

To: All students

Send date: Thursday 10 December

Subject line: COVID-19 update #11: Spring term face-to-face teaching and COVID-19 testing

Dear students,

This message is being sent urgently to all students and we recognise that this may include some who have recently completed their studies. Please ignore this message if you are not a current University of Reading student.

I am writing to share more information about our plans for the spring term, following my email on the [3 December](#) about the UK government's national guidance for students returning after the Christmas break.

Reminder about reporting positive test results

Please remember that if you test positive for COVID-19 following one of the Lateral Flow Tests currently being offered at the SportsPark, **you must let us know using our [online form](#) as soon as possible**. The test results are held by the NHS only and we do not see them, so we do not automatically know who receives a positive result.

If you do not complete the form, we cannot support you to access a priority PCR test to confirm your result. It also means we cannot support those you have been in close contact with to ensure they do not unknowingly spread the virus to family or friends they may be seeing during the Christmas break. If you have received a positive test result, please [let us know](#).

Face-to-face teaching on campus in January

Government has advised universities to stagger the return of students, prioritising those on programmes with practical elements or placements, and to provide Lateral Flow Tests for non-symptomatic students when they return to campus. After carefully considering this guidance, we can now share our plans for the return to campus in the spring term with you.

For us here at the University of Reading, this means:

- **term will still start on Monday 11 January** for most programmes, with a small number of programmes starting from Tuesday 5 January as originally planned;
- **we will continue blended online and face-to-face learning** in the spring term;
- **the start of face-to-face teaching in January will be staggered**, prioritising programmes with practical or placement elements, meaning some modules will be taught online only for the first one or two weeks of term;
- **all on-campus teaching will have restarted by 29 January**.

A full list of when face-to-face teaching will resume on modules in each School is [published on Essentials](#), along with [further information about planning your return to campus](#) in the spring.

Your personal **timetable for the spring term will be published on 18 December**. This will show all your scheduled online and face-to-face sessions in each of the modules for which you are registered. Joint Honours students, and students taking modules from other Schools, can start to attend face-to-face classes in line with their timetable.

Our postgraduate research students should continue their research activities and supervision meetings as planned, in consultation with their supervisor.

As we have done for the autumn term, our teaching sessions on campus will continue to adhere to social distancing requirements and government regulations, and you should continue to wear a face covering unless you are exempt.

Lateral Flow Tests for students and staff

We will make Lateral Flow Tests available for all students, whether they have travelled over the Christmas break or stayed in Reading, as well as for colleagues who will be working on campus in the first few weeks of term. As with the end of the autumn term, we strongly recommend that you use this service, although it is not compulsory. The government advice to take two Lateral Flow Tests, three days apart, continues to apply.

Testing will be available from Tuesday 5 January through until Friday 29 January and will, once again, take place in the sports hall at the SportsPark. [Bookings are now open via this link](#). If you wish to take a test, please book as soon as possible, ideally before 18 December.

Remember that if you have any of the [main symptoms of COVID-19](#), you should not take one of these Lateral Flow Tests at the SportsPark and you should instead book a PCR test through the [national NHS system](#). If you test positive for COVID-19, from any type of test, you must [let us know](#) as soon as possible so we can support you and your close contacts.

Further information about testing is [published on Essentials](#).

Campus services and facilities

Over the Christmas closure from 22 December to 4 January, our halls of residence will remain open, with catering available if required and support for anyone who needs to self-isolate during this time.

Campus services and facilities, including the Library, study spaces, further catering outlets and student support services, will reopen as planned from 4 January, subject to the relevant government restrictions in place at the time.

We are planning to safely reopen our fitness facilities at the SportsPark in January, while the sports hall is used for the Test Centre, and will keep you updated.

I hope this email has been helpful. We will continue to keep the [Essentials webpages](#) updated with the latest information, advice and FAQs. You can also contact our COVID-19 support line on 0118 214 7813 from 9am to 5pm on weekdays and 11am to 4pm at weekends.

Best wishes,
Paddy Woodman

Dr Patricia (Paddy) Woodman
Director of Student Services