

Guidelines for Managing COVID-19 at The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL)

This document outlines the guidelines to be followed in all premises of the OUSL, including the Regional and Study Centers to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 infection and to promote the health of the staff and students. These guidelines were developed/adopted according to the requirements of the OUSL after a careful study of the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Indigenous Medical Services on COVID-19 preparedness for workplaces.

Aim of the Guidelines

To ensure the continuity of essential academic and administrative activities of OUSL with maximum safety to staff and students.

1. Possible Modes of transmission COVID-19 virus within the OUSL premises

The transmission of the Covid-19 virus could happen through the following three modes.

Droplets: The virus could be transmitted by breathing infected droplets. Droplets could be produced during coughing or sneezing or even by exhalation from infected persons. These droplets could travel up to a distance of one (01) meter.

Direct: Person-to-person transmission by direct contact with an infected person (eg: hugging, shaking hands). The virus could enter the body through the nose, mouth, or eyes.

Indirect: When an infected person coughs, sneezes, or exhales, droplets of infected fluid could be released and could contaminate nearby surfaces and objects, such as desks, tables, telephones, computers, etc. An uninfected person might come in to contact with the virus by touching those surfaces and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

2. Preventive Measures

It is the duty of the staff members and students to inform/report to the OUSL COVID-19 Hotline **070 123 5774** or the Public Health Inspector (PHI) or the Health Centre **011 2881 370** if any of the following symptoms (as per 2.1a) are present or if they have been informed by the area PHI of possible COVID exposure.

Further, all the staff and students must adhere to the following guidelines and good practices.

- 2.1. Following categories of staff and students should not report for work or study.
- a. Those having fever, with or without respiratory symptoms such as cough, runny nose, sore throat, and/or shortness of breath.
 - b. Those who have had contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 for the last 14 days.
 - c. Those who have returned from overseas / Quarantine Centre or whose relatives have been quarantined within the last two weeks, should contact the **OUSL COVID-19 hotline – 070 1235774** or the Health Centre - **0112881370** before entering to the OUSL.

Only essential visitors will be allowed to the OUSL premises. A log of visitors' details must be maintained at the university entrances.

The respective Heads/Directors must ensure that if a staff member or a student with the above-mentioned symptoms has reported for work or study to send him/her back home immediately with the recommendation of UMO. The details of the staff member/ student should be informed to the Senior Assistant Registrar / general Administration in the prescribed form given in Annexure 1. It is mandatory to follow the steps mentioned in Section 5 in this guideline, if there is a valid suspicion that a staff member may have been infected with COVID-19 .

- 2.2. Anyone entering the OUSL premises (staff, students or visitors) must wear a facemask and wash their hands with soap and water before entering. (Foot-operated tap is the best for such a purpose). Alternatively, rubbing hands with an alcohol-based hand rub (70% - 85% of alcohol) could also be practiced. An additional optional measure is to have a foot bath at all the entrances of the OUSL.
- 2.3. Check the temperature of all the staff and students or essential visitors at the time of entrance to the OUSL. Any person recording a temperature above 98.4°F or 37°C must be reported to the PHI/UMO by the security staff through the OUSL Covid-19 hotline
- 2.4. Keep a minimum distance of at least one (01) meter between persons at all times (while working, teaching, meetings, and in the canteens, etc.)
- 2.5. All the staff and students must wear facemasks while on duty or study. They should refrain from touching the mask while wearing it. After removing the mask, it must be discarded into a closed foot-operated bin and hands washed. There should be minimal handling of the mask when removing it.
- 2.6. Always avoid touching the face.
- 2.7. Encourage respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes. Coughs and sneezes must be covered by the inner side of the elbow or sleeve. In a situation where this

is not possible a tissue could be used to cover the nose/ mouth, provided the tissue is discarded into a closed bin and hands washed thereafter.

