

Start of term with Student Services – 22 September 2020

Welcome to our new students and welcome back if you are returning to the University of Reading! It's great to have you with us, and we've been busy preparing for you. There's a lot of information to take in when starting a new year at university – but don't worry. This newsletter, from Student Services, is designed to point you towards information and guidance as you make your way through the next few weeks and beyond.

Planning your safe return to Campus

The teaching term starts on **Monday 28 September** and you should plan to be back on campus by the time teaching starts for your programme. We are committed to ensuring you continue to benefit from all that university life has to offer. To provide you with the best possible experience, while protecting your health and safety, we will be doing some things differently this autumn.

We will all need to work together to keep our community safe. When you return, you can expect to see **marked one-way systems, designated building entry/exit points** and **hand hygiene stations**. Some rooms and facilities will have **new layouts** to increase space between people and we are also introducing **maximum capacity restrictions** in some areas.

Our dedicated website, [Student Life in Autumn 2020](#), includes a range of useful information about how the university is working to ensure the safety of students and staff, while providing you with a supportive learning environment while adhering to social distancing requirements. Here you can find out:

- [Teaching and studying](#)
- [What's open](#)
- [Isolation and quarantine advice](#)

And much more.

Our collective responsibility

Our aim is to create a vibrant and active campus environment for you to live, study and socialise in, while protecting the safety and wellbeing of our whole community. To do this effectively, we need

to work together, as well as being flexible and considerate towards each other as we continue to adapt to the changing environment.

If you haven't done so already make sure you know exactly [what we expect you to do to prevent the spread of COVID19 infection](#) and protect the health and wellbeing of the whole University community.

Welcome Week

This year Welcome Week (21 to 25 September) at the University of Reading will feature a combination of virtual and face-to-face activities. All these events and much more can be found on the [Welcome Week website](#) and [Welcome Week mobile app](#). Click here to download the app in the [app store](#) or [play store](#) now; please note, virtual events listed on the app can all be accessed through the Welcome Week website.

School Welcome events for new students

If you are joining us as a new student there are a lot of '[events](#)' happening over the coming days but the most important ones are the ones organised by your School, Department or programme. You will find the details listed on the [Schools Welcome events site](#). Diary these now and be sure to attend (virtually or in person).

Wellbeing & Support

Everyone's journey at university is unique, and everyone manages in their own way - this year more than ever. We hope you have an enjoyable and enriching time with us at the University of Reading. For those times when it seems tougher than usual, it's important to know you have access to a wide range of support here at Reading:

- [Student Welfare Team](#) – here to help with personal difficulties such as homesickness, family, relationships, and issues related to drugs or alcohol, bullying and harassment
- [Counselling & Wellbeing](#) – providing specialist mental health support
- [Academic Tutors](#) – for advice relating to your academic progress, development, or study skills

- [Our NHS-endorsed self-help guides](#) – providing guidance for a wide range of challenging situations
- [Student Life Blog](#) – written by Reading students for Reading students. Subscribe to read how others manage little and big challenges in their lives
- [Togetherall](#) – a free, online support network, available 24/7
- [Life Tools](#) – interactive workshops to help develop your skills, such as building resilience and confidence
- [RUSU Advice Service](#) – offering independent and confidential advice for all students

Support arrangements

All our regular support services continue to be available for all students, though some are delivering their services remotely or during adjusted opening hours, due to the ongoing issues regarding COVID-19.

- **Immigration and international support:** If you are coming from overseas, this team can advise you on anything from settling in, to immigration. For Immigration or Home Office Compliance enquiries, please email immigration@reading.ac.uk and for general enquiries please email Int.Adv@reading.ac.uk. For information on how to arrange an appointment with one of the team please see the [appointments](#) webpage.
- **Financial support and advice:** The place to go to find out about fees, and funding advice. The Student Financial Support team are also responsible to administering some of the many Scholarships and Bursaries available at the University, most commonly the Reading Bursary. Email studentfunding@reading.ac.uk and a member of the team will respond or can arrange to call the student to discuss the issues raised.
- **Careers advice:** Our services are for all students, all disciplines and all years, including postgraduates and researchers. You can contact the team via careers@reading.ac.uk or calling 0118 378 8359.
- **Campus Jobs:** If you are looking for further information about Campus Jobs and how to find a part-time job on campus, we recommend visiting the Campus Jobs webpages – www.reading.ac.uk/campusjobs alternatively if you would like to contact the team directly you can do this in a few different ways:
 - a. Appointments – The Team are now accepting appointment bookings, these will be virtual appointments for general queries, and in-person appointments if you are required to show us documentation.

