

Dear student,

I hope this email finds you well, and that you enjoyed the festive break. I hope you and your loved ones managed to stay clear of Covid-19, and you enjoyed some rest and relaxation.

I realise that many of you are now facing assessments. Good luck to everyone! Please make sure you look after yourselves through the assessment period. There are resources to help you [study well](#), to [look after your wellbeing](#) and plenty of quiet [places to study](#) available on our campuses. If you have any concerns, please reach out for help – we are here to support you.

Please come back to our campuses for the start of Semester 2!

I realise many of you are already back – it's great to see the University coming back to life after the holiday! If you haven't yet travelled to join us, please make sure you are back with us before the beginning of Semester 2 (or earlier if you have any planned in-person activities). Under the current government guidance, all face-to-face education and research can continue at universities. This means there will be no impact of the current government restrictions on your educational experience at Queen Mary, and you should come to our campuses for your face-to-face educational activities, to study, to engage in research as needed for your course, and to enjoy all our extracurricular and social activities. All our student support services, our libraries, study spaces, University-run cafes, bars, sports centres etc and our residences remain fully open.

Change to face covering policy

Updated [government guidance](#) for universities states that from today (4 January), as well as wearing a face covering while moving around indoors in communal areas, face coverings should now be worn in teaching settings, for example in workshops, laboratories, offices, libraries and study areas, teaching rooms and lecture halls. Our staff do not have to wear a face covering while teaching. No one need wear a face covering when outdoors, or in our residences, cafes, bars, sports facilities and restaurants.

Please remember that some people are exempt from wearing face coverings. In line with our Values, please treat anyone who is exempt with respect. The guidance is also clear that if a face covering impedes communication, you can remove it.

This change in government guidance regarding face coverings is temporary until Wednesday 26 January, at which point it will be reviewed.

Change to self-isolation guidance for anyone testing positive for Covid-19

If you suffer [symptoms of Covid-19](#), you should self-isolate straight away and [get a PCR test](#). If it is positive, you should continue to self-isolate. If your symptoms end, and you test negative on a lateral flow test on day six and day seven of your self-isolation period, you can finish your self-isolation on day seven. If you are still testing positive on a lateral flow test on day six and day seven, you should self-isolate for 10 days. You can read more about the national rules of self-isolation [on the NHS website](#).

Lateral flow testing and vaccination

Please make sure you take a lateral flow test at least twice a week, to help reduce the spread of Covid-19 within our communities. You can [pick up home test kits from our campuses](#). Please

remember to [register the results of your tests](#) with the NHS. This is important, even if the test result is negative. The [government guidance](#) states if you are a close contact of someone with Covid-19, and you are fully vaccinated, you should take daily lateral flow tests for seven days but you do not need to self-isolate.

Everyone should now have been offered a booster jab. If you haven't had yours, please [get one as soon as possible](#). We are still hosting a [vaccination centre on our Mile End campus](#), which you can [book to attend](#) or drop in.

Remember we are here to support you, and if you have any questions or concerns, contact your Advisor, the Student Enquiry Centre, or you can always contact me via the address below.

Best wishes,

Colin

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