

11th November 2020

Dear Students,

I hope you are keeping well during this difficult time. I wrote to you last on the 2nd November and in that [letter](#) outlining what we knew at that time, I also stated that I would confirm more when we had been provided with additional guidance by the Department for Education (DfE). Therefore please take the time to read the contents of this letter fully and carefully.

Immediate actions

We have now been provided with details from DfE on the requirements for Higher Education Providers for the end of this term. Therefore I can now confirm the following:-

1. **Going home for Christmas** - For those students who have both a term time address, **and** a home address, we ask that if you are well, and are not showing any Covid symptoms you return to your home address between the 3rd – 6th December. If you have any Covid symptoms and/or have been asked to self-isolate you should not return home until your isolation period is over, and should follow appropriate guidance. If you choose not to return home please let your personal tutor know.
2. **Moving online** - From the morning of the **7th December** (in line with DfE requirements) UCSD will be moving to online delivery for the remainder of this term (the last day of teaching is the 17th December). This will be synchronistic and will therefore follow your normal timetabled pattern. If you do not believe you can access online learning please discuss this with your personal tutor.
3. **Accessing support and facilities** - The University Centre and other College buildings will remain open until the 17th December. You can continue to access any support that you might require including with Disability, Wellbeing, Study Skills and Employability until the end of term, both on campus and remotely (via phone, email and MS Teams). You can also find information and advice on our dedicated [Student Support Hub webpage](#).
4. **Placements** - If you are a student undertaking placement you will be given additional guidance about your placements from your programme team.
5. **Library** - In preparation for the end of term, I ask that you make use of the [click and collect service](#) for the library over the coming weeks to ensure you have all the books and resources you require for the Christmas period.
6. **Returning in January 2021** - we expect teaching to continue after Christmas as planned, with students returning as normal in 2021 (from 5th January), and look forward to seeing you in person then.

The clear intention of the Government decision to require Higher Education delivery to move online is to (as much as is feasible) ensure that students will not require to be in self-isolation during the Christmas and New Year period. Therefore, the decisions outlined above should be view in this context.

In the meantime, we have and will continue to provide options for remote access if they are needed, either to enable social distancing or to support your individual circumstances. All staff involved in HE delivery now have the required equipment, software and training to be able to provide synchronistic delivery so you can access lectures, seminars and tutorials from home at the same time as students in classrooms. In almost all cases these are also recorded so you can access them again to recap and revisit the session.

Our Higher Education [Student Support Hub](#) always remains available for you during these difficult times and can provide support with areas of academic development and practice, employability and your next steps, wellbeing and counselling as well as support for students with a disability. Details are linked above.

Our [FAQs](#) provide more information for you about your experience, with specific information about Track and Trace, and guidance for those students living in Houses of Multiple Occupation.

Wider consideration

In all our consideration and planning we are in discussion with our local Public Health Officials. This includes any requirements as a result of a local outbreak plan which could include moving between tiers and any future possible move to online delivery - although we do not anticipate this at this time. The points (1-5) outlined above do not relate to any local context, local risk or movement in a local Tier, this is a national directive.

At this time we continue to plan for in person (face to face) delivery to resume in January, and unless instructed again or as a result of movement in the local tier we do not currently anticipate any interruption to the continuation of your studies. However, should any lockdown or movements in local tiers impact on practical and/or placement we will work with effected groups to support you to achieve these requirements. This might include extending your registration period.

Our commitment remains to provide you with the very best learning experience in the safest possible environment and we will absolutely do this following Government guidance and directives and best practice. However, if you have any concerns or questions please do speak to your tutor or a member of the Higher Education team in UCSD.

Best wishes,

Alastair Wilson
Head of Higher Education and Academic Registrar

