

## COVID-19 email update 3: Advice to help planning for the months ahead

Dear students,

Further to my last update, you have probably seen there have been further changes to local risk levels in several different areas of the UK. I am writing to provide some information about how we are responding here at Reading to this new three-tier alert system for England, so you can plan for the coming weeks and months.

### **New government alert system for England**

The government has recently introduced '[COVID alert levels](#)' for England, with different restrictions in place depending on the level. Reading, Wokingham and Henley are currently on 'Medium alert' (Tier 1), which means no further restrictions beyond existing national restrictions.

Some students may be commuting from areas on 'High alert' to attend sessions on campus. The [government advice](#) is that if you are a commuter student, living at your family home and travelling to and from University each day, you can continue to do so as this is for educational purposes. Please see the [government website](#) for further advice. When travelling, please also make sure you follow the [government advice on travelling safely](#).

### **COVID-19 security on campus**

I would just like to remind everyone that **you must carry your campus card or other identification with you when you are out on campus**. Our University Security team has a really important role in keeping our community safe, and during the current pandemic that includes making sure that everyone is abiding by COVID-19 regulations. This will sometimes involve having to identify if people on campus are part of our University community or not.

It is a [requirement for students to show identification](#) to a University staff member if asked. This can be any form of identification but carrying your campus card with you at all times means that you can quickly and easily show not just who you are but that you are a University of Reading student. To help keep your card accessible, after Week 6 there will be free lanyards available through the [Support Centres](#) and the RUSU main reception, and we encourage you to collect and wear one.

You can also collect a free 'sunflower' lanyard from the Support Centres, which you can choose to wear if you have a hidden disability, and in particular if it means you are exempt from wearing a face covering.

### **Week 6 (Monday 2 to Friday 6 November)**

Before making any plans for Week 6, you should check your academic timetable to see what sessions you have scheduled on campus or online.

If you wish to travel to see family or friends, **you must [check government guidance](#)** on which areas of the UK are currently subject to increased restrictions and make sure you follow the [government advice on travelling safely](#). With Reading and Wokingham classified as Tier 1 ('medium' risk), we can travel between Tier 1 areas [subject to government guidance on safe travel](#). However, please do check the [government guidance](#) for any other areas you intend to visit before travelling. Please remember that there are different and specific regulations that apply in [Wales](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

## **Christmas holiday period**

The government has said that it is developing plans for students to return home safely for Christmas and that this may require students to self-isolate for two weeks before travelling. Secretary of State for Education Gavin Williamson has said that he hopes this will only apply to a small number of universities.

There are no further details yet from government about these plans. However, as [infection rates](#) remain low for our community, hopefully any self-isolation requirements will not apply to us. Of course, if they do, we will do all we can to support affected students.

Along with other universities, we are also talking to our sector representative body, Universities UK, to make sure the best interests of students are represented and encourage the government to consult with the sector before any plans are finalised.

## **Spring term**

As mentioned in my previous email, we are very aware that you value face-to-face teaching, and this will continue to inform our plans for the rest of the academic year. We are currently working on our timetable for the spring term and we intend to offer as much scheduled on-campus activity as we can safely accommodate while adhering to current social distancing requirements. This is, of course, subject to any change in local or national restrictions.

As with the autumn term, we anticipate that students on most programmes will be able to continue to study at a distance in the spring if they cannot be on campus. However, there are some programmes for which it will be difficult for students to meet their learning outcomes without being on campus in the spring term, even if it has been possible in the autumn. We will write to all students on these programmes with more information by the end of November.

We will continue to share information as soon as we can confirm further details about our plans, including for exams and assessments in the summer term.

## **Travel advice for international students**

For international students currently in the UK, please make sure you check the latest travel advice for your home country before making plans.

If you are planning to travel to Reading for the start of the spring term (Monday 11 January), please remember that the [current advice](#) is that you would need to complete 14 days of self-isolation when you arrive in the UK, unless you have travelled from a country that is exempt. We recommend that you plan to arrive on or around 4 January, when the University reopens after the Christmas vacation. This means you would spend your second week of self-isolation attending teaching sessions online, before being able to attend on-campus sessions in the second week of term (from Monday 18 January).

As noted above, there will be some programmes where it will be difficult for students to meet their learning outcomes without being on campus. We will write to all students enrolled on affected programmes by the end of November.

### Key reminders

1. The '[rule of six](#)' applies inside and outside. You can gather with members of your household in a group of more than six but you cannot then be joined by anyone else.
2. Visitors (students or non-students) are NOT permitted in UoR Halls including Kendrick Hall
3. Please [self-isolate](#) if you or someone in your household has [symptoms](#)
4. If you test positive for COVID-19 you must notify the University via [our online form](#)
5. Follow instructions to [self-isolate](#) if the university or NHS Test & Trace requests you do so

Lots more detailed information and advice is [provided on Essentials](#).

I hope this email has been helpful in highlighting some of the key things you need to know for planning the next few weeks and months. Please continue to check your University email account daily, as well as the [Essentials webpages](#) for the latest information and advice. If you have any questions or need any support please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

Best wishes,  
Paddy

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