

4 Dec 20

Dear All

For some of you term is over and for others there is still one week to go. Hang in there - you are nearly there! Christmas is moving ever closer. This will be a time for us all to stop, to spend time with our close families or friends and to re-energise before the new year. I know that some of you will be working or caring for others over this period but even so, please try to take the time to find some peace and take a little time for yourself.

I also know that some of you will not be able to go home so please look out for the opportunities that are offered to you. I would not want you to be alone at Christmas.

I hope that those of you who are in Level H have found the last few weeks useful in making progress on your dissertations or other projects. This will stand you in good stead in the new term.

I hope that those of you on other Levels, both undergraduate and postgraduate, are ready for your last weeks of teaching - remember, this will all be on line so that everyone has had the opportunity to be tested and travel in the window if you need to.

If you are still in Liverpool please remember to collect anything you need from the library before you finish for Christmas. Information about opening hours can be found [here](#). This is particularly important for postgraduate research students as I know that many of you use some of these weeks for study.

I am really pleased that the Covid situation in the City is now much improved and that there are a minimal number of our community who are unwell or isolating. It is of course important that we all keep observing the need for face coverings, handwashing and social distancing to avoid going back to the figures that we had in the middle of the term.

It is really important that as many of you as possible have a Covid test before you finish for Christmas. The University testing centre at Hope Park in the Sports Centre will remain open next week and you are welcome to drop in there. Alternatively if you are asymptomatic, you can use one of the [public testing centres](#) that are still open across Liverpool. If you have symptoms of Covid you must use one of the designated centres through the [NHS booking system](#). Remember, this is to keep you and your family safe, to protect the community and to help you all to have a healthy and happy Christmas.

Just to reassure you, the University testing centres will reopen in January, before the start of next term, so that all of you can have tests as you recommence study.

As I have previously promised I will write to you on Monday with the initial plans for teaching next term. Obviously these may change over the next few weeks and will be very dependent on the Covid rate in the City and the University, the NW r rate and the Government Tier at that time.

Have a good weekend and travel safely.

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Best wishes
Penny

7 Dec 20

Dear

I promised to write to you in the week of the 7th of December to update you on the arrangements for the start of next term. Firstly, thank you for your patience whilst you have waited for this information - this has allowed us to take some time to monitor the local and national situation and to wait for the appropriate guidance from the Government. The guidance has now arrived.

The good news is that, with the decrease in cases in the City, the reduced R number for the NW and the imminent release of the vaccine, we can start to believe that there is light at the end of the tunnel. We are hopeful that this means that we can begin a gradual and phased process to some sort of normality, in terms of teaching, during the coming Term.

In the meantime, we are really keen for those of you who can, to spend a full three-week period at home with your families as your timetable indicates. This will give you the opportunity for a refreshing break. Your accommodation will remain open and available to you after Christmas, as in your contract. For those of you who are remaining in halls over Christmas, the residential-life team have put arrangements in place to support you during this time.

The Government expects all students returning to university halls and campuses after the Christmas break to undertake two lateral flow tests so that we can be sure that each residential and academic bubble remains free from Covid-19. The University test centres will reopen on 4 January and will remain open for several weeks to facilitate this. If you are travelling from a Tier 3 area you will need to take a test in your area before you travel to Liverpool. Please let us know when you intend to arrive so that we can ensure a local test is available to you as quickly and conveniently as possible.

If you are returning to undertake a teaching or other placement outside the University, your placement start date will be delayed until 11 January to allow you to undertake two tests before you begin your placement. If you are on School Direct your Alliance lead will let you know about the arrangement for your course.

We will start the new term on the published dates. In the initial weeks your teaching will be in the same format as you have had during this term, that is, online for most subjects but with some face to face in those subjects with specialist space requirements.

After the first few weeks we will begin an experimental period where Schools/Departments will start to reintroduce small amounts of face to face teaching into your curriculum for those of you who have not had any up to this point or slowly

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increase face to face contact for those in subjects that the Government has already allowed.

