

Dear student,

I hope this email finds you well and that, for those of you who have now completed your exams, you are enjoying some well-deserved rest and recuperation.

Some students and staff have written to me to express their frustration and anger following the horrific killing of George Floyd, and also with suggestions about what more we as a University can do to address the systemic racism within our societies. Standing together against all forms of racism and living up to our values about inclusion is one of the most crucial aspects of our work. I am deeply committed to making Queen Mary a truly inclusive University, opening the doors of opportunity for all through our teaching and research, and addressing the embedded inequalities that plague our society. I will be writing again about these issues shortly.

Please be aware we have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of hate crime, and anyone who is victim of or witness to such a crime should [report](#) it immediately. This includes any racist comments made on social media.

Covid-19 and returning to campus

As we continue to re-open our campus facilities the safety and security of our students, staff our wider community is our top priority. We are all incredibly proud to be part of the diverse East London community. I am also painfully aware of the disproportionate impact that Covid-19 has had on specific community and ethnic groups. I am therefore steadfastly committed to ensuring that, as we re-open campus and look forward to returning, we do so in the safest possible way for the benefit of all of us – our students, staff and our wider community.

I shared last week the exciting news that we have reopened some research laboratory facilities. This was the first step in re-opening our campuses in full. We are opening more laboratories through this month and have also been able to reopen our nursery, which has passed all Ofsted and Covid-secure criteria. The next phase of our work, as soon as government guidance permits, will be to open up small study space and other facilities for students, which I know students desperately want and need.

Supporting the fight against Covid-19

I am so proud of the contribution of our staff and students to the fight against the pandemic. The stories of student volunteering are just amazing: do [keep sending them in](#). It is heartening to see how colleagues from every Faculty are continuing to turn their expertise to the varied challenges being presented by the pandemic. Recent examples include: Dr Angray Kang who has recently had [work published](#) on how novel light technology can be applied to antibody testing; [a project in the School of Geography](#) has received funding to help manage the pandemic's impact on the environment; and Dr Tim Lee has [written on the global economic implications](#). This work, and that of [many others from our academic community](#), illustrates our University's significant contribution. In addition, our staff and students [continue to contribute](#) through their community work and volunteering activities.

I am also delighted to share with you the recording of the first in a new series of events called 'People and Pandemics' in which our world-leading academics bring their knowledge and wisdom to bear on aspects of the current pandemic. In the first event, chaired by our Vice-Principal Dr Philippa Lloyd, Dr Magda Osman, Professor Tim Bale and Professor David McCoy discuss the current global impact of Covid-19 from the perspectives of psychology, politics and public health. It is a fascinating discussion and a great illustration of the depth and breadth of our academic excellence. We are

promoting these events broadly, as they contribute to the public engagement with the wider aspects of the pandemic, and are another way in which we are contributing to the fight against Covid-19.

Do watch the event [here](#), and follow the rest of the series [here](#).

University rankings

Finally, I would like to share with you some good news. This week the latest QS World University Ranking and Complete University Guide were both published. There are many university rankings published each year of which the QS is one of the most globally respected. I am pleased to report that, in the context in which three-quarters of UK universities slipped in the QS global ranking this year, we have made improvements in both, [confirming our place among the world's best universities](#). We still have some way to go to achieve the position that truly reflects the quality of our University, but this is a good step in the right direction.

Please stay safe, and look after yourself and your loved ones.

Best wishes,

Colin

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