

## COVID-19: Important update on travel and accommodation

Dear students,

As we approach the end of term tomorrow, Friday 27 March, I hope you have been able to undertake your studies using our new online arrangements. This has been a big change undertaken in a short period of time. Some of you may have encountered some teething problems, so please bear with us, as we are working hard to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

Below are some important updates on:

- accommodation contracts
- the University Student Support Funds

### **Halls Accommodation contracts**

As I said in my email yesterday, we fully appreciate the concerns of students in Halls about their accommodation contracts. Given the current exceptional circumstances, I can now confirm that those in University Halls accommodation, operated by our partner UPP, **will not be charged for the third term if you will not be living in Halls for the rest of the academic year.**

This cancellation process will take a little while to organise, and we will contact students in our Halls directly to let you know how to trigger this. We are working on this as quickly as we can. There is no need to contact the University or UPP in the first instance, and we will make contact with you as soon as we are able. In the meantime, you can assist the Accommodation Office by completing the [online departure form](#), if you have not already done so, if you have left or will be leaving shortly.

As outlined in yesterday's email, for those in **Kendrick Hall**, the owner Unite Students has also confirmed that it will release students from their contracts if this wish to return home or have already done so. All students in Kendrick Hall who wish to cancel the third term must inform Unite Students by the strict deadline of Friday 10 April by emailing [cancellations@unitestudents.com](mailto:cancellations@unitestudents.com).

For welfare and safety reasons, we need to know who is remaining in Halls. If you are unable to return to your home and intend staying in Halls please let us know by completing the [staying on in Halls](#) form.

If you decide to leave to return home, please endeavour to take all your belongings with you. Given the government's prohibitions against non-essential travel, I hope you understand that we cannot provide access to rooms after you have left unless it is for one of the authorised exceptions, such as collecting critical medical items. In the meantime, your belongings will be secure. Once the restrictions are removed or relaxed, we will be in contact with all Halls residents about a process for collecting your things.

### **University Student Support Funds**

The University Student Support Funds exist to help those students who find themselves facing financial difficulties. I know some students may be struggling with financial problems due to the coronavirus outbreak – things like unexpected expenses or loss of income – and this will be causing additional worries. To help, we are amending the process and criteria for applying for support from the Funds.

If you find yourself with financial commitments that you are unable to meet, please contact the Student Financial Support Team on [studentfunding@reading.ac.uk](mailto:studentfunding@reading.ac.uk) and we may be able to help.

As previously explained, **you can expect to hear by Friday 3 April about arrangements for your exams**. So please continue to check your University email account regularly for this and any other updates.

I encourage you to use the vacation period to continue preparing for your assessments and exams next term. But I also hope that you can find some time to relax, after what has been a challenging few weeks. Remember that your community is here for you, so I also suggest you join the [new RUSU Community Facebook](#) page to stay in touch.

Kind regards,

Patricia

DR PATRICIA WOODMAN  
Director of Student Services