

Email to students - Coronavirus: update from the Principal

Dear student,

I hope this email finds you well. It's great to see all our staff and students enjoying the first semester on our campuses! I hope everything is going well for you: remember, if you have any questions, your Advisor is your first port of call. Do look after yourselves and each other, and [reach out for help](#) if you need it.

Omicron: new Covid-19 variant

I am writing to you in relation to the [precautionary measures](#) the Government is bringing in as a result of the emergence of the new Omicron Covid-19 variant. The measures are precautionary: scientists are still studying the new variant and its impact, and are imposing some new measures until more about the variant is known.

The new measures include wearing a face covering on public transport, and in shops. In addition, there are changes to the rules in relation to international travel: [have a look at the gov.uk website](#) if you were planning to travel overseas in the near future. These new measures will be reviewed by Government in three weeks' time.

Temporary changes to our face covering policy

We have heard from the Department for Education that we should make some temporary changes to our policy in relation to face coverings. These changes include:

1. Please now wear a face covering when walking around in our buildings in corridors, communal areas, stairwells and in lifts. You do not need to wear a face covering in other indoor areas or whilst seated. If you live in our residences you do not need to wear a face covering in your residence.
2. Please continue to undertake regular lateral flow tests and register the results.
3. The [current guidance](#) on contact tracing and isolation remains in place. In addition to these, any suspected or confirmed close contacts of the Omicron variant will be asked by the NHS Test and Trace system to isolate for 10 days regardless of vaccination status or age (note: if this applies to you, you will be contacted directly by the NHS Test and Trace and told to isolate).

Please be reassured that number of [cases of Covid-19 among our communities](#) and in the local area remains very low. The single most important thing we can all do to keep safe is get vaccinated. If you have not yet been vaccinated please can I strongly encourage you to get fully vaccinated as soon as possible. We are hosting a vaccination centre on our Mile End campus, which can be used by students, staff and the general public. You can either [book via the NHS](#) or simply attend as a drop-in. If you have had one jab, please do make sure you get your second, and also book your booster jab as soon as you are eligible.

Overseas students can also have the vaccine even if they have received a different vaccine overseas.

General update: study spaces and extra-curricular activities

If you are looking for somewhere to study, remember we have a new service to help you find study spaces across our campuses outside of our library buildings. We have over 3,700 of these spaces, which you can find on our [Library Services website](#).

Do make sure you are also taking advantage of all the social and extra-curricular activities provided for you. There is a wide variety of activities on offer – have a look at [the programme](#), which includes in-person and online activities.

Queen Mary no 1 in the country for social mobility!

To finish on some good news: I hope you saw last week the [report by the Sutton Trust](#) that put us at number 1 in the country for social mobility – if you missed it, do have a look. This new study attests to everything we stand for as a University and to our vision of opening the doors of opportunity. Being ranked at no 1 is a result of all staff and students' hard work. This is an incredibly proud moment for Queen Mary. Well done, everyone!

I hope you are having a great time here. If you have any questions, please contact your Advisor, the [Student Enquiry Centre](#) or of course you can contact me at the address below.

I will write to you again when I have a further update.

Best wishes,

Colin

Professor Colin Bailey, CBE, FEng, BEng, PhD, CEng, FICE, FStructE, MIFireE President and Principal
| Queen Mary University of London | Mile End Road | London | E1 4NS

