

Dear student,

I hope that this email finds you safe and well. I know many of you are either preparing for, or taking, assessments. I do hope everything is going well. Do please look after yourselves, and take breaks from your studies to socialise and wind down.

Relaxing of national Covid-19 restrictions

I'm very pleased to tell you that as part of the Government step 3 out of Covid-19 restrictions, all students can return for in-person on-campus teaching from Monday 17 May. This is good, if significantly overdue, news, and we look forward to welcoming even more students back to our campuses in the coming weeks. Unfortunately, our teaching term has of course finished for most students, but there is a wealth of [social and sporting activity](#) for you to get involved with – it is really important that you take breaks and socialise, so do keep checking the activities calendar. From bungee jumping to cinema nights and quizzes, there is something for everyone. From next Monday, for social activities, [up to six people or two households can meet inside, and up to 30 people can meet outside](#), and we will be adding more activities to the calendar to take full advantage of these new freedoms.

Please note if you are travelling back to our campuses for the first time, you should book lateral flow tests at our test sites on the Mile End and Charterhouse Square campuses. The Government recommends you book three tests when you arrive back on campus for the first time.

Campus facilities

Many facilities on our campuses are open and have remained open during the pandemic. Our bars and restaurants have been operating as take away services with designated study space where students and staff can eat and drink, and as you know Qmotion is open. From next Monday, students and staff will be able to sit inside to eat and drink in groups of six or fewer, or two households, in our bars and restaurants. I am also pleased to tell you that the Students' Union is reopening Drapers Bar and Kitchen from next Monday, and there will be events hosted there three times a week. With the relaxing of national restrictions, working with our Students' Union, we will be looking to run more activities indoors and outside, so do keep checking [the calendar](#).

Surge testing in Tower Hamlets

Anyone who is living in certain postcodes in Tower Hamlets ([visit the Council website for a postcode checker](#)), or regularly travelling to our Mile End campus, should have a PCR test as part of the ongoing surge testing. You can [do or collect a test locally in Tower Hamlets](#), and in addition there is a mobile testing van that will next be visiting the Mile End campus on 13 May – [visit our website](#) for more information. This surge testing has been instigated, as a precautionary measure, because some cases of the South African and the Brazilian variants of Covid-19 have been found in the borough. If you would like to know more about the surge testing please [visit the Council website](#). Please note that there is no need to change your behaviour as a result of this surge testing: please continue to travel to use our campuses, and follow our [Covid Code](#) and continue to [book a Covid-19 test](#) at one of our centres up to twice a week depending on how frequently you are on campus.

Lateral flow testing at home

We will be offering home Covid-19 lateral flow testing kits for students and staff from next Monday 17 May. Each kit contains seven individual tests, which will provide you with enough for three and a

half weeks of testing. We will ask you for your name and University ID when you collect a kit. Kits can be collected from Monday from our existing test centres on our Mile End and Charterhouse Square campuses, and from the library in the Garrod Building on the Whitechapel campus. Please note the Mile End test site, and collection centre for home testing kits, will be moving to Mucci's from 24 May. For the moment, we will offer both on-campus lateral flow testing and tests that can be collected and used at home.

Covid-19 across the world

Much as the UK is emerging from the pandemic, in some countries the situation in relation to Covid-19 is bleak at the moment. Our thoughts are with those of you who have friends and relatives in countries that are suffering. Do please look after yourselves, and remember we are here to support you - [do reach out for help if you need it](#).

I will write again when there is more news to share.

Best wishes,

Colin

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