



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

**16<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

## **Our next academic year**

**To: Undergraduate and Postgraduate returning students**

Dear student,

I hope you're keeping safe and well.

I know the past few months of University life have been incredibly challenging – particularly as we have all adapted to a new way of teaching and learning.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming you back when we start our next academic year. When you return, you will notice some changes, particularly in the way we provide our teaching and learning, as we must do it in a way that prioritises the health and safety of our students and staff.

In my email sent to you in May, we outlined our plans for a hybrid approach of on-campus and digital learning. While most of our lectures will be delivered digitally in Semester 1, we will offer other elements face-to-face wherever possible, such as seminars and tutorials. This means that we will have a number of buildings open for use wherever that is possible, while following the latest physical distancing guidelines.

I know that many of you will be hoping to return to all on-campus teaching as soon as possible, and this is our ultimate goal too. We will continue to follow the latest Scottish Government guidance to ensure that we can safely maximise our capacity for on-campus teaching and research over the coming months.

Over the summer months, many of you will be starting to think about returning to Edinburgh ready for next Semester. We are carrying out a huge amount of activity to allow us to gradually reopen our campuses fully with all appropriate measures in place to enable us to do this in a safe way.

I appreciate that due to Covid-19, you may not have organised your accommodation yet, or may be finding it harder to find private accommodation remotely. That's why we are making more bedrooms in our student accommodation available to returning students, which also includes a flexible option to stay with us in Semester 1 only. For more information and to apply, visit our [student accommodation webpages](#).

**Please remember that at all times we are following [Scottish Government advice](#), which might differ from UK Government advice.** For example, in Scotland you must now – by law – wear a face covering in shops and on public transport, and we are strongly encouraging you to also wear these in University buildings. If you are travelling from further afield, specific travel and self-isolation measures may also apply, so please ensure you check out the [Scottish Government's website](#) for the correct information.

A huge part of the student experience is about building connections and being part of our societies and clubs. We are determined to give you as much of an on-campus and in-city

experience as is possible. While life will be different for a while due to physical distancing guidelines, you will still be able to immerse yourself in student life from the moment you return.

Your Students' Association, Sports Union and the University's Sport & Exercise team are committed to ensuring you can connect with others through sporting and extra-curricular societies, clubs and wider physical activities. Some of these will be face to face, some will be outdoors and some will be virtually. However you do it, you'll still be able to carry on with the activities you took part in last Semester, or develop new skills and interests.

We will continue to do all we can to support you over the coming weeks and months. Our [support services](#) might be working remotely, but please be assured that they are still open and ready to help you.

I appreciate that this has been a stressful period – so thank you for your patience and cooperation as we navigate these extraordinary times. We will be in touch with you as soon as possible to provide more details about our preparations to ensure that you receive the highest quality of education and student experience in the coming Semester.

In the meantime, please continue to check out our [Student webpages](#) for the most up-to-date information, including short films on student experience, hybrid teaching and learning, and returning to Edinburgh.

I look forward to welcoming you back soon.

Best wishes,

**Professor Colm Harmon**  
**Vice-Principal Students**