



HSW Guidance Criteria - Self-Administered Rapid Antigen Testing

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 primarily for core business purposes. This use includes those people that are considered close contacts and are coming to a UQ campus or site for work.

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 to get an accurate result.

Key items to consider when using RATs:

- They are most accurate when used on a person exhibiting symptoms, although RATs are less sensitive than PCR tests.
- A negative result may not necessarily indicate that a person is not infectious, and a negative result does not rule out infection of another type of respiratory virus. If you feel unwell, you should stay at home until your symptoms have resolved.
- A negative result means that a person may be negative or that the viral load is too low to be recognised by the test.
- The test is for one time use only, do not reuse the test.
- If a positive result is obtained, the immediate requirement is to put on a mask, leave campus and isolate at home in accordance with the current Queensland Health requirements on isolation of diagnosed cases of COVID-19.

UQ business units will be able to order the tests on a needs basis via UQ Store (UQeMarket) at cost price.

Principles around this guideline

1. As always, if unwell, a person should not be attending a UQ location and must isolate from others
2. 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; and
 - d. Where a staff member is deemed a close contact and is presenting for work on campus or a UQ site and must take a RAT every second day (day 0, day 2, day 4, day 6) for seven days from the day of becoming a close contact.

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):

- As identified in a UQ risk assessment as a control measure.
- To complete the seven-day testing requirements for close contacts if required to attend a UQ campus or site.



- 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>