**Decision making structure for Covid-19 outbreaks within**

**the University of Bolton**

The University of Bolton has established three levels of command to manage any outbreak:

*The national definition of an outbreak in a university or other higher education setting is more than one confirmed case of COVID-19 among students or staff associated with a setting or site within a 28-day period* ***plus either of the following conditions:***

* + - *there has been direct contact between at least two of the cases within the setting; or*
		- *there is no sustained community transmission of COVID-19 and no alternative source of infection beyond the school identified for the confirmed cases.*

The level of command which takes operational ownership depends on the size of that outbreak.

Decisions will be made based on the available information, and informed by the local and institutional risk assessments, internal track and trace information and advice from local Public Health England and the government regulations and guidance in force at the time.

This decision-making structure which is specifically in place for outbreaks of the Covid-19 virus within the University settings, complements the existing business continuity and crisis management processes, and should be read in conjunction with those documents

The Vice Chancellors’ Group acts as ***Gold Command*** and is responsible for decisions concerning strategic and longer-term issues affecting the whole University, such as the closure of a whole campus for a period of time.

Strategic decisions such as moving Higher Education Institution tiers or mobilizing on campus testing due to increased prevalence of infection in Bolton that requires interventions on the whole Bolton community, will be escalated to the Vice Chancellor, Director of Public Health and Public Health England and will be discussed at the Health Protection Board.

The Executive Board acts as a ***Silver Command*** and is responsible for managing outbreaks at a school or departmental level.

Representatives of Silver & Gold are active participants at both a strategic and operational level in the Outbreak Control Board; the Multi-Infrastructure Partnership Silver Group; the Bolton- wide Comms Cell; Health and Universities Joint Working Groups

The RTW&S Group acts as a ***Bronze Command*** and is chaired by the Registrar. The RTW&S group manages individual cases, and small outbreaks of no more than a class or an office.

Locally the University of Bolton regularly meets with Bolton Council, local Public Health England and shares best practice with other Greater Manchester HEIs.

Nationally the University of Bolton is an active participant of strategic and operational networks which all currently have a focus on the safe operation of higher education and the prevention and containment of Covid-19.

These include engagement through Universities UK, and USHA (Universities Safety and Health Association).