

2 Oct 20

Dear All

I am sitting in my office in the Gateway Building to write this email. It is lovely to see some of you on campus now. If you are visiting the Gateway please give me a smile when you walk past!

I hope that you are all looking after yourselves. What a challenging time this is. When I started writing these covid updates to all students in March I never thought that I would still be doing it in October.

I know that you must all be weary of the restrictions and frustrated about not being able to study and to experience University life as you expected. Obviously in the last few days the news has not been good for the Northwest of England and particularly for the Liverpool City region. I have just received the daily report from the City Council which states that Liverpool has 287 Cases of Covid-19 per 100,000 population which is very high. In the light of this data and for the protection of your health and the health of all members of the Hope community and of the wider community of the city, I am asking you to make sure that you follow the guidelines issued by the Government. I know that there has been much discussion in the press about how confusing these are, so for clarity you should check the [Liverpool City Council website](#) where there is a very straightforward explanation.

The new measures include the requirement to only socialise within your residential bubble and this means that you should not have parties or congregate with others from different bubbles. I know that the SRTs are making this clear to those of you in halls. We have, however, been contacted by the City councillors about student parties in private accommodation which are in contravention of these measures and are of great concern to local residents. I am hopeful that these events do not involve Hope students, who we expect to be respectful of the community they live in. However, if you have been involved in such activity over the last few weeks, now is the time for it to stop - in the interests of the whole population of the City. It will be a great disappointment to me if one of you is brought to my attention for this reason and rest assured that the University will take action.

I know this is a really difficult time, we all need to work together to get through it.

Safety on campus:

I have had some questions about cleaning on the campuses. There is a detailed cleaning protocol which involves cleaning in all buildings several times a day. The cleaning staff are circulating in all buildings so if you are worried about a certain area please let them know. The frequent touch areas have also been coated in an antimicrobial product which lasts for an extended period of time after which it will be reapplied.

Face coverings on campus:

Please wear your face coverings at all buildings on campus except if you are in your own residence or office. If you have exemption you can request a different coloured lanyard for your ID card to indicate this. These are now available through SDW

(sdw@hope.ac.uk) and you can pick them up at the Gateway or Creative Campus desks.

Covid on campus:

Whether you are in halls or are living off campus, if you have symptoms or a positive diagnosis you should contact the covid team via covid@hope.ac.uk. The team will contact you to tell you what needs to happen next and the support teams will be informed so that they can provide help with anything that you need. At the moment there are a small number of students in the halls of residence who have a positive diagnosis. All their contacts have been informed and have been asked to isolate where this is necessary. Please be assured that if we are aware of anything that is relevant to your safety the team will be in contact with you personally.

Teaching arrangements:

There are a small number of face to face sessions scheduled for next week. Please check your timetable to ensure that you know if this includes your course. I would reassure you all that the academic teams have worked really hard to make sure that these sessions are conducted with safety requirements as the top priority. Please think about social distancing as you enter and leave classrooms and stay in your seat when you get there unless a member of staff asks you to move. As you know, at the moment the number of classes on campus is low so that the total number of people on campus at any one time is kept to a minimum. We will continue to review this situation and would hope to restore some more teaching on campus once the situation in the City is improved, but only if we can do so in a safe way for all staff and students.

Computer Access:

If you need access to IT resources or the WiFi then you are welcome to come onto campus. You can book a computer in the library or use one in the other areas on the campus. Some students are finding it easier to access online lectures on campus and if you want to do this it is fine. Obviously you must take the relevant safety precautions and wipe down the equipment before and after use. There are plenty of cleaning materials around for you to use.

Moodle:

I have spoken to a number of students who need help with navigation of their Moodles. If this applies to you please ask your tutor to explain how it is set up for your subject. They will be happy to help you.

Outstanding Assessments from 2019/20:

For undergraduate students who have outstanding assessments the next submission deadline is 6 October 2020. This means that you still have a few days to get them finished. Please make contact with your tutor for advice if you need it.

Social activities, Sports Clubs and Societies:

The Student Union, my colleagues in HopeSocial have a range of activities for you to take part in. You can access these through the HopeSU website or the Hope Social and HopeSU social media channels.

