

Dear student,

I hope this email finds you safe and well. The exam period is coming to an end now – I hope, if you are taking exams, they are going well. If you need somewhere quiet to study remember our campuses are open, and you are welcome to come onto them if need [quiet study space](#), IT or internet facilities, or if you feel that your mental health and overall wellbeing will be better served by being on campus.

I'm sending you quite a short update this week, focussing mainly on lateral flow testing and safety on campus. You will already have received an email this week on [ensuring fair assessment](#) from Professor Stephanie Marshall, our Vice-Principal (Education), jointly with our Students' Union. If you have any questions about that, or about any aspect of your learning, do raise them with your Advisor, or your School or Institute.

Lateral flow testing for Covid-19

All students and staff working, studying and living on our campuses should [book for lateral flow tests](#) every week, as regular testing of people is a key mitigation to control the spread of Covid-19. We have completed over 5000 tests successfully on our campuses so far, and have now opened up [appointments for February](#).

If you book to be tested please do turn up for your appointment. A few people are failing to attend for their appointments – if you book a slot and then fail to attend, you have taken a slot that another student or member of staff could have used and there is also a cost involved, so please do either turn up, or cancel your appointment.

Remember lateral flow testing is for people who do not have symptoms of Covid-19. Testing is one of the measures that we have in place to keep our campuses [Covid secure](#). Other key mitigations to stop the spread of Covid-19 are wearing face-coverings, and the frequent washing/sanitising of hands. Thanks to everyone for continuing to follow our Covid code! It is really important that we do everything we can to keep everyone safe. Currently, thankfully, numbers of cases amongst our students and staff (irrespective if they have been on our campuses or not) [remain low](#), and this is a direct result of everyone following the code and ensuring that they keep themselves and everyone else safe.

Finally, I just wanted to share some of the uplifting stories that have reached me. I have already written about the many students and staff volunteering to help the fight against Covid-19. In addition, you can keep up to date with highlights of our research on our website, including a feature on how Queen Mary is helping [to increase the national Covid-19 testing capacity](#) (links). You may also have seen that one of our alumni, Professor Andrew Pollard, is the Director of the Oxford Vaccine Group which, with AstraZeneca, led the development of one of the Covid-19 vaccines now in use. There is an interview with him on [our website](#). On the subject of vaccines, at the vaccination centre we are hosting on our Mile-End campus, approximately 4600 vaccination have now been successfully delivered. Alongside these stories there are many more personal stories of our students and staff helping the Covid effort. Please do keep these coming, and let our [communications team](#) know if you are happy for us to share them! These stories make us all so very proud to be part of Queen Mary.

Please look after yourselves and each other, and keep safe. If you are struggling, have a look at [the support available to you](#), and reach out if you need help. I will write to you again next week with a further update, or earlier if necessary.

Best wishes,

Colin

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