

To: UG and PGT students (new and returning)

Date: 8 September 2021

Subject: COVID-19 vaccinations, testing and keeping our community safe

Dear NAME,

The start of the 2021/22 year is now not very far away and I'm sure you are looking forward to getting it underway. Before things get too busy, I'm writing with some key points that will be important this term, to make sure we all keep well and can enjoy the greatest amount of freedom possible.

Travelling to university

If you'll be travelling to Reading from within the UK, you should take a lateral flow test before and two tests, three days apart, when you arrive. You can [order tests for free on the government website](#) and we'll be providing them on campus in Welcome Week. If you're coming from outside the UK, make sure you're familiar with the [government guidance](#) and check if you're eligible for help from our [Quarantine Support Package](#).

Vaccinations

We strongly encourage everyone in our University community, students and colleagues, to get both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can.

Watch a [video from our own experts](#) about how the vaccines work and how they protect those around you. Vaccination against COVID-19 is already saving many lives and has resulted in the removal of many of the restrictions which have affected our daily lives. In England, if you are fully vaccinated (and have no COVID symptoms), you no longer need to self-isolate if you come into contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19.

All students in the UK, including international students, **can get the vaccine for free** by booking on the [NHS website](#) or attending a [local walk-in vaccination site](#). You can also get your first or second dose on campus during Welcome Week, although you should make every effort to be fully vaccinated before the start of term.

It is important for our outbreak planning to understand what proportion of students have been fully vaccinated. The greater the proportion of vaccinated students, the more confidence we will have that any outbreaks would be easier to contain without the need for additional on-campus restrictions.

[Take our anonymous vaccination poll](#)

Please help us by taking the poll to report your vaccination status. You will not be asked to provide your name or any personal information. Your responses will not be linked to you or your student record in any way. The data gathered from this questionnaire will only be used to identify what percentage of our students have been vaccinated.

Keeping everyone safe on campus – what you need to do

We all still need to take action to minimise the risk of COVID-19. We ask that you:

- Take lateral flow tests twice a week as a matter of routine

- Do not attend classes or other events if you have COVID-19 symptoms regardless of whether you have been vaccinated
- Wear a face covering when moving around in indoor spaces and when you're around people you don't regularly spend time with
- Maintain good hand hygiene and take responsibility to keep shared living areas clean

[You must let us know if you receive a positive test result](#) for COVID-19 so we can support you.

Remember that it is the law to self-isolate if you are told to by NHS Test & Trace. Do not come to campus if you have any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 (or other infectious illnesses) or if you test positive.

We've recently updated our health and safety guidance, including our policy on face coverings. In line with government changes, face coverings will no longer be expected. However, we encourage face coverings to be worn when moving around in indoor spaces and when in close contact with those you do not regularly spend time with. They can be removed when sitting at a desk (for example, in offices, classrooms and the Library) or once seated in our catering outlets. So [visit Essentials](#) to find out what you can expect in the autumn term.

Please ensure that you have read and understood the full [health and safety guidance for students](#) before arriving in Reading for the start of the year.

Join us for Welcome Week

While Welcome Week is usually aimed at new students, this year we have designed many events for both new and returning students. I encourage you to come along to some of the activities from 20 September – 24 September. With over 800 events planned for the week, it will be a great opportunity to settle (back) into university, start the year off well, and learn more about opportunities you can get involved with. [Download our Welcome app](#) to find out what's happening on campus.

Advice and support

Remember that our full range of [specialist advice and support services](#) are available for information and support, as well as your Academic Tutor. If you do not know where to direct your question, your [Support Centre \(or Henley Helpdesk or ISLI Admin Office\)](#) are ready to advise.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Best wishes,

Paddy

Dr Patricia ('Paddy') Woodman

Director of Student Services