Please remember that if you need any support such as counselling, mental health and well-being, learning and disability support, student health, sexual misconduct and harassment, healthy relationships, and much more then the SDW team are available to help

you. <https://www.hope.ac.uk/gateway/students/studentdevelopmentandwell-being/>

If you have any queries about any aspect of your Hope experience you can contact the Gateway team Gateway@hope.ac.uk or drop in if you are on campus. If they don't know the answer to your query they will know someone who does!

I am thinking of you all.

Best wishes

Penny

8 October 20

Dear

I am writing regarding the PGCE celebrations scheduled for 30 October 2020. When this date was published we were hopeful that we would be able to hold these celebrations onsite in Hope Chapel. Having monitored the situation in the City of Liverpool very closely and with the knowledge that the majority of you are already working in schools, we have had to make the difficult decision to move this celebration into a virtual format.

The virtual celebration will take place online on 30 October 2020 and details will be sent to you nearer the time. You will receive your certificate through the post.

I know that this is disappointing but we need to keep the health and safety of all of our staff students and graduates as our number one priority.

If you have any queries you should contact the Gateway team gateway@hope.ac.uk.

Best wishes
Penny Haughan

8 Oct 20 – Graduation

Dear

I am writing regarding the Graduation ceremonies scheduled for 1-3 December 2020. When the dates for Graduation were moved to December we were hopeful that we would be able to hold these celebrations at the Metropolitan Cathedral with all of you and your families in attendance. Having monitored the situation in the City of Liverpool very closely and with the knowledge that the Government has a range of restrictions in place, which are likely to be further enhanced in the coming days, we have had to make the difficult decision to cancel these ceremonies. This decision has been made keeping the health and safety of all of our staff, students and graduates as our number one priority.

I know that this will be a great disappointment to some of you. The University community is also very disappointed, as we really value the opportunity to celebrate with you and your families. I know that many of you were really looking forward to these events and I was personally looking forward to celebrating with you following our correspondence over the last months.

Over the coming weeks we will be sending out all of your degree certificates by post. Before this happens we need to make sure that the details which are on the University system are correct and that you have told us what you want on your certificate in terms of your name etc. A message will be sent to you through your SRM to allow you to confirm this information.

I know that some of you really want to attend a ceremony to celebrate with your families and friends and to meet your tutors. At the moment, providing the situation in the City has improved, we are still planning to hold Graduation ceremonies in July 2021 and you will be invited to attend one of these should you wish to do so.

If you have any queries you should contact the Gateway team gateway@hope.ac.uk.

Best wishes
Penny Haughan

9 Oct 20

Dear All

Once again we find ourselves in challenging times. The level of transmission of the virus has increased again and much more rapidly than anyone expected. I know that this is really difficult for all of you. It is difficult enough for those of you who are healthy and are trying to conduct yourselves in as sensible manner as possible, to protect yourselves and the community. It is even more difficult for those of you who are vulnerable or have vulnerable family members, those of you who are currently isolating and those of you who work in the front line. Whichever group or groups you fall into you need to look after yourselves and those around you, look out for each other and be kind.

If you need help please let us know and we will do our best to support you.

Covid matters:

I'm sure that by now social distancing, wearing masks, using hand sanitiser etc. are parts of your daily routines. It is important that we all keep up these measures and don't let the precautions slip. I have been asked to remind you specifically about the wearing of masks on all public transport and particularly the buses.

I would like to remind you of the student commitment which you were all asked to sign up to at the start of term. This applies even if you are not currently on campus. It is waiting in your SRM please complete it as soon as possible if you have not yet done this.

Please remember that if you have covid symptoms or a positive diagnosis you must let the University know by emailing covid@hope.ac.uk. We need to make sure that you get added to the support list and we are also required to report numbers each day to the public health service. Please use this address for reporting of symptoms and tests results, if you have other queries you should send your enquiry to the Gateway gateway@hope.ac.uk or Student Development and Wellbeing sdw@hope.ac.uk. If you are resident on campus your SRT is also a source of help. If you are currently isolating you will receive regular phonecalls from the support team to ensure that you are OK. If you have symptoms you should not come to campus or mix with other individuals until you have had a negative test result.

