St Catz Start of Term Arrival and Covid-19 Testing Arrangements

This document contains important information about your return to College at the start of Hilary Term 2021, including arrangements for booking a return date and taking post-arrival Covid-19 tests.

The Government guidance is that undergraduate and graduate taught course students should be offered a staggered return to university after the Christmas vacation, and that students traveling from within the UK or from a country on the Government’s travel corridor list (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors) should be offered three Covid-19 lateral flow tests (LFTs)* in the ten-day period immediately after their return. Postgraduate research students will return to university as they would usually.

Following this guidance, the University has divided all taught courses at Oxford into two groups: the first to resume in-person teaching from Week 1 of Hilary Term, and the second to resume in-person teaching from Week 2 of Hilary Term. Your department or faculty will confirm the teaching arrangements for your course as soon as possible. Once it has done so, please book your return to College as instructed by the Accommodation Office (details to follow soon). Return dates from Sunday 3 January 2021 will be available.

Returning to College

All students traveling from within the UK or from a country on the Government’s travel corridor list should ensure they are back in College in time to take two LFTs, three days apart, before their in-person teaching is scheduled to resume. This means that students of group 1 courses should return to College no later than Thursday of Week 0, and students of group 2 courses should return no later than Thursday of Week 1.

All students traveling from a country that is not on the Government’s travel corridor list should ensure they are back in College in time to self-isolate before their in-person teaching is scheduled to resume. You may be able to reduce your self-isolation period through the Government’s ‘Test to Release’ scheme (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-test-to-release-for-international-travel).

Students who have a reason for wanting to return to College before this time may also be able to do so. In this case, please contact the Accommodation Office.

Students with pre-existing travel plans do not need to change their bookings.

Taking your Covid-19 tests

LFTs will be available to St Catz students from Monday of Week -1 (4 January), and should be taken on days 1, 4 and 10 of your return. Hence, if you are booked to return to College on 4 January, you should take an LFT on 4 January, 8 January and 14 January.

You will need to collect your testing pack on return to College from the Porters' Lodge, read the attached leaflet, complete the remote training at https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/enroll/KJNBLX, and contact the College’s Covid Admin team (covidadmin@stcatz.ox.ac.uk) for further support, if needed. All LFTs will be taken in your College room or other residential setting. You should limit your social contact and interaction with others until you have received your first negative LFT result and continue to be cautious until you have received your second negative LFT result. Any student who receives a positive LFT result should inform the Porters’ Lodge (lodge@stcatz.ox.ac.uk) immediately. You will then need to self-isolate and book a regular EAS test (https://earlyalert.medsci.ox.ac.uk/earlyalert/).

For more information about these arrangements, please see the University's website at https://www.ox.ac.uk/coronavirus/students/christmas-vacation or contact the Covid Admin team (covidadmin@stcatz.ox.ac.uk). For questions about returning to College, contact the Accommodation Office (accommodation@stcatz.ox.ac.uk).

10 December 2020
LFTs are self-administered nose and throat swab tests for use by asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic COVID-19 carriers. They involve taking a nose or throat swab to collect a sample, inserting the swab into a tube of liquid, and then putting the liquid into a kit from which results are returned within 30 minutes. By using LFTs it is hoped to identify those most at risk of spreading COVID-19 – those who are infectious but unaware of being infectious – so that they can self-isolate before resuming face-to-face teaching and other in-person activities and reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to their peers, tutors and others in their College and wider communities.
COVID-19 Rapid Self-Test Instructions

To perform this test correctly, it is imperative that you review this leaflet in addition to the online video on this Canvas site: https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/enroll/KJNBLX

OVERVIEW
1. Take a swab sample (tonsils then nose)
2. Process the sample and apply it to the rapid test cartridge
3. Set a timer for 30 minutes
4. Read and record your result

STEP 1
Look inside your mouth, and find your tonsils at the back of the throat.
You may use a mirror or a phone to help you with this.
Your tonsils (or if you had them removed, where they would have been) are where you will swab your sample.

STEP 2
Gently blow your nose into a tissue to get rid of excess mucus.
Wash your hands so that you don’t contaminate the test kit.

STEP 3
Open the test package and take out the swab.
Holding the swab in your hand, open your mouth wide and rub the fabric tip of the swab over both tonsils (or where they would have been) at the back of the throat with good contact at least three times (for about 10 seconds).

STEP 4
Put the same end of the same swab gently into one nostril until you feel a slight resistance (about 2.5 cm or 1 inch up your nose).
Roll the swab (for about 10 seconds) along the inside of the nostril.

Please make sure that you have watched the instruction video under the following link: https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/enroll/KJNBLX
STEP 5  
Unscrew the buffer solution pot.  
Take the extraction tube and place 6 drops of the Buffer solution into the tube.  
Try to avoid touching the tube with the bottle.

STEP 6  
Place the fabric end of the swab into the tube. It is important you mix thoroughly.  
Press the swab head against the edge of the tube with force, while rotating the tube for 10 seconds to squeeze as much fluid out as possible.

STEP 7  
Take out the swab while squeezing the tube and fabric end of the swab and squeeze as much fluid out as possible.  
Press the nozzle cap tightly on the tube.

STEP 8  
Apply 2 drops of the liquid on to the test strip to the well labelled with an "S".  
Set a timer for 30 minutes and wait.

STEP 9  
Read the result at exactly 30 minutes.  
Leaving your test to the full development time is really important.  
Do not read your results until 30 minutes. If a positive result appears after 30 minutes, it should not be interpreted as positive.

RESULTS:  
C is the Control line. If the C line is not present (appears after c10 mins), then the test is invalid and should be repeated with a new test kit. This is independent of whether the T line is present or not.  

The test is negative if only the C line is present.  
The test is positive if both the C and the T (this could be a faint line) are present.

Please record results and details on the University Early Alert System:  
https://earlyalert.medsci.ox.ac.uk/earlyalert/