

Dear student,

I hope that this email finds you safe and well, and that you were able to take some time off from your studies over the bank holiday weekend. It is great to see students on our campuses enjoying the activities organised by our Students' Union and the University: remember, whatever course you are studying, you can come back to our campuses if you feel your wellbeing would be better served by being here. Do check the [activities calendar](#) to see what activities are available. There is a mix of on-campus and online activities: do have a look, and get involved if you can. If you are on our campuses, could I please ask you to wear your University student identity card all the time, to help us keep our campuses safe for everyone.

This is just a short note, following some media coverage about surge testing in Tower Hamlets.

Surge testing in some parts of Tower Hamlets.

You may have seen media coverage that there is [surge testing in some areas of Tower Hamlets](#). This is because some cases of the South African and the Brazilian variants of Covid-19 have been found in the borough. All known cases of these variants are now self-isolating. To help ensure that we contain these variants, the local public health authority is encouraging everyone aged 11 years old and over in the area to get tested, as a precaution, even if they don't have symptoms.

The kind of test needed is a PCR test, not the lateral flow tests we are currently offering at our own test centres. If you live in Tower Hamlets, including in our student residences on or near our campuses, or regularly travel to our Mile End campus you should now either go and get a PCR test at one of these test centres:

- Outside Goldman House, Cephass Street, E1 4HQ - open midday to 8pm
- Corner of Mile End Road and White Horse Lane - open 10.30 to 5.00pm

or pick up a test you can use at home from these areas:

- Bethnal Green Gardens, off Cambridge Heath Road, immediately in front of Bethnal Green Library, E2 0HL
- Anchor Retail Park (Asda supermarket), 123 Mile End Rd, Stepney Green, London E1 4UJ, opposite the turning for Stepney Green
- Corner of Redmans Road and Stepney Green Park, (near the AstroTurf), E1 3NG.
- Tramshed Community Hub on Digby Street, E2 0LS (behind Albert Jacob House)

Please be aware that if you pick up a test from one of these centres, you then have to return it when used to the test site you collected it from.

There is [more information about surge testing in Tower Hamlets](#) on the council website. You may also wish to [sign up to the Tower Hamlets e-newsletter](#).

The number of cases of these variants is small: all Covid-19 cases are now thankfully low, in our communities, in our local boroughs and across the country. There is no need to change your behaviour as a result of this surge testing, which will be used regularly as a precaution measure across the country going forward: please continue to come to our campuses to study, and to take part in the [social and sports activity offered](#). It is important to continue to keep safe on and off our campuses: please follow our [Covid Code](#) and [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 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. I will provide you with more details, including where you can collect the kits from, in my next message.

Vaccination programme

As I mentioned last week, the UK vaccination programme is going well, and by the end of July everyone over the age of 18 will be offered a vaccine. You must be registered with a GP to be invited for a vaccine, so **please do register with a GP** if you haven't already done so. There are more details on our [Student Health Services webpages](#). I would encourage everyone to have the vaccine to keep yourself and others safe.

Please look after yourselves as we head into the assessments period: it is really important to take breaks from studying, meet up with friends and exercise if you can. Have a look at the Students' Union [Study Well campaign](#) for some tips.

I will write to you again soon.

Best wishes,

Colin

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