- b. To book an appointment students are required to log on to the Campus Jobs portal (<https://campusjobs.reading.ac.uk>) and go to **Search Appointments**.
- c. Our Help desk is based in Carrington Building, but is not currently open for drop-ins, please **do not** wait in the queue if you **do not** have a booked appointment.
- d. Appointments are generally available between 10:00-16:00 Monday-Friday and can be booked between 1-7 days in advance.

You can also call the team on 0118 378 4499, email campusjobs@reading.ac.uk or on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

- **Disability support:** The dedicated disability advisory service within Carrington is on hand to offer support. The Disability Advice Service is primarily offering remote appointments through Teams video call or phone call. Face to face appointments can be arranged if needed. If you would like to discuss having an appointment, please contact us by emailing disability@reading.ac.uk or calling 0118 378 4202.
- **Counselling and wellbeing:** our highly skilled and experienced counsellors and mental health advisers can provide advice, support and guidance on a wide range of issues. This service is providing telephone and video conferencing sessions through Microsoft Teams.
- **Student Welfare Team:** You can email the team at studentwelfare@reading.ac.uk and ask to arrange for a telephone or video call appointment with one of the Welfare Officers.
- **Student Services Reception:** The team located on the ground floor of the Carrington building can help with questions about enrolment, Council Tax certificates, Railcard applications, Oyster applications, replacement campus cards, Verifications of awards or academic progress and Transcripts for Graduates. Students can also call the team on 0118 378 5555 or email studenthelp@reading.ac.uk. If you're unable to visit in person, you can call your Student Support Coordinator or log on to RISIS and click on '[Ask a Question](#)'.

Support Centres: The Support Centres are your first port of call for all questions, help or advice throughout your time at the University, providing you with the support you need to be successful in your studies and beyond. [Find out which Support Centre](#) supports your school or department.

Your attendance and engagement

We want to make sure you succeed on your chosen programme of study by providing opportunities and support throughout your time here. This includes support for your wellbeing, academic achievement, and progression through your programme.

Engagement in every aspect of your studies is key to your academic success and our [Student Charter](#) sets an expectation that you engage fully with all of your academic activities.

We encourage you to work with us to take responsibility for your own attendance and engagement. If you have any worries or concerns, we have a wide network of support to help you, depending on your individual circumstances. Your Academic Tutor and Student Support Co-ordinator (in your [Support Centre](#) or Henley Helpdesk) will provide you with details of the help available and point you in the right direction accordingly, so they should be your first point of contact.

Flu jab and registering with a doctor

It's important to sign up with a doctor's surgery (GP) and dentist in the local area. Also, students are considered a higher risk group for contracting meningitis, so if you haven't already had the MenACWY vaccine to protect against meningitis, make sure to request this from your new GP shortly after arriving.

- [University Medical Practice](#) 0118 987 4551
- [Chancellor House Surgery](#) 0118 931 0006
- [Green Road Surgery](#) (Parkside Family Practice) 0118 926 0026

This year it's especially important that anyone who is eligible contacts their doctor and receives the flu jab, which is available every year on the NHS to help protect adults and children at risk from flu and its complications. This year the flu vaccine is being offered on the NHS to:

- adults 65 and over
- people with certain medical conditions (including children in at-risk groups from 6 months of age)
- pregnant women
- people living with someone who's at high risk from coronavirus (on the NHS shielded patient list)
- children aged 2 and 3 on 31 August 2020
- children in primary school
- children in year 7 (secondary school)
- frontline health or social care workers

Latest news

As a University of Reading student, you have access to the [Me@Reading student portal](#). Remember to log in regularly to see details of all of the events taking place on campus, as well as University news tailored to your course, and to access your University email and timetable.

Alternatively, check out our [Student Life blog](#), or follow our [Twitter account](#), with content created by University of Reading students sharing stories about their experiences of life on campus and beyond.

Online induction and re-induction

We've launched two online courses to help new and returning students adjust to our blended learning environment this autumn term.

- [Study Smart](#) – for new undergraduate students

Designed by our expert Study Advisors, this course provides useful information on how you'll be studying this term, including advice on how to make the most of face-to-face interactive sessions and online course content, as well as developing your study skills to adapt to learning online. If you are a new first year undergraduate student you will receive an email with a link to the course in the first week of September 2020.