- 2.8.** Staff and students should not use another person's mobile phones, pens, and other common telephones, fax machines, desks, or other work tools and equipment whenever possible.
- 2.9.**
 - a.** Under the supervision of the PHI, cleaning staff need to maintain regular housekeeping practices employing a roster/card system to ensure cleaning of public/common spaces as per the provided guidelines. This includes routine wiping/cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, equipment, and other items in the work environment. All metal surfaces shall be disinfected with 70% alcohol solution and all non-metal surfaces disinfected with 0.1% Sodium Hypochlorite, after cleaning by damp dusting/wet mopping with soap and water or a general-purpose detergent. The doorknobs/handles should be cleaned and disinfected every 03 hours. Floors, office equipment, and furniture should be cleaned/mopped by a disinfectant at least twice a day.
 - b.** Within the department premises, under the supervision of the Head/Director of the department, a staff member (works aide) can be assigned to ensure cleaning of the department/office spaces as per the provided guidelines. Clear directives must be given by the Head/Director of the department to ensure that the department environment remains clean and safe.
 - c.** A university culture of living with COVID-19 involving voluntary self-cleaning and sanitizing is encouraged.
- 2.10.** Strip curtains should be avoided and if it is necessary, they should be cleaned with disinfectants three (03) times a day as described above.
- 2.11.** Ideally meetings should be held using online/virtual platforms. If essential physical meetings take place, the following should be ensured: a) adequate ventilation b) participants should not remove masks for any reason c) refreshments should be provided on a take-away basis d) discourage staff and students from shaking hands/hugging. Adopt other non-touch techniques of greeting.
- 2.12.** Encourage the staff and students to take actions to maintain good personal health and hygiene by practicing the following:
 - A balanced diet
 - Drinking adequate amounts of warm clean water
 - Regular physical exercise
 - Abstain from unhealthy habits such as smoking and consuming alcohol

3. Specific instructions for the staff at service counters (shroff, information, assignment counters and gates, etc.)

- 3.1. Always wear a facemask. (Mask should be worn securely and properly and should not be touched thereafter until it is removed)
- 3.2. Keep a minimum distance of one (01) meter from the staff member/ student or alternatively have a blind / glass / plastic visor or shield in front of the counter leaving a space at the bottom to carry out transactions.
- 3.3. Practice minimum handling of cash (request for a credit/debit card). When using the credit/debit card ask the customer/student to insert and remove it from the machine.
- 3.4. The person at the counter should not share the pen used to sign documents. The staff member or student should use his/her own pen. In case the staff member or student does not carry a pen and uses the pen of the person at the counter, it should be sanitized after use by the staff member/ student.
- 3.5. Keep an alcohol rub/hand sanitizer by the side (one per each person at the counter) and use it as frequently as possible or alternatively wear gloves. (Gloves should never be reused and disposed of into a closed foot operated bin when the duty shift is over).
- 3.6. With reference to conducting all the examinations at the OUSL the instructions given in the (Annexure 4a & 4b) should be followed.

4. What needs to be done on returning home from the OUSL premises on a day-to-day basis

Upon returning home before entering the house,

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Remove the clothing and shoes/slippers and leave them outside. These items should be taken inside only after washing. Do not wear them again without washing.
- Leave all your belongings outside and if any item is taken inside the house, either wash them with soap and water or sanitize with alcohol sanitizer. (This applies to your mobile phone, spectacles, wristwatch, etc.)
- Enter the house only after a bath.

5. Special advice in case of detecting a suspected Covid-19 infected person at the OUSL premises

During such an event, necessary action should be taken to transfer the staff member or student to the nearest government hospital by ambulance. *Suwasariya* ambulance service can be contacted by dialling 1990 or one could also seek assistance from the contact numbers given below. However, before that, the following steps should be followed.

