



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

1st October 2020

Update for students in University accommodation

To: all students in University managed accommodation

Dear student,

Over the past few weeks we at the University of Edinburgh have been delighted to see you come (or return) to our University to start the next phase of your lives and join our community. The preceding six months have been an incredibly difficult time for you, dealing with an unprecedented pandemic and then the complications for many of you with this year's school examinations and results. We have always known that your experience would be different, it has been different for us too this year, but we remain committed to your education whilst working within the Scottish Government guidelines to deliver that.

Your start in University of Edinburgh accommodation has not been as we would wish for all of you – in particular, those of you who have needed to self-isolate. We acknowledge that and accept that there have been some difficulties, but do believe that the situation has improved. Yesterday we delivered more than 1000 food packages to self-isolating students, and were made aware of three errors which the teams worked hard to rectify. We are delivering three meals a day to all self-isolating students in our accommodation and from Friday 2nd October one of these will be a microwavable/hot meal.

As an acknowledgement of the difficulties you have had to contend with, we are taking the following additional measures:

- We want to ensure that it is as easy as possible for you to remain connected – in particular, if you are self-isolating. We are taking immediate action to improve Wi-Fi and Network connectivity. This includes distributing 3000 cables to enable you to have better-performing direct wired access to the internet from your bedroom – these are being provided free to students in all Halls over the next 3 days; and increasing our IT support presence at student accommodation to help swiftly investigate problems and assist students - we will be using all means possible to ensure students have good access to the internet network. Individual help is available and please raise any continuing issues by emailing: care@optifyourworld.com or phoning 0333 308 0000.
- As an acknowledgement of the difficulties some of you have experienced, we will provide a £50 voucher to all students in our University Accommodation. You will be able to choose one of three options for the kind of voucher you wish to receive. The details of how to make your choice will be communicated over the next few days.
- We hope that your experience is improving and that despite the restrictions you are meeting or connecting with new people and can see yourself getting through these initial months and making your new life at Edinburgh. However, if you do not, and feel you wish to leave University accommodation, we will be flexible and will not hold you to the 28 day notice period. If you feel that your particular individual circumstances mean that it would be difficult for you to remain on your course, we will of course support you but please do talk that over carefully with your personal tutor before making any sudden decisions.

We know it is tough, particularly for those of you having to self-isolate. The staff in our Residence Life teams and beyond are specifically trained to support your wellbeing either in person or remotely and we have many ways to support you including: your first point of contact the Residence Life team in your hall; [the Student Counselling Service](#).

Find out more about the health and wellbeing support available:

[Health and wellbeing support](#)

Life is not easy just now, we all understand that, and we must all follow the guidelines to do our best to suppress the virus. We know that very many of you are indeed doing this and thank you for that.

We are committed to giving you a high quality learning experience during these extraordinarily difficult times. Academic and support staff have been working throughout the summer to ensure you continue to receive the world-class education that you will expect from the University of Edinburgh. We are delivering more than 95,000 hours of teaching this semester and more than 35,000 hours of these are scheduled to be on campus. Our libraries and other study facilities are open, and we have created new spaces for you to meet and interact during this challenging year.

We are operating in exceptional times, but having won a place at Edinburgh you are studying at one of the leading universities in the world and your degree can be a passport to great success in the future.

Your start at Edinburgh has been different this year but it is still your time and we will continue to do our best to ensure that it is the best it can possibly be.

Best wishes,

Peter Mathieson and all members of the Senior Management Team