If you have any queries or issues accessing Study Smart, please email: studyadvice@reading.ac.uk.

- [Back To Uni](#) – for returning undergraduate and taught postgraduate (Master's students)

Get off to the best possible start this autumn term by completing 'Back to Uni: Your Essential Guide to Flexible and Online Study' – a free online course tailored exclusively for you by the Study Advice team and academic and support staff from across the University.

There have been some changes to the ways you'll be learning post Covid-19.'

'Back to Uni' will help you prepare for your return to study at the University of Reading. The course will provide vital information on how you'll be studying this term, including advice on how to make the most of face-to-face interactive sessions and online core content, as well as developing your study skills to adapt to learning online.

The course is packed with useful advice and guidance to help you return to your studies with confidence, whether you are returning to campus or temporarily studying remotely.

We recommend you complete the course before the term begins to get the maximum benefit. It can be completed in a few short sessions (approx. 4 hours of total study) and is designed so you can work through it at your own pace. You will also have plenty of opportunities to connect with other UoR students, new and old, in the course discussion boards and share your ideas and experience.

If you have any queries about the course 'Back to Uni', please email studyadvice@reading.ac.uk. If your query is regarding access, please contact the Online Courses team ooocs@reading.ac.uk. To sign up, click the link and register using your University of Reading email address.

- [International Welcome course](#) – for students joining us from overseas

In addition, if you need to complete a period of self-isolation (or 'quarantine') after arriving into the UK from overseas, we've designed another course specifically to help you during this time. Our **International Welcome Course** is available on Blackboard and will introduce you to our network of student support services, as well as providing an opportunity to reflect on your own personal and academic development.

Library services

We've worked hard over the summer to make changes to our Library building and services so that you can still get the resources you need, some space to study safely, and online support from our expert staff.

Getting the books you need

We're continuing our [Click & Collect service](#) throughout the Autumn Term so you can borrow books without needing to book a study space. Place holds online via Enterprise and we'll put them aside for you to collect. You'll get an email when your books are ready. In term time the service will be open 10:00 – 21:00 seven days a week from the Palmer Quad side of the building. See the 'borrowing print materials' section of our [Current Library Services](#) guide.

Studying in the Library

We've created socially distanced study spaces from Floors 1 to 5 for individual study only. You'll need to check our [Current Library Services](#) guide to select your furniture and zone, then [book your space](#) for one, two or three hours. Bring your confirmation email and Campus Card when you visit. Use the main entrance (Whiteknights house side). Our staff will admit and direct you. Follow the

burgundy feet to queue! Then follow the one-way system to move around the building. Check our [floorplans online](#) to see how that works.

You're welcome to browse the book shelves whilst you're studying and we've put Self-Service Points on Floors 2 to 4 so you can borrow your books upstairs before following the one-way exit route. If you use a book but don't borrow it, please leave it on one of the trolleys labelled with a penguin for us to put back. Feel free to make use of the hand gel and wipes on each floor to keep yourself and the study spaces hygienic.

Support from our experts

All our expert staff are available online to help and advise you, although not from staffed Library desks for the time being. Do check the [Library website](#) to see all the support already available to you. If you have a general enquiry or are not sure who to ask for help email library@reading.ac.uk or phone 0118 378 8770. If you want advice on resources in your subject area contact your [Academic Liaison Librarian](#) who can assist by email or a 1-1 virtual meeting. Our [Study Advice Team](#) help you develop your study skills. They have [online tutorials](#) and offer [bookable sessions](#). If your course involves any maths or statistics work and you need a helping hand to brush up your skills our [Maths Support Team](#) can get you on track with their [online guides](#) or [1-1 advice sessions](#).

New students - two bus journeys for free

[Reading Buses](#) are offering all new students [two free trips on their buses](#) as a 'welcome to Reading' gift. Simply click on the link below and enter your email address. You will be sent a link to download their free app with two free trips waiting for you. You don't need to do anything else – once you have the tickets, you can use them on their buses without worrying. It's a great way to try their services for free. Reading Buses were awarded the Visit England 'Good to Go' mark so you can rest easy knowing they are clean, safe and ready for you.

Please note the government's [safer travel guidance for passengers](#) in relation to travelling in vehicles or on public transport during the current coronavirus outbreak. In particular, you must wear a face-covering on public transport in England currently, unless you come under an [exemption](#).

