

Update following Prime Minister's announcement of another lockdown period

Dear doctoral student,

As you will be aware, the Prime Minister announced new restrictions for the whole of England that, pending a vote in the House of Commons, will start this Thursday (5 November) and are due to last until Wednesday 2 December.

Unlike the lockdown earlier this year, this time schools, colleges and universities will remain open. However, there are some changes that you will notice and some new restrictions that you will be asked to abide by.

We fully understand this is a difficult and worrying time, and we are here to support you in any way we can as we navigate the weeks ahead. We appreciate that there are many different ways you may be pursuing your doctoral degree, including working remotely, and we extend our warm wishes to you wherever you are based.

If you are in England, be aware of the new rules

You can find full information about the restrictions on the [UK Government's webpages](#) but please be particularly mindful of the new rules restricting social interactions and mixing of households.

You should stay at home, except for specific purposes, which include:

- for childcare or education, where this is not provided online (*please see below for University of Bath information about education*)
- for work purposes, where your place of work remains open and where you cannot work from home (including if your job involves working in other people's homes)
- to exercise outdoors or visit an outdoor public place - with the people you live with, with your support bubble or, when on your own, with 1 person from another household.
- for any medical concerns, reasons, appointments and emergencies, or to avoid or escape risk of injury or harm - such as domestic abuse
- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which should be as infrequent as possible
- to visit members of your [support bubble](#) or provide care for vulnerable people, or as a volunteer

This list is not exhaustive and there are other limited circumstances where you may be permitted to leave or be outside your home. These will be set out in law and further detailed guidance will be provided.

Education and research here at the University of Bath

You can leave your home to travel to campus for your research, education, learning support and study purposes.

We are keeping local circumstances under regular review, in line with our [Outbreak Management Plan](#), but for the time being research laboratories will remain operational, wherever possible, strictly observing Covid-secure measures and risk assessments. Research remains a core part of our mission and researchers, including staff and doctoral students, who need to do research work on campus should continue to do so. We will be looking at our arrangements, learning from the last few weeks, to see what enhancements we can make. Please continue to reach out to your supervisor or Director of Studies to discuss any personal circumstances if you have any concerns around continuing with your research. Bookable study spaces remain open, as does the Library.

Moving between Bath and any homes elsewhere

The UK Government has been very clear in its message for students:

“If you live at university, you must not move back and forward between your permanent home and student home during term time. You should only return home at the end of term for Christmas. We will publish further guidance on the end of term.”

This also applies to doctoral students, so if you’re currently in Bath or on campus you should avoid travelling back to your family or another home during the next four weeks.

Covid-19 cases are increasing in Bath and North East Somerset, and we need every member of our community to remain vigilant and to follow public health rules and the new restrictions in place. We know that those of you who are planning to travel away from Bath to celebrate Christmas or spend time with family will be particularly mindful of the safety of your family members and friends elsewhere.

Please remember:

- The basic [‘Be Safe’](#) rules of ‘Hands. Face. Space’ and [‘Isolate. Test. Tell’](#)
- If you are helping friends from another household who are in self-isolation, drop any food or medicine on their doorstep, maintain social distancing, wear a mask and do not go into their houses

If you’re staying on campus or in Bath over the break, we’re planning now to ensure you are well looked after and we’re working with the SU to create plenty of options for Covid-secure activities. See [The SU’s what’s on guide](#) for more information about ongoing activities.

Sources of support

As we all know this year has presented unique challenges to everybody in the University community and it’s only natural that changing our ways and living with restrictions can sometimes cause frustration and anxiety.

Remember to check the [advice from the Doctoral College](#), which includes information on looking after your wellbeing as well as funding and fees support options, safety if you’re working on campus, and guidance on working remotely.

If you need advice on money management, disability support, counselling or mental health support, if you are feeling homesick or have any other worries, there are a number of

sources of support available to you from Student Services. Externally, NHS England recently published a [blog](#) for undergraduate students outlining support available to them if things are getting too much during the ongoing pandemic, and much of the information in there will also be useful for postgraduates.

All our usual services are still running both online and in person and [Wellbeing Support](#) is available every day of the year by phone on 01225 383838, or by email at wellbeingservice@bath.ac.uk. You can also find wellbeing advisors at the Roper Centre on campus. Help is also available from The [SU's Advice and Support Centre](#) and the [Chaplaincy](#).

The University has also recently launched a new, confidential service '[Be Well – Talk Now](#)' which gives immediate advice and support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Please do make the most of this support – we are here for you if you need us.

Keeping healthy this winter

We understand that it can feel a little bleak when the winter weather sets in and the clocks go back. Please do make the most of our [online health and wellbeing classes](#), free to students, which will help to keep you fit and boost your mood.

- If you have not already done so, we'd encourage you to register with the local NHS [University Medical Centre](#)
- If you haven't yet had your MMR or meningitis vaccinations, please read [our information](#) and get in touch with your GP as soon as possible
- We are also offering free flu vaccinations on campus, information about booking this is [on our website](#)

We'd like to express our thanks to all our students. Many of you have had to self-isolate in your households or tackled other challenges already this academic year and we know that the vast majority have acted responsibly and with real kindness to one another. Thank you and we look forward to being in touch again soon.

With warm wishes and support,

Dr Cassie Wilson
Vice President (Student Experience)

Professor Jeremy Bradshaw
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International and Doctoral)