Dear colleagues,

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
- Reporting symptoms and positive cases of Covid-19
- College household details

**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.

The information below explains what you should do if you have Covid symptoms and the internal reporting process we have put in place.

**Reporting symptoms of Covid-19**
If you have Covid-19 symptoms, you must immediately self-isolate, book a Covid-19 test (via nhs.uk/coronavirus) and inform your manager. If you have been in close contact with anyone else in the University community, including students and staff, we will ask those colleagues/students to self-isolate. We anticipate close contact being rare as the University is Covid-secure and colleagues should be socially distanced.

We have a new process in place to allow managers to capture relevant information from colleagues who either have symptoms which may be Covid-19, or who have tested positive for the virus. This is so that we know where the colleague has been within the University (to allow for cleaning) and who they may have been in close contact with.

Details of the process can be found in these posters which will be displayed around campus. More information, including FAQs and scenarios, is available on the Health & Safety page. If you have concerns that you are clinically vulnerable or in a higher risk group, or are anxious about anything else at this difficult time, please speak to your manager or seek support via the Employee Assistance Programme.

Covid-19 symptoms include:

- **A new continuous cough.** Coughing a lot for 1 hour or more, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours.
- **Loss of, or change to, smell or taste.** Do things smell or taste different to normal?
- **A high temperature.** Do you feel hot to touch on your chest or back?

Follow the advice provided to you to help protect yourself and protect others. By working together, we can maintain a healthy community.

**College households**

To keep students as safe as possible when they arrive at their 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.

These requirements reflect changes to UK Government guidance on 10 September 2020, as well as additional temporary measures introduced in parts of the North East of England, including County Durham. You can read the guidance here.

**Conclusion**

As we enter a period of local restrictions and changes to national guidance, we understand that this is a period of significant change. 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 hard work and understanding.

Best wishes,

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

All Covid-19 communications issued to students are available on our website.