The introduction of face to face teaching will be done slowly and with the health of students and staff as the top priority. We are aware that some students and staff will not be able to return to campus for health reasons and we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place for these individuals to ensure that they can continue with their studies or teaching.

As the year progresses, we will increase the amount of face to face teaching as the Government and the local Covid-19 situation permit. I know that you will understand that the University can only go as fast as public health guidelines permit because we want our staff and students to be safe. Thank you for your understanding in this matter and for all your efforts in ensuring others are not infected. As I said, there are good signs that we will be able to make progress towards a sense of normality in the next term.

Your School/Department will be in contact during January to clarify the details for your subject. If you have any general queries the Gateway team are happy to help.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Christmas. I hope that you are able to take the opportunity of a well-deserved rest.

Best wishes

Penny

11 Dec 20

Dear All

It's the last day of term for many of you and Christmas is on the way.

I hope that as many as possible of you are safely home with your families. For those of you who are still intending to travel please do so as safely as you can. For those of you who are remaining on Campus or are staying in student houses in Liverpool please look after each other and also make sure that you are aware of how to get help if you need it. SDW has put together a useful set of information of sources of support over the time the University is closed. [You can access this here \(Karen - this is the attachment\)](#).

Much as we would all like to forget about Covid-19 over this period we can not do this. The virus is still amongst the population and we all need to continue to follow the **'Hands, Face, Space'** guidelines. These are simple actions which make a huge difference. If you feel unwell over the Christmas period you should get tested for Covid-19. If you are in Liverpool the [City Council website](#) will give you the information about available testing centres. If you are in other parts of the country you should check your local information.

I want you all to try to have a restful period over Christmas, the new term will be upon us before we know it and the Autumn has given us many challenges which we need to reflect upon.

We will open the University testing centres on 4 January for those of you who need to return at that time. Please ensure that you make time to have two tests before joining your cohort or placement. I will send more details about the start of term for all levels over the holiday period, so please check your emails from time to time.

Thankyou for all your hard work this term. I hope you have a good holiday.

Happy Christmas!
Best wishes
Penny



Well-being support over the Christmas period

Please be aware that the Student Counselling and Mental Health support services within Student Development and Well-being will close for the Christmas vacation period from Friday 18th December, reopening on Monday 11th January.

If you need any support over the holiday period, or just somebody to talk to, listed below are details of organisations and services that can provide help covering a variety of issues. Also included are details of the support available if you're staying in university halls.

For more information on sources of help and support over Christmas click here:
www.hope.ac.uk/gateway/students/christmasbreakinformation

Support for students staying in University halls over Christmas

The Residential Life Team will continue to be available to those students remaining in University halls over the Christmas vacation. From 12th December onwards, residential students requiring assistance can speak with a member of the Residential Life Team between 7 - 9pm each evening. On the dates of 24th, 25th, 26th, 31st December and at all other times, students requiring any assistance should contact their Security Lodge.

Residential Life Team: 07341 783 053

Residential students can continue to email
residentiallife@hope.ac.uk or srt@hope.ac.uk

These email inboxes will be monitored between 7 - 9pm each evening, except on 24th, 25th, 26th, 31st December.

Students requiring urgent/emergency assistance should ring their security lodge (staffed 24-hours a day).

Security Lodge emergency contact numbers:

Hope Park	0151 291 3800
Creative Campus	0151 292 3700
Aigburth Park	0151 727 7262

Staying on Campus over Christmas? Let us know!

If you are staying in halls at any point between 12th December and 4th January, please email residentiallife@hope.ac.uk as we need to know who is on campus for health and safety reasons.

Liverpool Hope Nightline

Liverpool Hope Nightline is a listening and information service, run by students, for students. The service is confidential, anonymous, non-judgemental, non-directional and non-advisory. The Nightline is currently operating as an instant messaging service and is available from 10pm to 2am every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday during term-time. The Nightline's last day of operation before the Christmas vacation is Sunday 13th December, restarting on Friday 8th January 2021. The instant messaging service can be accessed here: liverpoolhopenightline.carrrd.co

The Samaritans

The Samaritans provide a confidential, supportive listening service for people experiencing any kind of distress or despair.

