HSW Guidance Criteria - Self-Administered Rapid Antigen Testing for UQ Business Purposes

What is a rapid antigen test (RAT)?

Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) are self-administered tests for detecting the COVID-19 virus and can detect whether proteins of the COVID-19 coronavirus are present in the body. RATs can sometimes detect COVID-19 before symptoms develop. They are not as accurate as PCR testing, particularly if you are asymptomatic. RATs are quick — returning a result within 10 to 20 minutes.

The University has bulk ordered TGA-approved self-administered RATs to be used for core business purposes.

How accurate are rapid antigen tests?

RATs can detect COVID-19 during the ‘acute’ phase of infection — especially just before symptoms appear and in the week after symptoms first appeared. Note, they are still not as reliable as PCR tests and can produce either false negative or false positive results. It is very important to follow the instructions in the packaging in order to get an accurate result.

Key items to consider when using RATs:

- They are most accurate when used on a person exhibiting symptoms, although as RATs are less sensitive than PCR tests, a PCR test is recommended if a person has symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19.
- Using them when no symptoms are present, when a person is well, may provide a false positive result. Therefore, a confirmatory PCR test is recommended for someone who is well and is not known to have had COVID-19 recently.
- A negative result may not necessarily indicate that a person is not infectious and if symptoms are present the person must seek immediate further testing via the PCR Method.
- A negative result does not rule out infection of another type of respiratory virus.
- The test is for one time use only, do not reuse the test.
- A negative result means that a person may be negative or that the viral load is too low to be recognised by the test. If symptoms such as headaches, migraines, fever, loss of sense of smell and taste, are present, the person must seek immediate further testing by PCR.
- If a positive result is obtained, the immediate requirement is to put on a mask, leave campus and present to a Covid Testing Clinic for a confirmatory PCR Test and self-isolate at home in accordance with the current Queensland Health requirements on isolation of diagnosed cases of COVID-19 and management of close contacts.

UQ business units will be able to order the tests on a needs basis via UQ Store (UQeMarket) at cost price. Orders should only be placed where there is a UQ official purpose, to manage identified COVID-19 risks.

Principles around this guideline

1. Unless exempt under the COVID-19 Vaccination Procedure, RATs do not mitigate the need for someone attending a UQ location from 14 February 2022 to be fully vaccinated.
2. As always, if unwell, a person should not be attending a UQ location, should isolate from others, and people with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should have a PCR test.
3. Due to limited UQ supply, RATs should be only used where necessary.
4. A RAT is to be administered at the UQ campus.

1 After reading the result, place all used components in the plastic bag provided and dispose of into an outside general waste bin.
5. RATs are not to be taken home and used for personal use of non-UQ staff or students.

6. RATs may be used for testing and infection control:
   a. Especially in student accommodation and other University-controlled household like settings; and
   b. In University settings where there are higher risks of transmission; and
   c. In settings where potential consequences are higher, including disruption to business and study programs.

**Priority business purposes**

RATs for business purposes should be used where core business or study needs to continue as a matter of priority. The following examples provide guidance (note, these should be for asymptomatic individuals. Symptomatic individuals should have a PCR test):

- Those who are medically exempt from vaccination - this is to be managed by placement co-coordinator or the staff member’s supervisor through conversations with Student Services and Human Resources.
- As identified in a UQ risk assessment as a control measure.
- To inform if a staff member can attend and remain on campus after becoming aware they have been a close contact of a person with COVID like symptoms. Note, if the staff member has COVID like symptoms then, as always, they must not attend campus.
- UQ owned residential accommodation (Kev Carmody House and Gatton Halls of Residences) where staff or students were in close contact with a positive person and where a negative test is required to be released from quarantine/isolation. Local protocols to be established.
- At UQ owned clinics (i.e., PSY, SHRS, Dentistry) or UQ research involving human participants where participants require a RAT.
- Where staff work and share accommodation, kitchen facilities and ablution blocks, e.g., Research Stations where UQ staff or student has exhibited COVID like symptoms (to use as they need – local protocols to be established).
- Field trips where there has been close contact e.g., travelling in the same vehicle for long period of time with a COVID positive person, where people have shared accommodation kitchen facilities and ablution blocks. Local protocols to be established.
- If Queensland Health (or other related health care provider) require staff and students on specific clinical placement to have a RAT as part of the clinical placement, and the employer is unable to provide it themselves.

For more information on types of tests available and how to get tested for personal reasons, visit [https://www.health.gov.au/health-alerts/covid-19/testing](https://www.health.gov.au/health-alerts/covid-19/testing)