- 5.1. The suspected staff member or the student must wear a mask and should be kept in isolation immediately and all relevant precautions mentioned above should be taken to limit the spread of the disease, until transfer to the hospital. A specific isolation room/area must be identified in the OUSL premises/Regional Centres in advance. The area of isolation requires basic facilities such as a room with an attached bathroom, a chair, a bed, etc. Supervision is required to ensure that the patient remains isolated.
- 5.2. In the event of detection of a suspected staff member or a student at the main Campus/CRC, inform the Public Health Inspector (PHI) (**Hot Line: 0701 2357 74**) or University Medical Officer (UMO) (**Tel: 071 2316 754/ 011 2881 370**). Until the PHI or the responsible team from the Medical Centre arrives, the suspected staff member or the student must be kept in the office, classroom, or the lab where he/she was identified. The PHI and the team will bring the patient to the specific isolation room safely.
- 5.3. PHI will take necessary actions to transfer the suspected staff member or the student to the nearest government hospital by ambulance.
- 5.4. PHI will further inform the Chairperson of OUSL COVID 19 Response Task Force and the relevant Head/Directors of the departments of the suspected staff member or student for further actions.
- 5.5. PHI/UMO will further attend to identify the first contact persons in the relevant department, student groups, or any other relevant persons with the help of the respective Head of the departments/Directors and request for self-quarantine period until the suspected staff member or student's diagnostic report is released. The mode of transport to return home should be arranged using a private vehicle.
- 5.6. In the event of the suspected staff member or the student becoming positive, university PHI will inform the area PHI/MOH and follow the instructions to officially home quarantine the first contact persons in the respective departments. (For more information see Annexure - 2)

- 5.7. The Chairperson of the OUSL COVID 19 Response Task Force will officially inform the relevant authorities of the University and follow-up measures will be implemented with the help of the relevant Head/Directors of the relevant departments.
- 5.8. The Chairperson of the OUSL COVID 19 Response Task Force will,
- b. Coordinate with PIO to provide updates of the incidents to all staff members through ALLOU emails and the COVID-19 Newsletter, on a continued and weekly basis.
 - c. Direct welfare actions using the COVID - 19 Welfare Fund, Counselling Unit, Staff & Student welfare committees for COVID-19.
- 5.9. In the event of the suspected staff member or the student is at the Regional and Study Centre, the Assistant Director (AD) or any other responsible persons shall follow the **5.1 & 5.2** of these guidelines and inform the University PHI in the Main Campus at Nawala. University PHI or UMO will inform the area MOH and follow the instructions given by them for further actions.
- AD should fill out the provided Annexure 1, to obtain information of COVID-19 for contact tracing.
- The AD or any other responsible person of the Regional Centre shall inform the Chairperson of the OUSL COVID 19 Response Task Force (oucovid19rtf@ou.ac.lk) and continue to update all relevant news updates and coordinate the welfare actions.
- 5.10. PHI in the Main Campus and the AD or any other responsible person from the Regional and Study Centre shall take actions to disinfect/sanitize the suspected areas as per the provided guidelines by the PHI/UMO (For more information see Annexure 2).
- 5.11. Suspected staff members can access PCR testing with the approval of the UMO either at a private hospital, utilizing the university medical insurance scheme or at a government hospital

6. OUSL administration and the OUSL COVID 19 Response Task Force are expected to ensure the following:

- 6.1. Depending on the requirement, personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, goggles, face masks, gowns, or aprons (when appropriate), and sanitizing agents such as soap, chemicals, sanitizer sprays, additional masks, etc. must be provided to the relevant frontline staff and they must be encouraged to use them according to the recommendations.

- 6.2. Improve ventilation in workplaces and where feasible install air filters. Where air conditioners are not used leave the doors open.
- 6.3. Restrict large gatherings. Avoid face-to-face meetings as much as possible; alternative methods of communication like Video Conferencing is recommended.
- 6.4. If a face-to-face meeting is essential,
 - Minimize the number of attendees
 - Pre-order enough supplies and materials, including tissues and hand sanitizer for all participants.
- 6.5. Provide lunch and tea breaks group-wise to prevent crowding in the canteen. Avoid consumption of food in public/common spaces. SAR Gen/Admin must monitor and execute these directives.
- 6.6. Different modes of working/teaching (through emails, teleconferencing, etc.) to be employed to minimize contact.
- 6.7. Disposal of waste shall be carried out as per the guidelines routinely followed. All cleaning staff should be given training on the correct procedure of waste management. They should be provided with suitable PPE, including industrial gloves, and provided with adequate facilities for handwashing, with soap and water. Monitoring and evaluation/supervision should be conducted by PHI and the administration with the coordination of a division / department representative.
- 6.8. Educate and train all staff and students on COVID-19 infection, risk factors, and protective behaviours (e.g., cough etiquette and care of PPE and to follow the instructions in Section 4 of this document through webinars/email campaigns). OUSL COVID 19 Response Task Force must have a subcommittee in this regard.
- 6.9. Posters and health education messages to be displayed to encourage workers to comply with the given instructions.
- 6.10. OUSL COVID 19 Response Task Force should monitor the control activities implemented to control the spread of COVID-19 infection with the help of the UMO, PHI, and the University Medical Centre and must also provide all the other necessary guidance.