Call: 116 123 (24-hour helpline)

Text: 07725 90 90 90

Email: jo@samaritans.org (aims to respond within 12 hours)

Website: www.samaritans.org

PAPYRUS, HOPElineUK

PAPYRUS provides telephone helpline and text support for young adults who are feeling suicidal.

Call: 0800 068 41 41 (9am-midnight every day of the year)

Text: 07860039967 Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Website: www.papyrus-uk.org

Student Space

Student Space is a support resource designed specifically for university students. Whatever is causing you concern, be it your mental health, your studies, worries about money, relationships, or loneliness, Student Space is there to listen and support you to move forward.

Telephone support line: 0808 189 5260 (3pm - Midnight every day)

Text message support: To start a conversation, text 'STUDENT' to 85258 (24-hours every day)

Email support: students@themix.org.uk (24-hours every day)

Webchat: studentspace.org.uk/support-services/webchat-support 4-11pm

Website: studentspace.org.uk

Shout crisis messenger service

Shout is a free 24/7 text service for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's the place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help.

Text: 'Shout' to 85258

Website: www.giveusashout.org

Merseycare NHS 24-hour urgent mental health support line

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, thoughts of suicide or self-harm that you intend to act upon, or you feel you need urgent mental health support, 24/7 access to assistance is available via this helpline.

Phone: 0800 145 6570 (Liverpool residents only)

18 Dec 20

Dear

I am writing to all students who are resident in Northern Ireland, following yesterday's announcement from the NI Executive about a further lockdown in the period after Christmas. I know that some of you are concerned about what this means in relation to your studies. We have not yet received the formal Government guidance on this matter and it is not yet published on the relevant websites, but I am sharing our current thinking.

For the present time we are advising that the arrangements we have already published will still apply. This assumes that travel for Educational purposes is permitted, as it was last time. If, once the full guidance is published, the situation is different this time I will be back in touch.

Term will start on the published dates for individual cohorts.

Placements will start on 11 January.

Your teaching will start in the same format as you had last term.

- If you had some face to face teaching last term, this pattern will continue.
- If you were taught solely online last term, then you will start this way.

It is still our intention to gradually introduce a limited amount of face to face teaching in all other cohorts. As I have already explained, this will only happen if and when the Covid cases in the University and the City and the R Number for the region are considered to be low enough. I can reassure you if we are in a position to go ahead, this will only start to happen after 1 February which currently marks the end of the NI lockdown.

I can not emphasise enough the importance of being tested for Covid-19 both before you leave NI, if this is available to you, and definitely as soon as you arrive in Liverpool. If this is before the University test centres open on 4 January you should use one of the City-wide centres. The location and opening times of these centres are available [here](#).

I will be back in touch if we get any further guidance. Please try not to worry.

Have a good Christmas. I am glad that you are all back with your families.

Best wishes

Penny

18 Dec 20 – NI students only

Dear

I am writing to all students who are resident in Northern Ireland, following yesterday's announcement from the NI Executive about a further lockdown in the period after Christmas. I know that some of you are concerned about what this means in relation to your studies. We have not yet received the formal Government guidance on this matter and it is not yet published on the relevant websites, but I am sharing our current thinking.

For the present time we are advising that the arrangements we have already published will still apply. This assumes that travel for Educational purposes is permitted, as it was last time. If, once the full guidance is published, the situation is different this time I will be back in touch.

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I can not emphasise enough the importance of being tested for Covid-19 both before you leave NI, if this is available to you, and definitely as soon as you arrive in Liverpool. If this is before the University test centres open on 4 January you should use one of the City-wide centres. The location and opening times of these centres are available [here](#).

I will be back in touch if we get any further guidance. Please try not to worry.

Have a good Christmas. I am glad that you are all back with your families.

Best wishes

Penny

31 Dec 20

Dear

I hope that you have had the opportunity to have a break over Christmas and have spent time with loved ones.