If you are on campus and need a test you can apply for a postal kit as I know some of you have done. Alternatively there is a pop up testing centre at Allerton library which does not require you to make a prior booking. You can walk to Allerton from the Hope Park campus.

Teaching:

Please keep checking your timetables so you know where and when your sessions are being delivered - this does change from week to week in some subjects. We are really delighted (for the vast majority of students) with your engagement with your studies to date this term - the uptake has been brilliant. One request from your tutors; if you are involved in online sessions please will you make sure you are dressed appropriately - I have heard of a few situations where this has not been the case.

Level 1 start of term:

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Term starts for most Level 1 students on Monday 19 October, with the exception of BA(QTS) students who start this Monday 12 October. As with other Levels, most teaching is online unless you are registered on a specialist subject, in which case your seminars or equivalent may be face to face. You should check your timetable to be certain. If you are intending to live in halls then your previously agreed arrival date still stands.

Graduation/PGCE celebrations:

A separate email should go out to you today if you were expecting to attend these events, however as I know that you really want to know urgently, I am including the headlines here:

PGCE celebrations scheduled for 30 October 2020: We have had to make the difficult decision to move this celebration into a virtual format. The virtual celebration will take place online on 30 October 2020 and details will be sent to you nearer the time. You will receive your certificate through the post.

Graduation ceremonies scheduled for 1-3 December 2020: We have had to make the difficult decision to cancel these ceremonies. This decision has been made keeping the health and safety of all of our staff, students and graduates as our number one priority. Over the coming weeks we will be sending out all of your degree certificates by post. I know that some of you really want to attend a ceremony to celebrate with your families and friends and to meet your tutors. At the moment, providing the situation in the City has improved, we are still planning to hold Graduation ceremonies in July 2021 and you will be invited to attend one of these should you wish to do so.

Support:

This is a challenging time. It is perfectly normal to find this situation difficult and it is perfectly normal not to be OK sometimes. I can not emphasise enough that, if you are not OK, you need to ask for help. You can contact the University via all the addresses I have listed above or you can talk to friends, family or other outside sources of help, whichever you find easiest; just please don't feel that you are alone.

There are lots of sources of help directed at students. You can find a list of them on the SDW webpage below. The 'Student Minds' resources are particularly helpful.

<https://www-hope-ac-uk.ezproxy.hope.ac.uk/gateway/students/studentdevelopmentandwell-being/coronavirusresources/>

I am thinking of you all. We will get through this.

Best wishes
Penny

13 Oct 20

Dear

In spite of our best efforts, the rate of infections is rising across the country. As you will be aware, last night the Government announced some additional restrictions which apply to the Liverpool City Region, placing it in the 'very high risk' category. Other areas are likely to be included as well.

In addition to the restrictions already in place in the country the following now apply to all of our city region:

- Pubs and bars must close, and can only remain open where they operate as if they were a restaurant – which means serving substantial meals, like a main lunchtime or evening meal. They may only serve alcohol as part of such a meal.
- People must not meet with anybody outside their household or support bubble in any indoor or outdoor setting, whether at home or in a public space. The Rule of Six applies in open public spaces like parks and beaches.
- People should avoid travelling outside the 'Very High' area they are in, or entering a 'Very High' area, other than for work, education, accessing youth services, to meet caring responsibilities or if they are in transit.
- People should avoid staying overnight in another part of the UK if they are resident in a 'Very High' area, or avoid staying overnight in a 'Very High' area if they are resident elsewhere.

These restrictions are to avoid spreading the virus.

I ask you in the strongest possible terms to follow these Government requirements. We need to work together with others in the City, to protect our community and to prevent any further spread of the virus.

At Hope will be continuing with teaching as it is currently scheduled and will review these arrangements as previously agreed in the w/c 26 October. As you know, it is our intention to reintroduce more face to face teaching, but we will only do this when it is safe to do so. We will of course consider the new restrictions when making these decisions. At present it is unclear how long Liverpool will be kept in the Tier 3 category so the arrangements will need to be flexible as we move forward.