These guidelines will not only enable the prevention/control of the spread of infection but will also prevent panic situations in the event of detecting a suspected case. The guidelines are applicable to all university academic and administrative events such as day school, exams, lab classes, etc.

If it is felt that additional guidelines are necessary for every sector and activities of the University such as the Security, UMO, PHI, Day-care, Department Heads, Senior/Assistant Registers, Public Information Officer, Examinations, Day Schools, Lab classes, etc. such guidelines should be developed separately based on this document. Guidelines that are already developed are attached as Annexures to this document.

For more information

In case more information regarding COVID-19 infection is required please contact.

- **HOT LINE (OUSL)** - **070 1235 774**
- University Medical Officer (UMO) - 071 2316 754/2881 370
- Public Health Inspector (PHI) - 071 4483 948
- The Chairperson of COVID-19 special task force - 076 4769 519
- The Ministry of Health hotline, available 24 hours - 011 3 071 073
- The Government Media Unit hotline - 117
- *Suwa Sariya* Health Line - 071 0 107 107
- COVID Centre - 011 2860 004
- Medical Officer of Health of the relevant areas
(for Study and Regional Centres) - See Annexure 3

Annexure 1

Notifying COVID 19 affected staff and students' information of the OUSL

If you are identified/recognized as one of the conditions as listed in Table 1 below, please complete this information sheet and email to oucovid19rtf@ou.ac.lk. If you need further clarification, please see the chart given by the Medical Officer of the OUSL. (Annexure 2)

Please mark ✕ in the appropriate box.

PART I: Identified COVID 19 Status

Student: Staff:

a	Contacts (1 st Level)	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	Contacts (2 nd Level)	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	Contacts (3 rd Level)	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	Suspected Case	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	Positive Case	<input type="checkbox"/>

Table 1: Status

PART II: Personal Details

1. Name with initials :.....
2. NIC Number :.....
3. Male/Female :.....
4. For Students

Student Registration Number: Centre:.....

Faculty:..... Program:.....

5. For Staff;

Permanent: Temporary:

Centre / Faculty / Department/ Division:.....

PART III: Contact Details

6. Telephone No: Residence: Mobile:

7. E-mail Address: Email -1: Email -2:.....

8. Your Permanent address:

.....
.....
.....

MOH Division: Contact Number:

Name of the PHI: Contact Number:

9. Temporally address and contact number if available:

A. Boarding Place address :.....

.....
.....
.....

Contact Number :.....

MOH Division: Contact Number:

Name of the PHI: Contact Number:

B. Workplace address:

.....
.....
.....

Contact Number :.....

MOH Division: Contact Number:

Name of the PHI: Contact Number:

10. Any Other information:

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.....
.....

Contact Details - OUSL

Hotline (OUSL): 070 123 5774
University Medical Officer (UMO): 071 231 6754 / 011 288 1370
Public Health Inspector (PHI): 071 448 3948

