

Dear student,

I hope this email finds you well. I realise many of you will be studying for assessments and/or completing coursework. Studying hard for a sustained period can take its toll. Please do make sure you look after yourself, and take regular breaks. There are plenty of tips on our website and on our Students' Union's website on how to [study well](#). I do hope that you will also take part in the many [social and sporting activities](#) available: regular exercise and socialising can help you stay well, study better and continue to meet new people within our Queen Mary community. If you do need help, or are worried either about yourself or anyone else, we are here to support you. Your Advisor is your first port of call, and you can also always contact our [student wellbeing services](#) or the [Student Enquiry Centre](#). Please do reach out if you need any support.

Industrial action

I'm very sorry to tell you further industrial action, including more strike days and a marking and assessment boycott, has been announced at Queen Mary, and the other universities across the country where the trade union UCU has a mandate. Strike days at Queen Mary will be from 5-18 May 2022, with a marking and assessment boycott from 19 May onwards.

Industrial action is focused on a very small number of areas within our University, with many Schools and Institutes seeing little or no disruption. If you are in a School or Institute where there is disruption, you will receive messages locally about what that will entail. I'm so sorry if you have experienced disruption: we are working hard across the University to do everything we can to mitigate any impact of the ongoing five-year sector-wide industrial action on your education and experience. We are asking staff who wish to take part in industrial action to prioritise all educational activities above their other non-educational duties, which we accept can stop during industrial action.

Graduation and progression to the next year of study

There are comments in the media about the possible impact of the marking and assessment boycott on students' ability to graduate or progress onto their next year of their studies. I want to reassure you that this industrial action will not affect either of these things. All students due to graduate this year, who reach the required standard, will graduate on time and as planned. All students in the earlier years of their degrees, who reach the required standard, will progress onto their next year of study. I also want to reassure you that we will not compromise on the quality and standards of our assessment processes as a result of this industrial action: the rigour with which your work will be assessed will be of a standard that is similar to that of a normal year, and hence your marks and degree classification, will be a true reflection of the quality of your performance.

External examiners

You may have read that some of our, and other universities', external examiners have decided to resign. This has happened before, at Queen Mary and other universities, during periods of industrial action.

External examiners are a part of Queen Mary's assessment processes, and we are very grateful to all the academics who act as external examiners for us. However, we embed externality into our educational provision in a number of ways in addition to the input of external examiners, in assessment and elsewhere. In the areas where we have received resignations from external examiners, we will use other means to ensure that our marking procedures have been followed.

I'm very aware that concern about industrial action is the last thing you need when you are studying. I would like to reiterate that colleagues are working across the University to mitigate impacts upon you. If you have any questions about the continual industrial action, have a look at the [FAQ](#), contact the [Student Enquiry Centre](#) or me at the address below.

Please do enjoy your time with us, and remember we are here to support you: do reach out if you need help. Good luck to those of you who are taking assessments! I will write again when there is a further update to share.

Best wishes,

Colin

Professor Colin Bailey, CBE, FEng, BEng, PhD, CEng, FICE, FStructE, MIFireE
President and Principal | Queen Mary University of London | Mile End Road | London | E1
4NS

