

Meeting of the Board of Governors

4.00 pm on Thursday, 12 March 2020
in Technopark, SE1 6LN

Agenda

<i>No.</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Pages</i>	<i>Presenter</i>
8.	Supplement: Coronavirus contingency planning update	164 - 167	DP

This page is intentionally left blank

	CONFIDENTIAL
	PAPER NO:
Paper title:	Coronavirus COVID-19 contingency planning
Board/Committee	LSBU Group Executive LSBU Board SBC Board SBA Board
Date of meeting:	N/A
Author(s):	Ed Spacey, Head of People and Organisational Development Compliance
Sponsor(s):	Nicole Louis, Chief Customer Officer
Purpose:	To provide the Executive and Board members with an update on the contingency planning for Coronavirus across the LSBU Group.
Recommendation:	The committee asked to note the arrangements identified in this report.
Further Approval required	n/a

1.0 Background and current position

- 1.1 Robust contingency arrangements have been prepared to deal with the impact of an outbreak of Coronavirus across London South Bank University Group. This report provides an overview of measures taken to date, and well as forward planning considerations should an outbreak occur.
- 1.2 As at 3 March, 51 cases of Coronavirus have been confirmed in the UK. There is currently no indication of community transmission, with confirmed cases being related to international travel. However, it should be noted that the Government considers this an inevitability, with numbers expected to increase over the coming weeks. At the time of this report, there are no confirmed cases across the LSBU Group.

2.0 Preventative and Reactive Measures

- 2.1 Several detailed planning meetings have taken place since the last report on 05/02/2020, with a meeting of strategic representatives from across the Group taking place on 26 February to discuss contingency arrangements and to coordinate planning.
- 2.2 The Health, Safety and Resilience team is in daily contact with other Universities via the Higher Education Business Continuity Group, Universities UK, and accessing a range of other advice from professional bodies which has also fed into this planning process.
- 2.3 Outcomes from these meetings have identified numerous preventative measures that have been put in place to minimise the likelihood of a Group outbreak, such as increased cleaning regimes and the distribution of hand sanitisers. A number scalable actions should an outbreak occur have also been planned, although it should be noted that these actions are based on a continuously developing model, and are dependent on the spread of the virus and any new Government guidance and regulatory advice that is issued.

3.0 Communications

- 3.1 A broad communications campaign has been launched to communicate preventative measures to staff and students, focused primarily around the hand and respiratory hygiene advice as advised by Public Health England and the NHS, and to promote current Foreign and Commonwealth Office guidance to those who have recently travelled internationally. Channels for this information include email, a central information repository on the staff and student intranets as well as a broad poster campaign.
- 3.2 Staff and Student FAQs have also been issued, focusing on communicating facts around the virus, preventative measures that can be taken to limit its spread and signposting to current travel guidance. Responses to queries that relate to visas, sickness and discriminatory behaviour have also been included in collaboration with People and Organisational Development, International and Student Services. These FAQs will be regularly updated.
- 3.3 The Health, Safety, and Resilience team have provided answers to any specific staff and student queries as a central source of advice. Support channels have also been provided for both staff and student who have been affected by this outbreak.
- 3.4 The Group also has the facility to operate an incident support helpline, and has pre-identified call takers and allocated an incident number. We further have the facility to enact an external telephone helpline, and this response is also scalable.
- 3.5 Regarding external/media enquiries, reactive external holding statements have been drafted, which are regularly reviewed and updated as the situation develops. One enquiry from the press association

was received in the early stages of this outbreak, and one public enquiry, but no further enquiries have been received since, nor are they expected unless a specific case is identified from within the Group.

4.0 Travel

- 4.1 As stated, travel advice across the Group has been agreed to follow Foreign and Commonwealth Office guidance and is being continuously reviewed. A structured process for authorisation of essential business travel is being developed, as is guidance to managers for staff returning from personal holidays to destinations abroad and general staff information.

5.0 Business Continuity

- 5.1 It should be noted that the latest Government guidance does not recommend the closing of Schools and Universities as a whole. Areas of buildings are more likely to be temporarily designated out of use, where arrangements would be initiated to determine alternate locations of each campus.
- 5.2 In the event of an enforced closure of a site, e.g. a Government directive to suspend lectures, the continuation of teaching activities would be attempted to be delivered online wherever feasible. It should be noted that this would not be practicable for all. Academic Schools are still developing plans as to how this could operate and any alternatives.
- 5.3 In the event of enforced closures, support staff would be asked to work from home where possible, and capacity issues have been checked to confirm if a significant number of staff can access IT systems from home. This has been confirmed. It is recommended that any staff who currently have laptops or mobile devices take them home each evening, in case they are needed.
- 5.4 To manage this process effectively, all areas of the Group must have up to date business continuity plans in place so that we can effectively identify what resources are available and what critical functions are linked to each area. This will be facilitated by the Health, Safety and Resilience team moving forward to ensure organisational resilience.

6.0 LSBU Halls of Residence

- 6.1 Estates and Academic Environment have a scalable action plan in place to deal with any Coronavirus cases that may arise in any of LSBU's four halls of residence. These actions focus on self-isolation arrangements, with the aim of keeping all halls of residence open.
- 6.2 It is not anticipated that Halls will be advised to close, and this is reflected in the current guidance for educational establishments. Normal methods of small scale re-provision (moving to other Halls, Hotels or temporary accommodation) are not practicable for such an outbreak, as it contradicts current self-isolation guidance. There would also be additional complications for international students as a result.

7.0 Multi-Academy Trust

- 7.1 Actions relating to the Multi-Academy Trust differ slightly as guidance is primarily led from the Department for Education. At this current time, the Government is not suggesting fully closing Schools, though of course, this may change. At present the initial principle will be isolation in the first instance, keeping areas of the building open wherever this is possible in the view of the Principal and following all PHE advice, depending on the incident.
- 7.2 In preparation for any enforced closure, the MAT is reviewing and pre-preparing communications to parents, and how it may need to respond to any likely DFE reporting requirements.

This page is intentionally left blank