

**Please see attached (in trail) communication to students**

Dear Partners

*(Please note that this same email is being sent to our School Direct and University-led placement partners)*

We are writing to you to share the communications sent to CTE trainees and provide an update to you in relation to our current understanding regarding placements.

Last week, on the 2nd of January 2021, CTE contacted our trainees with advice regarding arrangements for returning to University and placements. This, however, was before the lockdown announcement was issued.

Our advice has not changed significantly but today we have issued a further email to all trainees clarifying our position at present. Please see both communications at the footer of this email for your reference. As you can see, we are working on the understanding that placements will not be stopped and do not necessarily have to be 'in person'. We have directed several questions to UCET and the DfE and we will also need to get in touch with our partners about plans for SD and University-led placements, this will happen over the coming days. University phase and route teams will need to nuance their approach so schools will likely be consulted by relevant staff in these teams.

We have been made aware since the Government lockdown announcement that in some cases trainees are being asked to provide confirmation of key worker status to the school their child attends. We have advised that any trainees who are asked by a childcare or education setting to provide further formal evidence regarding their enrolment on an ITT programme and participation in a placement to contact our on course team using the resource account given. We hope this is helpful to all concerned.

We would like to take this opportunity to show our appreciation for our school-based colleagues' incredible hard work and dedication to their pupils and our trainees throughout the current challenges.

Yours sincerely



Professor Kate Ireland,  
Director of CTE

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**From:** CTEcurrentstudents, Resource <[ctecurrentstudents@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:ctecurrentstudents@warwick.ac.uk)>  
**Subject:** Clarification on return to placement and studies in January 2021 : PGCE trainees  
**Sent:** 05 January 2021

Dear Trainee

Further to the communication in the footer below, issued on 2nd January, as the Government has since advised of a national lockdown commencing today, we wanted to send you an update confirming our understanding and approach to school placements at this point in time.

CTE are seeking further guidance and advice from the DfE alongside input from our school partnership regarding the nature, format and timing of placements possible during the national lockdown period and the remainder of the year.

There is no reason for us to assume at this point that a cessation of PGCE placements is necessary given that the nation's familiarity with online learning has vastly improved over the last nine months. As we have said, we are seeking advice from the Government and our partner schools regarding this.

For those trainees who were expecting to receive confirmation of their placement school this week, given the recent news we will regrettably have to delay communication of your placement arrangements to next week at the earliest.

For those trainees who have commenced placement this week, or are awaiting confirmation of a placement, please do continue to follow the guidance previously issued and confirm arrangements for testing, attendance and engagement with your placement school.

For those who are not due to start their placement for some time, if you are still at a 'home' address that is different to your term-time address and are not due to start your school placement for some time, you are encouraged to stay where you are if possible until you need to return for placement purposes. You will need to obtain a negative COVID-19 test ahead of relocating and then follow your placement school's advice.

**During this lockdown period, please note that as ITT Trainees are 'critical workers', you should be able to access education provision or childcare whilst you are engaged with the work of your placement school:** *Note that the government website regarding Initial Teacher Training [here](#) clarifies that ITT trainees are included in the definition of 'critical workers' identified by the Government as [having access to full-time education provision in the case of COVID-19 restrictions](#). If you are being asked to provide any further evidence of your status as a trainee, please contact [ctecurrentstudents@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:ctecurrentstudents@warwick.ac.uk)*

**Further communication regarding your taught sessions and placement arrangements will be issued by the end of this week and on an on-going basis throughout the lockdown.**

**Centre for Teacher  
Education**  
Avon, Westwood  
University of Warwick  
Coventry CV4 8EE UK  
T (0)24 7615 23801  
[www.warwick.ac.uk/cte](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/cte)

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**From:** CTEcurrentstudents, Resource <ctecurrentstudents@warwick.ac.uk>  
**Subject:** Clarification on return to placement and studies in January 2021 : PGCE trainees  
**Sent:** 02 January 2021

Dear trainee

You may have seen in the news and [recent communications from the University](#) to all students, that due to the national COVID-19 infection rates, the Government is requiring changes to University courses over the next few weeks. We are writing to you to reassure you that **there is limited change to our PGCE students as Initial Teacher Training placements are permitted to continue 'in person' as planned.**

Furthermore, as we confirmed in December, to ensure minimal disruption to trainee placements and to provide consistent and quality teaching despite the current uncertainty, **University taught sessions for our PGCE students will remain online at least until the situation is reviewed again later in the Spring term.**

If you did relocate from a term-time to an alternative address to see family over the break (as was permitted under Government guidance for University students), it is strongly recommended that, wherever possible, you obtain a negative Covid-19 test from your home area before returning to your termtime address. Furthermore, if you are still at this alternative address and are not due to start your school placement for some time, you are encouraged to stay there if possible until you need to return for placement purposes, which may include COVID-19 testing ahead of attending school where/when advised by your placement school.

### **Placements**

Our trainees have various placement start dates across the Spring Term, depending on whether you are a University-led or School Direct trainee as well as your phase. If you are yet to have your placement details confirmed, you will have a later start date and will be able to confirm arrangements with your school after you receive their details.

· **Placements starting week commencing 4th January:** Please liaise with your placement school for their advice and instruction on how to proceed and what testing protocol applies to you (see rapid testing below). You can seek out a community testing centre for an asymptomatic (lateral flow) test in Tier 3 or 4 areas. If you live in Coventry you can find further information [here](#). If you live in Warwickshire you can find further information [here](#).

· **Placements commencing later in January/Spring term:** Please liaise with your placement school for their advice and instruction but be mindful that given operational pressures and priorities, they may take some time to respond to you. Please do consider booking an asymptomatic test via the University testing facility, especially if you (or those you live with) travelled over the Christmas break.

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## **Testing**

### ***Tests for those who have symptoms***

If you have COVID-19 symptoms (a high temperature or a new continuous cough or a change to their sense of taste or smell) **you must self-isolate** and book a test via [NHS Test and Trace](#) or by calling 119.

### ***Rapid testing for schools and colleges in England***

The [Government announced on 15 December](#) that from January, staff and pupils of schools and colleges will have access to rapid COVID-19 testing to keep them open throughout the spring term. Initial Teacher Training (ITT) trainees on placement in a school should be offered tests in the same way as the wider school staff.

### ***Tests for University of Warwick students***

As we have previously communicated to you, asymptomatic Covid-19 tests will be available for students of Warwick via the Government testing centre from Tuesday 5th January. You will need to book two appointments, 3 days apart and can access information and the booking system here: <https://warwick.ac.uk/coronavirus/term2/bookings/>

### **Community asymptomatic testing centres**

You can seek out a community testing centre for an asymptomatic (lateral flow) test in Tier 3 or 4 areas. If you are currently away from your term-time address as you relocated for Christmas, you are encouraged to obtain a negative COVID-19 test before returning to your term-time address. These centres can be found online by using a search engine (such as Google) and searching for the city or county where you live and the words “asymptomatic covid-19 testing”.

### **Further University guidance and information about COVID-19:**

The University will continue to update the Stay Safe at Warwick website as more information becomes available. For the latest information, please check [Coronavirus advice at Warwick](#). In the meantime, please continue to follow the latest restrictions and stay healthy by observing the “hands, face, space” advice.

We wish you a safe and happy 2021.

*Kate*

Professor Kate Ireland  
Director, Centre for Teacher Education,  
University of Warwick