Dear students,

This email contains important Covid-19 updates. Please take the time to read it carefully.

**Local restrictions**

New restrictions came into force on 18 September in seven local authority areas across the North East of England to address the increase in the number Covid-19 cases seen in recent weeks.

The new restrictions, which are legally enforceable, state that residents must not socialise with other people outside of their own households or support bubble in private homes and gardens. Residents are also advised not to socialise with other people outside of their own households in all public venues.

If you are socialising with people from your household in a public place, please ensure that you limit your group to a maximum of six people, in line with national advice.

More information on local restrictions is available on the [UK Government website](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) or on [Durham County Council’s Covid webpage](https://www.durham.gov.uk/coronavirus).

If you haven’t yet arrived in Durham, please continue to follow national or local restrictions wherever you are. You can read more about national restrictions on the UK Government website: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

**Latest decisions and updates from Durham University**

- Covid-19 cases within our student community
- Important information about College households
- Guidance for students who may be clinically vulnerable
- Police University Liaison – support and advice
- Updating our Student Pledge during the Covid-19 pandemic

**Covid-19 cases within our student community**

We have a small number of individual Covid-19 cases within our student community. We have informed PHE and those affected are following NHS advice and self-isolating. They’re receiving our full support and we’re sure you will join us in sending our best wishes to those concerned.

The number of cases, while small, serves as an important reminder that our entire community must follow local and national restrictions and pay close attention to guidelines on campus, including practising good hand sanitisation, maintaining 2m social distancing where possible and wearing face coverings inside University buildings.

If you have Covid-19 symptoms, please self-isolate immediately, visit NHS 111 to book a test and [notify the University](https://www.durham.ac.uk/coronavirus).
If you have symptoms of Covid-19, you must:

- Self-isolate immediately,
- **Book a Covid-19 test**
- Inform the University using the dedicated page on **duo (Banner Self Service)**.

**Important information about College households**

To keep you as safe as possible when you arrive at your College and to help prevent the spread of Covid-19, we’ve produced requirements for undergraduate and postgraduate liver-in students, in line with current government guidelines for universities and student residences. Livers-out can find guidance on what they can and can’t do on this [webpage](#).

These requirements, which were circulated in full by Colleges earlier this week, reflect changes to UK government guidance on 10 September 2020, as well as additional temporary measures recently introduced in parts of the North East of England, including County Durham.

Please take time to read and understand the [guidance](#), and contact your College if you have any questions.

**Guidance for students who may be clinically vulnerable**

Although the government is advising that clinically extremely vulnerable people do not currently need to shield, we understand that students who fall into this category might still want to inform us and to discuss any further arrangements you might need to help feel safe.

Guidance for students who may be extremely clinically vulnerable to Covid-19 is available on our [website](#).

**Police University Liaison – support and advice**

The University works closely with Durham Constabulary through its Police University Liaison team. We encourage engagement from student groups, societies and teams with any queries related to local and national Covid-19 guidelines and how to apply these in practice.

To find out how you can access support and advice from the team, please visit this [webpage](#).

**Updating our Student Pledge during the Covid-19 pandemic**

In light of the global pandemic, we’ve made changes to our [Student Pledge](#) and it now forms part of the University’s regulations.

The updated Pledge asks you to commit to acting in ways that keep you and others safe during the Covid-19 pandemic. Signing up to the Pledge forms part of registration as a student at the University and shows a commitment to understanding our values.

**Conclusion**

We understand that this is a period of significant change, as you prepare to return to Durham or if you are joining us for the first time, particularly with the introduction of new rules and local restrictions. We are working at pace to adapt to these changes and to ensure we’re doing all we can to keep staff and students safe.
Thank you for your continued understanding.

Best wishes,

Claire O'Malley
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global)