
- Communication Policy
- Contingency and Change of Circumstances Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities & Inclusion Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Guidance Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Learner Safeguarding & Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Teaching & Learning Policy

*Disclaimer: This policy template is meant to provide general guidelines and should be used as a reference. It may not take into account all relevant local or government laws and is not a legal document. Neither the author nor Workable will assume any legal liability that may arise from the use of this policy.*

### **Policy Revision**

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