**Devon and Cornwall Counselling Hub**

**Covid-19 Policy**

The health, welfare and safety of students and staff, as well as other users of the building is the top priority of the hub. It should be noted that nowhere is 100% safe from Covid-19 or any other risk and as such, we will do all we can to minimise the risk but cannot guarantee to eradicate it entirely. We will be implementing this policy, which must be adhered to, without exception until further notice.

All tutors, members of the hub team and students are expected to follow these guidelines.

**Attendance**

For the period that this policy remains in force, the hub will consider any absences required because of self-isolation or infection to be an extenuating circumstance and will be assessed on an individual basis. It should be noted however, to uphold the credibility of the qualification, absences exceeding the minimum attendance requirement may result in a student being withdrawn from the course, being offered to retake the course at their expense or another outcome to be agreed between the course tutor, student, and course director. Our courses are primarily classroom based and will always run in the classroom unless government guidelines prevent us from doing so, in which case sessions will be held on zoom.

Students and tutors must not attend any class if they have tested positive or have any signs or symptoms of the virus or have come into close contact with anyone who has tested positive or has signs or symptoms of the virus. This means that if someone in your household has been asked to self-isolate as a precaution, you may attend if they do not have any signs or symptoms or have tested positive.

For the purpose of this document, close contact is defined as meaning: -

* Anyone who lives in the same household as someone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
* Anyone who has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) with a PCR or LFD test:
* face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within one metre.
* been within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact.
* been within 2 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over one day)
* travelled in the same vehicle or a plane.

Students should notify their course tutor of the reason for their absence on the day of it. Tutors and hub staff must follow the same guidelines and let the course director know at the earliest opportunity of their absence from their groups.

Tutors will be responsible for asking anyone who attends a course and who displays symptoms that could be covid-19 (constant dry cough and temperature) to leave the building immediately and return home and contact 111 for advice.

If someone is sent home due to displaying symptoms, or symptoms emerge during the course of the session, the whole group will also have to leave the premises and the course will then be delivered online for 14 days. The tutor in charge of the group should notify the course director or call the dedicated advice service introduced by Public Health England (PHE) and delivered by the NHS Business Services Authority. This can be reached by calling the DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687 and selecting option 1 for advice on the action to take in response to a positive case. They will put you through to a team of advisers who will inform you what action is needed based on the latest public health advice.

**Preventative Practices and Risk Management**

We will apply and communicate sensible risk management and safe working practices for the duration this policy remains in force. This will involve: -

* Regular assessment of hazards and associated risks.
* Implementing preventative and protective control measures against the risks, to a sensible level.
* Monitoring the effectiveness of these measures by the Course Director and members of the hub team.
* Provision of information and instruction to students and hub tutors and staff when necessary.
* Review of risk assessments, policies, procedures and practices at regular interval and where additional information is gained through changes in government guidance, monitoring or following an incident.
* Provide systems and opportunities for social distancing to be observed across our premises. (The responsibility for this lies with both course tutors, hub staff and students equally)
* Maintain an appropriate hygiene regime to be followed by all students and hub tutors and staff.
* Operate an enhanced cleaning regime.
* Ensure the premises are ventilated.
* Expect all students and hub tutors and staff members to take an active part in minimising risk of infection by observing social distancing and hand sanitising regularly during the time on hub premises.
* Use of an internal track and trace system to be used if there is possibility of infection in hub premises. Contact details may need to be shared with NHS or other government bodies in the event of an outbreak.
* The hub will continue to run classroom-based training if schools remain open and government guidelines allow and will move onto zoom delivery when schools close because of national or local lockdowns. Courses will return to classroom-based delivery at the earliest opportunity following a lockdown.
* There will be various risk management instructions around the premises which both hub tutors, staff members and students must adhere to.

**Personal Protective Equipment**

* In line with government guidance, students and hub team members are advised to wear a face mask or visor if they are able, when social distancing is not easily maintained such as moving around the premises. The government will review this at Easter 2021. No student or hub team member will be required to explain why they are not wearing a face covering. It will be assumed that they are exempt from wearing one.
* If masks are worn, they must not be disposed of on hub or Clay Factory premises and should be treated as clinical waste and as such, disposed of safely.
* Gloves will not be accepted as an acceptable form of PPE on hub premises due to danger of spreading the infection. We ask students, tutors, and staff members to use hand sanitisation products instead.

Amended 23.2.21