I promised to catch up with you during the holiday period to update you on our thoughts for the start of term. Clearly, over the Christmas period the national situation related to Covid-19 has once again become of considerable concern. The numbers in Liverpool are undoubtedly lower than in many parts of the country but Liverpool is currently placed under Tier 3 rules. I am aware that many of you are in areas that have been placed in Tier 4.

As we have throughout this period, the University continues to consider the Health and Safety of all of our staff and students as the highest priority. When I last wrote to you we had just received guidance from the Government about the requirement for Universities to begin the new term with a staggered start. I explained our thinking to you at that point and at present we are committed to continuing with those arrangements.

We will start the new term on the published dates. In the initial weeks your teaching will be in the same format as you have had during this term, that is, online for most subjects but with some face to face in a few nominated subjects. This means Initial Teacher Training and some Science subjects will retain some face to face teaching where your timetable indicates this is required. Your academic leads will confirm this to you.

An exception to this situation is for subjects at the Creative Campus where all teaching will now start online. This is because the Government have today changed the list of subjects for which face to face teaching is acceptable and have told us that creative subjects must be taught online for the initial weeks of term. Your subject leads will be in touch next week to make sure that you understand the new arrangements.

The Government expects all students returning to university halls and campuses after the Christmas break to undertake two lateral flow tests so that we can be sure that each residential and academic bubble remains free from Covid-19. The University test centres will reopen on 4 January and will remain open for several weeks to facilitate this. If you are travelling from a Tier 4 area you will need to take a test in your area before you travel to Liverpool if it is available. When you get to Liverpool you must get another test at either the local or University test centres immediately. If any of these test results are returned as positive you must follow NHS guidance about re-testing and isolation. You should also inform the University Covid Control Team via covid@hope.ac.uk.

I have included the opening times for the University Test Centres at the end of this email. The [Liverpool City Council website](#) will give you the information about other locally available testing centres. If you are in other parts of the country you should check your local information.

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If you are returning to undertake a teaching or other placement outside the University, we informed you already that your placement start date would be delayed until 11 January to allow you to undertake two tests before you begin your placement. As you will be aware the situation with schools is currently the source of some debate, and when we get some clearer guidance we will share it with you if you are a teacher trainee. If you are on School Direct your Alliance lead will let you know about the arrangement for your course. Later in the term, if the infection rate decreases and the R number goes down we will begin an experimental period where Schools/Departments will start to reintroduce small amounts of face to face teaching into your curriculum for those of you who have not had any up to this point or slowly increase face to face contact for those in subjects that the Government has already allowed. The introduction of face to face teaching will be done slowly and with the health of students and staff as the top priority. We are aware that some students and staff will not be able to return to campus for health reasons and we will ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place for these individuals to ensure that they can continue with their studies or teaching.

The Office for Students has published some helpful guidance for students which you can read at the following address. I would particularly recommend that you read the section related to travel which advises on how you can return to campus as safely as possible. It is important to remember that term does not start either for teaching or placements until 11 January at the earliest and you should make your plans accordingly.

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-students/student-guide-to-coronavirus/returning-to-university-in-2021/>

I will be in touch with any further information as we receive it.

If you have any general queries the Gateway team gateway@hope.ac.uk will be happy to help from Monday onwards.

Best wishes

Dr Penny Haughan

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Life and Learning)

University Test Site Opening Times

w/c Monday 4th Jan:

Hope Park Sports Centre

Monday 4th Jan - Friday 8th Jan: Monday 12pm – 5pm. Tues onwards 10am - 5pm

Aigburth Park Trinity Room

Monday 4th Jan: 12pm - 5pm

Thursday 7th Jan: 10am - 5pm

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Creative Campus Reading Room

Tuesday 5th Jan: 10am - 5pm

Friday 8th Jan: 10am - 5pm

w/c Monday 11th Jan onwards:

Hope Park Sports and Creative Campus Reading Room

Monday – Friday, 10am – 5pm