

Important COVID-19 update: exams in the summer term

Dear students,

I am writing to update you on arrangements for the summer term, including exams.

Given the rapidly changing situation, we have decided to extend online teaching and assessment into the summer term.

Exams and assessments

We can confirm that there will be no in-person exams held on campus during the summer term. **The vast majority of these exams will still take place** but as 'take home exams' – which will be made available to you electronically and submitted online – or another form of assessment. This will allow you to receive the credit for your learning and hard work this year, from where you are.

We already have experience of running take home exams that we are drawing on, but as we were due to hold more than 1,000 exams, we need to work through what the exact solution will be for every examination. Your School will contact you by Friday 3 April to explain in more detail what will happen for each of your modules. **However, I hope this provides you with sufficient reassurance to return home if you wish, whether that is in the UK or overseas.**

A very small number of exams that are required by professional accrediting bodies (around 20 - affecting a handful of modules) will need to be delayed until it is possible to hold them in person or another solution is identified. We will contact you separately as soon as possible if this will affect you.

More information about 'take home' exams will be provided on Essentials.

Graduation

We have taken the very difficult decision to cancel our summer graduation ceremony. This is a celebratory event of huge importance to our community, and it is a decision we make with a heavy heart. However, we feel it is better to make this decision now and provide those affected with certainty, particularly given the travel and other decisions that those attending need to make.

For those expecting to graduate in the summer, we will still provide your exam results and degree classification in a timely way, enabling you to make decisions about your future. We will offer the opportunity to attend ceremonies to celebrate in person with family and friends later in the year. The Graduation Office will be in contact shortly with all those affected to explain the options available.

Tell us if you are going home

If you now take the decision to leave, or if you have already left, it is important that you complete the [online departure form](#), if you have not done so already.

We need to know who is here in Reading and who has gone home, so that we can maintain the health and safety of those who are staying on campus and University staff. This will help us to provide services and help on campus only for those students who need it.

Self-isolation and social distancing

Please check the [government's updated guidance](#), to understand the implications and guidelines around [social distancing](#) (limiting contact between other people), and on [self-isolation](#) if you are showing symptoms or are otherwise at increased risk.

It is important that everyone in a household or shared accommodation follows the official advice to self-isolate for 14 days, if one person in that household displays symptoms.

If you are in halls and need to self-isolate, please tell us using the [online self-isolation notification form](#). If you are a UK student and you need to self-isolate we recommend that you should try to return home for your period of isolation, if possible.

Closure of Library building and study space

It is vital that all students follow the government's guidance to restrict social contact wherever possible. Therefore, the University has decided to close the Library building and Study at URS, from 5pm on Friday 20 March.

Continued support

These are all big changes, but we will be continuing to support your learning and welfare in a range of ways:

- Library resources remain available online and you can contact the team: visit the website for [Library contact details](#) and more information, such as on returning books.
- Apps Anywhere can now be used off-campus too. [Further information is available](#)
- Careers, Support Centres, Student Financial Support, International Student Advisory and Immigration, Welfare Team, Wellbeing and Disability Advisory services are moving to providing support by telephone or online through email and video conferencing. Other face-to-face services will also be made available in this way. Guidance on how to access these services will shortly be updated on the [Essentials website](#).
- We are currently working on updated Extenuating Circumstances guidance and will share this by the end of the term, Friday 27 March.

As we settle into this new way of working and studying, we will keep you updated about how we can support you and your learning.

Look after yourselves – and each other

As we all adjust to studying, learning and working remotely, keep a regular eye on your University email, Me@Reading and the [Essentials webpages](#). Please stay in touch with friends, course mates, your lecturers and your Academic Tutor. We will also be drawing together some useful [guidance on how to cope in these uncertain times](#)

The University experience is not just about learning. It is also about friendship and support. By staying in touch with each other, through all the many digital channels at our disposal, we can both receive and provide much needed support and connection for one another.

Kind regards

Patricia

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Director of Student Services