

ROBINSON COLLEGE

POLICY DOCUMENT

POLICY: WEARING OF FACE MASKS/COVERINGS IN COLLEGE

DEPARTMENTS AFFECTED: ALL STAFF, FELLOWS, STUDENTS, VISITORS & CONTRACTORS

ISSUED BY: DOMESTIC BURSAR

DATE: JULY 2020

UPDATED: OCTOBER 2020/MAY 2021

OBJECTIVES:

- To provide clarity for all College occupants on the principle and policy in respect of the wearing of face coverings/masks
- To bring the policy in line with the legal requirements:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>
- To stipulate that failure to wear face coverings/masks in College may result in disciplinary action.

PRINCIPLE:

Based upon a [Royal Society DELVE Initiative](#) report, analysis suggests that the use of face coverings or masks could reduce onward transmission by asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic wearers if widely used in situations where physical distancing is not possible or predictable, contrasting to the standard use of masks for the protection of wearers. If correctly used on this basis, face masks, including homemade cloth masks, can contribute to reducing viral transmission.

The principle is based upon:

Asymptomatic (including pre-symptomatic) infected individuals are infectious. Without mitigation, the current estimate is that 40%-80% of infections occur from individuals without symptoms.

Respiratory droplets from infected individuals are a major mode of transmission. This understanding is the basis of the recommendations for physical distancing, and of the PPE guidance for healthcare workers. Droplets do not only come from coughing or sneezing: in a-/pre-symptomatic individuals, droplets are generated via talking and breathing.

Face masks reduce droplet dispersal. Cloth-based face masks reduce emission of particles by variable amounts, studies showing between 50% and 100% filtering efficiency for airborne particles.

This evidence supports the conclusion that more widespread risk-based face mask adoption can help to control the Covid-19 epidemic by reducing the shedding of droplets into the environment from asymptomatic individuals. The full report is available <https://rs-delve.github.io/reports/2020/05/04/face-masks-for-the-general-public.html>

College Policy follows:

SCOPE:

Face coverings/masks must be worn when in College in INDOOR SETTINGS:

- In situations where individuals from different households are together in enclosed spaces and cannot maintain 2m distance
- During indoor meetings or teaching sessions where 2m social distancing cannot be maintained
- Where social distancing (at least 2m) cannot be maintained or may be compromised – e.g. when joining a queue or moving around an indoor space
- As required under risk assessments control measures and/or other instruction for the wearing of PPE
- Where the individual is under self- or household-isolation instruction.

Face coverings/masks need not be worn in College:

- In OUTDOOR SETTINGS
- Within individuals' own household as long as only members of their household are present, unless the individual(s) are under self- or household-isolation instruction
- Within exclusive-use rooms/offices where only the individual or regular sharers of the space are present, including staff members working in a protected zone – i.e. behind a full protective screen
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- When seated for studying, meeting, eating/drinking though social distancing must then be maintained and face to face orientation should be avoided
- If the individual has a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means they cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering or if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause them severe distress.

METHOD:

College will issue washable face mask(s) to all Fellows, 2020/21 students and members of staff which the recipient will then be required to wash and maintain.

Individuals may choose/need to wear their own face covering or self-sourced masks at their own expense. PHE guidance is to dispose of used masks (disposable) in a residual waste bin – general waste bin (not recycling). There is no requirement for a special bin. Anyone emptying the bin should wear gloves and then dispose of the gloves. People shouldn't put their hands in bins unless they are wearing gloves as protection.

Individuals are responsible for ensuring that their visitors understand and adhere to the policy and, as necessary, to provide suitable face coverings/masks.

Conference Organisers will be advised in advance of this policy with the expectation that they will communicate same to their delegates. Spare face masks will be available for issue as necessary.

Heads of Department will be required to advise suppliers of this policy in advance of their attendance on site and to ensure that any contractors on site understand and adhere to the policy. Spare face masks will be available for issue as necessary.

Council approved 13 July 2020

Revised edition approved by the Executive Committee of the College Council under vacation powers 23 July 2020

Updated 15 October 2020

Updated 14 May 2021

Reviewable 1 July 2021 or sooner as required

Reviewable from 19 July 2021 – to be rescinded in favour of new recommended code of conduct.

19/07/21 Policy rescinded pending recommendations to be issued