The resources of the University remain open to you. The library is open and the catering service is available. All of the student support services are operating so you can obtain mental health support, financial advice, careers expertise, disability support etc through the normal contact points.

The halls of residence remain open and Dr Bignold and her team of SRTs are there to support you. For those of you who are in isolation we have also have an additional pastoral care team who will be in contact with you throughout this period.

I would urge you to be aware of the travel advice which forms part of the new guidelines. Adherence to these guidelines will be monitored by local government and the police.

These are very challenging times for all of us, all our families and many who are ill or very vulnerable because of age, underlying health issues and disability. Please do all you can to help our community by keeping the rules and lowering the possibility of spreading the infection or being infected yourself.

Rest assured that we will do everything we can to support you. Continuing with your studies is one way that you can move your life forward in this period and I would encourage you to maintain a work pattern during these unusual times we are living in. I am so pleased to see so many of you

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using this time to immerse themselves in your studies. I would strongly encourage you to continue to engage with your tutors and deepen your academic experience.

Please stay safe and look after yourselves.

Best wishes

Penny

16 Oct 20

Dear All

I hope that you are all looking after yourselves and the others around you.

This is a challenging time for all of us. We are all trying to stay well and we are also all worried about our families and friends. I am concerned about all of you, as I am about my family.

I know that many of you are unwell - please be sensible and let us know if there is anything you need. Many of you are in isolation and I know having to stay inside for this period is really difficult. Again if there is anything you need please let us know. You can talk to the staff who are ringing you or emailing you regularly. You can also email the residential life team or the Gateway or tell the student union. Everyone will do their best to support you.

If you have been told to isolate it is really important that you stay indoors as instructed. I have had reports of a few students who should be isolating leaving their rooms. You must stay inside in your room/flat until the isolation period is over. I know that this is difficult but it is to protect the whole community. If you are isolating and so can not attend face to face sessions, please let your tutors know.

If you are struggling to cope and would like to access some additional mental health support, you can contact Student Development and Wellbeing sdw@hope.ac.uk and they will make an appointment to speak to you. You can talk to your resident tutor who will be able to help. You also have access to Student Space which provides a range of support for students and, in particular, phone and email helplines which you can access for support <https://studentspace.org.uk/>

There are a few things to update you on this week:

If you had outstanding assessments which meant that your profile went to the Board on Thursday, you should receive results through the normal route by 5pm on Monday. Congratulations to those of you who have now progressed or who have successfully passed your degree.

Welcome back to all second year students. It's lovely to have you back. Hopefully I will be able to see you on campus before too long. Please check your timetables to make sure you know when and where your teaching is taking place. If there are any issues the Gateway team will be able to help.

We have decided to remove all car parking charges on campus up to Christmas. If you have already paid for a permit the money will be refunded to you in the next few weeks.

If you are expecting a parcel to be delivered please will you pick it up from the Gateway or the Lodge as appropriate. There are so many parcels here that it is beginning to look a lot like Christmas! If you are isolating one of the staff will deliver your parcels to you.

Let us know if you need anything.

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Look after yourselves

Best wishes

Penny

23 Oct 20

Dear All

I'm catching up with you all, as I try to do every Friday. I am sitting in my office looking out at the wonderful Autumn colours of the trees in the sunshine outside my window. Try to enjoy the sunshine by going outside or at least looking out of your window at these beautiful colours. Several of you have just waved as you have gone past - thankyou - you always brighten my day.

What a strange world we are living in. Hopefully if we all stick to the government guidelines we will be able to see a decrease in Covid cases and a gradual return to some sort of normality, it does, however, seem a long way off at present.

This week I have been really overwhelmed by stories I have heard of individual students' kindness to one another. These are all small acts of support which are making huge differences to students who are in need of practical help or who simply need someone to talk to. I think this is what makes Hope students special. Please take time to think about your fellow students and whether you could be of help, also if you are in need of help please ask - there are lots of people, both staff and students, who would be happy to give you some support.