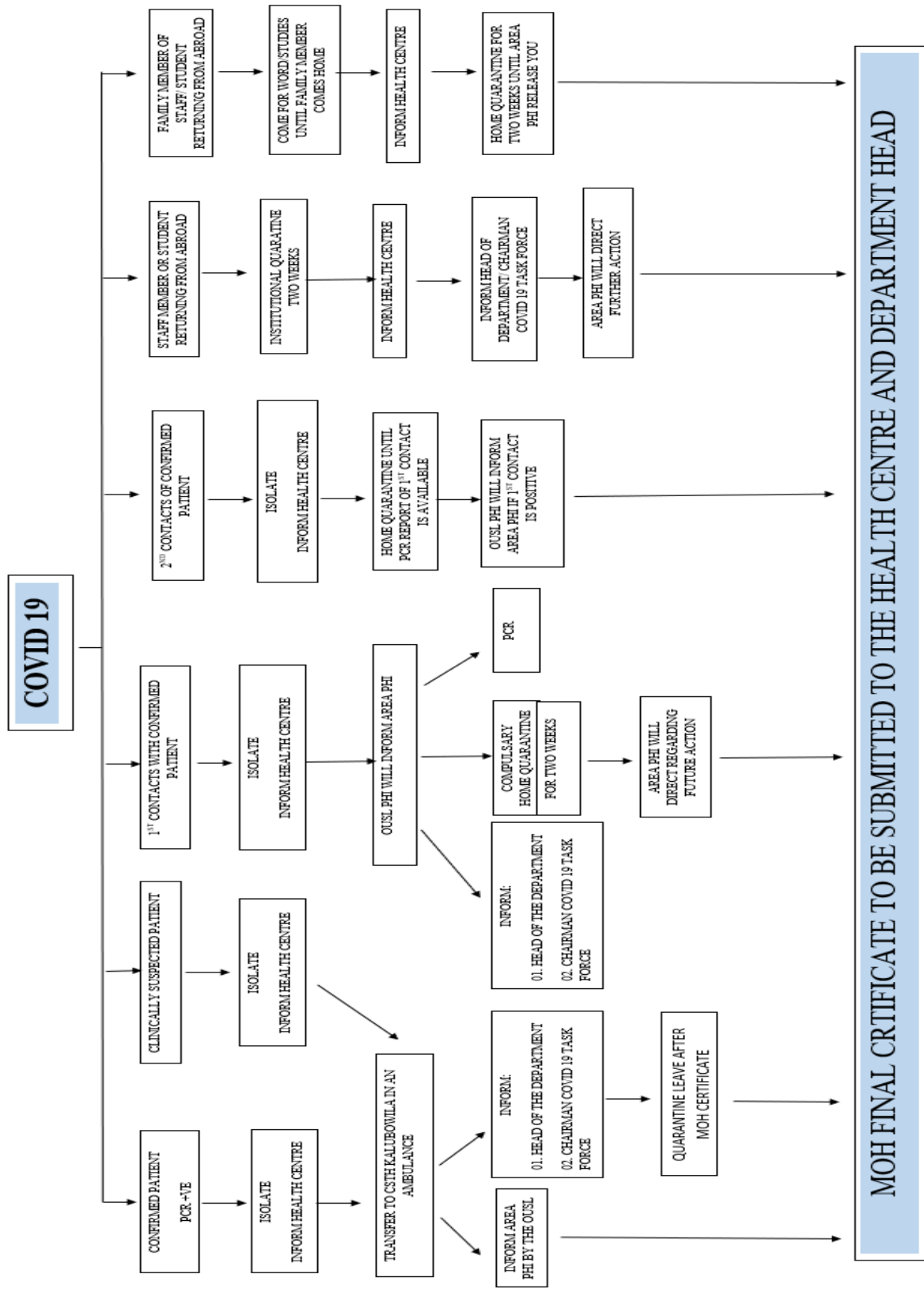
For office use only

Signature of the PHI :

Signature of the UMO :

Signature of the SAR/GA:

COVID 19 CASE MANAGEMENT CHART



Annexure 3

Centre	MOH /Name of the Doctor/ Contact No.	PHI
		Name / Contact No.
Kandy	081 2476262	Mr. Duminda 071 904 3928
Matara	Dr. (Ms) Achala) 041 222 2278 / 071 837 4258	Mr. Kumara 071 557 6327
Jaffna	021 205 3702	077 556 9224
Anuradhapura	025 222 2275	N. D. Kulathunga 076 860 3624
		M. P. Kuruneru 071 378 0703
Batticaloa	065 222 2278	Mr. Mithunraj 077 990 4620
Kurunegala	037 222 2194	Mr. Jayashantha 077 636 4000
Badulla	055 222 2278	Mr. Prasad 071 809 7027
Ratnapura	Dr. N. G. S. Panditharathna 045 222 2496 / 071 421 4793	Mr. Rismi Mansoor 071 616 7780
Ambalangoda	091 225 8278	PHI Head Office: Mr. Palitha 071 823 4938
		OUSL Area PHI: Mr. Hansika 071 449 4061
		Actg PHI: Mr. Nalin Abeysiriwardhana 071 449 4061
Bandarawela	057 222 2278	Mr. Dissanayake 076 097 4090
Galle	Dr. L. B. Ubeysekara 071 442 3543 / 091 222 2442	Mr. K. P. Wijesena 077 707 6061
Gampaha	033 222 2278	077 002 7442
Polonnaruwa	027 222 2209	071 818 0990
Kegalle	Dr. Dilrukshi Ekanayake 035 222 2278 / 035 222 2278	Mr. Sampath 071 449 6633

Ampara	063 222 2279	PHI Lunama 071 818 1788
Ambalantota	047 222 5053	Mr. Balakrishnan 077 662 1962
Hatton	051 224 2278	Mr. Sinhabahu 077 612 7602
Kalutara	034 222 9446	Mr. W. M. S Wanninayake 071 447 5042
Kuliyapitiya	037 228 1278	Mr. Chandana Karaunaratne 077 707 5259
Monaragala	055 227 6178	Mr. A. N. B. Dissanayake 071 408 8963
Puttalam	032 226 5201	Mr. A. N. B. Dissanayake 071 408 8963
	Dr. Chanru Fernando (AMOH) 076 303 8040	Mr. P Jagan 077 558 7756
Trincomalee	Dr. Sayanolibawan 077 601 6794	Mr. Lankeshwaran 077 460 4436
Vavuniya	024 222 2278	Mr. T. Kugan 077 078 6112
Kilinochchi	Dr. T. Suventhiran 077 399 0884 / 021 228 3823	Mr. T. Kugan 077 078 6112
	RDHS Dr Saravanapavan / 0773037535	PHI 076 552 3614
Mullaitivu	021 206 1588	071 511 1009
Mannar	077 668 8125 / 023 222 2278	Mr. Amila 071 440 4493
Matale	066 222 4927	

Annexure 4a

Please refer to the following special guidelines to be followed during this COVID-19 pandemic situation ;

Guidelines for the Examinations.

1. All the Students should fill a health declaration form (sample attached) under Quarantine Act on every day and submit to the security at the Entrance.
2. Entry que should maintain 1m distance and should not be overcrowding.
3. All the students should wash their hands/sanitize at the entrance.
4. Tables should be arranging 1.5m Distance.
5. All the Supervisor/Invigilators should be wearing KN95 Mask & Visor.
6. All the question paper packets must be sterilized by alcohol spray without wetting before opening.
7. End of each Examination disinfection should be done to the Examination Halls.
8. Please separate the special student (with high temperature & closely associated with COVID 19 patient/foreigner) and should be kept with a invigilator with PPD Kit at separate room/hall

Annexure 4b

Health Declaration Form **(Under the Quarantine Act)**

- Name of the Programme** -
- Type of the Exam** - **Selection Test** **CAT** **Final Exam**
1. **Name with Initials** -
2. **Student Registration Number** -
3. **NIC No.** -
4. **Address** -
5. **Phone Number** -
6. **Did you have any close association with a Covid 19 patient or a foreigner?**
 Yes **No**
7. **Do you currently have symptoms such as fever, sore throat, cough and body pain?** - **Yes** **No**
8. **Are you living in an isolated/Lockdown area?** - **Yes** **No**

.....
Date

.....
Signature

For Office Use Only

1. **Temperature** - **Normal**
 High

.....
Date

.....
Signature of the Security Officer