

Dear students,

We are writing again as we understand that many of you will have questions following the Prime Minister's announcement on Saturday. Obviously, we hope you will be pleased to receive the news that universities have been specifically permitted to remain open, and Michelle Donelan MP, the Minister of State for Universities, has recently written a letter designed to be shared with all students across the UK.

While you can read the full version of Michelle Donelan's message to students [from her twitter feed here](#) some of the key points of the message are outlined below:

- *“By keeping universities open, we are prioritising education so that there is no gap in your academic journeys and lives.”*
- *“As for everyone under the new national restrictions from 5 November, **you should not leave your term time address to return to your parents' or carer's home until at least 2 December** - and should continue to learn at university for the remainder of this term.”*
- *“The reason we are asking you to remain at your university area and not to travel home before the new restrictions come into place on Thursday is to prevent any further spread of COVID 19 – any movement around the country will risk the lives of our loved ones.”*
- *“We as a government recognise the importance of face-to-face teaching, including for your mental health and wellbeing, and we expect this to continue. Universities have worked hard to make teaching and learning COVID-secure, and we have not seen evidence of increased transmission within these environments. If you have any concerns, please do speak to your university – it is crucial that you and staff members feel safe.”*

In a separate letter to Vice-Chancellors, Ms Donelan has also specifically addressed the issue of libraries and study spaces in a positive way:

- *“As a Government we also expect libraries and study spaces to remain open, where appropriate, with COVID-secure measures in place to support students to continue their studies.”*

On this particular issue, it is important for us to remind you that all our core support services on campus continue to be open to, and accessible by, students. To ensure we can continue to offer access to our LRC services **we must remind students to always wear a face covering (unless they are exempt)**. The seating in our LRCs has been arranged at 2 metre distancing to protect everyone around you. Please do not move the furniture and stick to the clearly marked one-way systems. **Users of the LRC buildings who repeatedly disregard these rules will be politely asked to leave.**

Some of our other facilities will need to comply with the latest regulations and guidance:

- **Fitness Suite at Tudor Hale** – This will close from midnight tonight (4<sup>th</sup> November 2020) until Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020. We will automatically add one month to your current memberships and cancel any bookings made.

- **Otters Restaurants (BRC & BOC)** – We will continue to provide a catered service, including indoor seating, where there are no alternative facilities available to catered students: for example, where a student has no alternative place where they can eat or prepare food. All other catering outlets on campus are now **takeaway-only**.

- **Chapel (BOC)** – The Chapel will remain **open for private reflection only**, however, all services will move online only. The Chapel may be used for teaching space.

We hope that you find this message clear and supportive. In turn, we ask for your support in keeping the entire University community safe at this present time.

The positive message is that the University remains open and taught sessions will continue to be delivered. We look forward to seeing you on campus and will continue to do our utmost to give you the best possible experience and support you at this challenging time. We wish you a good and successful rest of the semester.

Best wishes,

Professor Jane Longmore (Vice-Chancellor)

Professor Simeon Keates (Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

Dr Mark Mason (Deputy Vice-Chancellor [Student Experience])