I know that some of you are unwell or are in isolation. If you are unwell, I hope that you feel better soon. If you are in isolation please stick it out - you are protecting the health of the whole community. In either case there are plenty of ways in which we can support you. You will have received this information when you first became unwell/isolated but if you are unsure about anything you should contact your senior resident tutor or the members of the support team who are contacting you regularly. The teams in the Gateway and SDW will also be able to support you. In particular if you are in need of mental health support you should ask for this as soon as you realise that you need some help. Again you can approach you SRT informally and the Chaplains are also available on campus and online. Student Development and Wellbeing have drop in slots everyday during the week and also scheduled appointments with both mental health and counselling staff. You can contact SDW by emailing sdw@hope.ac.uk

Other news for this week:

Hope Park Test Centre:

To help control the spread of the virus extra COVID testing sites have been arranged by Liverpool City Council. A new walk in site (no car required) is available until Sunday at Hope Park in the car park opposite the Library main entrance. This is open today until Sunday between 10:30 and 3:30pm. We are also expecting another facility to be installed during the course of next week. **To attend you need to book via www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119.**

You **MUST ONLY** get a test if you have symptoms. You must only leave home to get a test, wear a face covering on your journey there and back and not visit any shop or any venue. You must return straight back to your home /hall of residence.

Library Access:

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We are changing the way you should access the library. This is a temporary measure while the COVID testing centre is on site. We want to keep you as far away as possible from individuals arriving for testing. - so for the next few weeks the Sheppard-Worlock Library should be accessed through the entrance in the HCA building. You will need to follow the one way system in the HCA building by entering from the door opposite the Health Science Building and following the floor signs. Amended campus plans will be available with directions.

Request and Collect:

The library staff have been able to set up a Request and Collect option from within OneSearch using the Request button. This will save you time as you won't need to complete a separate form. If you are in isolation and need books from the library let the library team know and we will arrange for the books to be delivered to you.

Study Spaces:

In response to your feedback we have suspended the two hour limit on study space bookings in the library so you will be able to stay for longer. If demand increases this will be reviewed to ensure as many of you as possible can use these study spaces. You can also use the study spaces in the Gateway and other areas of the campuses.

Service and Leadership Award:

I am really keen for you all to make a start on your Service and Leadership Award. You can manage everything SALA related from My Careers Centre, just head there to see how to get started.

Try to enjoy your weekend.

Please stay safe - Look after yourselves

Best wishes

Penny

27 Oct 20

Dear

At the start of the academic year we made the decision to move the majority of teaching online for a period of 4 weeks. This was with the exception of a small group of subjects where the Head of School/Department asked the University to retain a reduced number of sessions in a face to face format owing to the specialist requirements of that subject. We made the commitment to review these teaching arrangements during the week commencing 26 October 2020.

Having reached that date, the senior leaders of the University, including your Head of School/ Department have met this morning to consider both the national and local picture with relation to Covid-19 and how this affects our plans for teaching for the remainder of this term (that is up to and including 11 December 2020).

This morning the r rate for Covid-19 in the Northwest region is 1.3. An r number of above 1.0 means that the infection is still spreading. The latest weekly rate of infections in Liverpool is 545.1 per 100,000 population and the latest positivity testing rate is 18.6%. This represents widespread community transmission. We have had some positive cases on campus, but I am pleased to say that these are now decreasing in number. It is clear, however, that the situation in the City and in the local community continues to be of serious concern. For this reason, the University has decided to continue with the current teaching pattern up to the end of the Autumn term. Just to be clear, this means that whatever pattern you currently have for online and face to face teaching will continue up to the Christmas vacation.

In the last week of term (w/c 7 December), the senior team will meet again to discuss arrangements for the start of Term 2. Once the decision has been made I will write to let you know the outcome.

I know that this will be disappointing for some of you, but we have to work in a way that keeps all students and staff as safe as possible. Please be assured that we are ready to commence face to face teaching in all subjects and are committed to reintroducing this format as soon as we are agreed that it is safe to do so. In the meantime, I would encourage you to continue your engagement with your studies in the current format and to let your tutors know if you need further academic support.

