

**Good Morning,**

I hope that you are as well as possible and for reassurance, this email has gone to all students with a cc to staff colleagues for information,

This email follows the one that you received yesterday and have hopefully now read from the Vice Chancellor. To repeat, the University remains open to you and is functioning and delivering.

Set out below are further points that may help at this time from Student Support and Wellbeing (SSW) with some reference to other departments.

Over the last week, but particularly since the start of the weekend, I and many colleagues, have received numerous emails and other individual enquiries and suggestions and we thank you for these, but there is much commonality with these and so I'm hopeful that this email may help all.

The information is my view and is correct as at 04.30am on **Wednesday March 18th**. We are living in rapidly evolving times so please do date and fact-check all information from whatever source.

Before I bullet-point some information that you may find helpful, please do take Covid-19 updates that you view or receive from the Government or the University seriously, they are based upon the best current known scientific information. You will note as adult students who are very capable of assimilating information and making your own decisions, that at a time of change and emerging factual data, your position is likely to change as will ours in response to new information that stands up under scrutiny. The point is that each of us own our decision based upon the facts and options put before us at a point in time. My colleagues in SSW and other University departments are here to support you and are very open to supporting the process of decision making based upon your individual circumstances.

The following may help you at this time:

- We are very much open for business, but are aware that a percentage of students are actively making the choice to go home now, knowing that physical classes and activities (Sports, rehearsals and dare I say it WSIHE Wednesday activities) have been postponed for now or alternative provision has been put forward. Many will have access to online resources and these are being further enhanced by academic and professional colleagues. Your student experience will therefore be different, but we plan to maintain quality.
- Such short-term change creates anxiety for us all and some elements of the press do not help allay fears, so please do look after each other and do continue to seek our support and clarification and do keep up to date with the latest health advice on the Public Health England website. Control what you are able to. For example, do contact your own department for guidance around submission dates, potential alternative assessments and can you prioritise certain pieces of work now that require small group working? (noting advice around social distancing). By the way,

short term amendments have been made to the Mitigating Circumstances process in acknowledgement of the current situation. If at some point in time in the future you were restricted to University access, can you still access all processes online? If not, now is the time to test these out and attempt to get alternative options in place. My staff colleagues are doing this now as part of their planning so that if the current situation changes we can continue to offer support.

- The SAM system is suspended.
- If you can access sufficient resource from your accommodation or from home, please give some thought to the following which is very much in your hands. Current Government advice is to self-isolate if you present with symptoms. This is now for a period of 14 days. If the symptoms get worse to the point that you would have gone to a GP, please do contact the NHS111 number after three or four days. \*There is a chance that testing will be increased again as we move forward. Other members of the household are also expected to self-isolate too. A household definition would also include a student house or a flat within a residential block. As such, if no one in your 'household' is currently self-isolating you may see this as a window of opportunity to move to study from home and still access University resources. Also note though, that if someone is already self-isolating, all such household 'mates' should be too, and therefore a move home now would be irresponsible, particularly if you were moving back in with a vulnerable relative. As such, we need to work together, so that the flat/household is supported by your external peers/landlord, accommodation (Uni residences) and/or SSW. We are already aware of certain households that are impacted and we would like to work with others so that communication and food/drink etc can be worked through. Therefore, please inform the Accommodation office on the [accommodation@chi.co.uk](mailto:accommodation@chi.co.uk) for residential students and [stuhealth@chi.ac.uk](mailto:stuhealth@chi.ac.uk) for student houses and we will work with you.
- We also recognise that for some, the University is your home and for others, due to travel restrictions, you cannot get home even if you wanted to at this time. You do not need to worry, we will work with you.
- I read some really positive news last night summarising where other countries that had been impacted earlier were currently at in their trajectory. The sense was that we will be impacted even more than we are currently feeling it with further tighter measures, but that there really is light at the end of the tunnel if everyone does their part now.
- SSW Wellbeing Pop Ups and Drop Ins are still active, but have mainly shifted to telephone, but of course we can still see individuals face to face at a slightly further distance, so keep asking for support.
- If you are in receipt of academic Mentoring Support from SSW this continues, again with social distancing and the option of this being by skype or phone. If you do head home, this will continue to be provided.
- If you perceive that you are vulnerable at this time, please do get in touch and we will be reaching out further to individuals today.
- My colleagues in the LRC and SIZ will communicate further, but please expect some amendments here too. We really do need your support with 'social distancing' so

expect us to ask you to work in different ways. We know it is a 'faff' and alien to the way that many of you would rather work, but please do comply during these exceptional times.

- We really do welcome your ideas too, the best ones tend to come from students, so please pass these back. It will no doubt be on our radar, but a student adds value.
- Lastly, please do as much as you can to remain positive and maintain a balance in your life. Control what you can control and seek coping strategies where this is not possible. Mine is a swim and I'm heading off there now. I shall personally circulate (table hop – at a distance) at both Otter restaurants today to hear any views.

**Many Thanks,**

**Dave Corcoran**

Director of Student Support and Wellbeing