Look after yourselves and please do not hesitate to contact the Gateway team gateway@hope.ac.uk or any of the support teams if you need help.

Best wishes

Penny Haughan

30 Oct 20

Dear All

Another Tier 3 day, but this time a more joyous one for the University. Today we have been running virtual graduation ceremonies for the students who got their PGCEs in the Summer. It was very strange not being able to see the graduates as their names were read, but it was really important that we marked their achievements. Many of them have already started work as Hope teachers and are currently on half term. I hope that they enjoyed their moment of celebration. I also hope that when we get to next Summer that we can return to a normal graduation in the Cathedral - I'm looking forward to seeing all of you currently in Level H getting your degrees.

I think this is a good moment in the term to stop and take account of the situation. This is both in terms of your studies and of your lives outside University. This is a really difficult time for everyone. We are dealing with Tier 3 restrictions related to the pandemic, the Winter is coming and the nights are drawing in and we are all starting to wonder what Christmas will be like. I need you to stay strong and I need you to look after yourselves and each other. It is OK not to be OK about this situation but please, please ask for help if you need it. If you are on campus you can approach your SRT or the Gateway team or the reception team at the Creative Campus. If you are on or off campus you can contact Student Development and Wellbeing sdw@hope.ac.uk for an appointment or a drop in slot. Alternatively, you can access some of the sources of online support on the website [here](#). In particular I would recommend [Student Space](#) which has been set up by Student Minds the UK Student Mental Health Charity. There are lots of great resources for you to access.

I will continue to repeat my request of last week that we all be kind to one another. A small gesture of kindness goes a long way.

There are a few things to update you with this week:

Mobile Phone Numbers:

In these unusual times it is particularly important that we can reach you by telephone if we need to. Some of the pastoral care team tell me that some of your mobile numbers are out of date on the system. I think some of you have maybe got a new phone or have moved provider. Please will you go onto your SRM and check the number we have for you is right. If it is not please change it so that we can contact you if we need to.

Covid test centre.

A mobile test centre will be at the Hope Park campus from today (Friday) to Tuesday next week. It is outside the library on the car park. You can book a slot through the NHS system. You can do this on your phone. I have been made aware that there are plenty of slots available. If you have any symptoms please get tested. We need to do everything we can to prevent the transmission of the virus.

Transmission in halls of residence.

I would like to say thank you to those of you who are in halls of residence. The number of cases and numbers needing to isolate in the halls have gone down this

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week. This is in no small part due to the sensible way that you are all dealing with this situation. Please continue to observe social distancing, wearing your masks, washing your hands and following the rules associated with your household, this is definitely making a difference. To the small number of you who are not abiding by the rules I would ask you to think very carefully about the health and safety of those around you - we are all responsible for the community that we live in.

Level F and C Reflective weeks.

Those of you in levels F and C have reflective weeks for w/c 2 and 9 November. This is an opportunity to do the project work that has been set by your school/department, hopefully in partnership with your fellow students. You should have plenty to do. It is also an opportunity to spend some time revisiting the material you have covered in your first 4 weeks of teaching and also an opportunity to move away from lengthy days on Zoom. The resources of the University are available to you over this period, so why not visit the library or visit one of the computer labs rather than studying in your bedroom. Use these weeks wisely, do your project work but also take time to visit the local area and get some fresh air.

Level H Dissertations/Projects.

Those of you in level H will be aware that we have added reflective weeks onto the end of term in your calendar w/c 23 November onwards. The intention of these weeks is to give you time to make progress on your dissertation or other significant pieces of work. Please make sure that you take the time over the next few weeks to collect all of the information, advice and resources you need to make real progress on your project over this period - it will make a huge difference if you can do this so that your time towards the end of the year is available to focus on your other assessments.

Library Study Spaces.

A quick reminder that we have removed the 2 hour limit on use of study spaces. You still need to book though - head to the [library pages](#) on the website for more information.

I hope that you have a good weekend. Try to find some time for peace and reflection.

Look after yourselves.

Best wishes
Penny