



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

24th September 2020

New Covid-19 restrictions this weekend: keeping yourself and others safe

To: all students

Dear student,

Firstly, I wanted to write to you to welcome you to the academic year, echoing the comments from the Principal earlier in the week. I am always proud of the fact that students from all over the country and indeed the world come to us every year.

This is not a normal year at the University. We are, like you, a little hesitant, a little uncertain. And we know that our community - the city, indeed Scotland more broadly - is anxious about the pandemic and about the impact of large numbers of students being back at University. Our success in dealing with the pandemic is down to the efforts we make and the efforts you make.

Today I need to ask you to not just keep that effort up, but to do more.

I need to urgently let you know about strict new government regulations that have just been introduced for all students that will impact you this weekend. In light of the number of people testing positive for Covid-19 in Scotland rising sharply, especially in the student population, universities across the country have agreed to implement the following [Scottish Government](#) restrictions to help prevent the spread of Covid-19.

To summarise, the new regulations mean that during this weekend we are asking you:

- 1. To avoid all socialising outside of your household.** To do so will be a breach of the law and will be subject to enforcement and even police action. If you have any doubts on how your household is defined, do reach out to the [ResLife team](#) who will advise. As a reminder, a household covers:
 - (a) people you live with in private accommodation
 - (b) students in a University flat with shared cooking and bathroom facilities
 - (c) students in University halls of residence who share a pantry, kitchen or bathroom
- 2. To avoid bars, restaurants and other hospitality venues**
- 3. To not hold parties or attend gatherings of more than six people**

I don't want to become too negative in tone, but I must say to you that we are – of necessity – unable to show much leniency on these matters. We must ask for your adherence, and we must remind you that the penalty for not doing so is harsh, including suspension from the University. We will continue to take a strict 'Yellow Card / Red Card' approach to breaches of student discipline that put students and others at risk.

I also want you, if you have not already done so, to download the [NHS Scotland Test and Protect app](#). This is important, and I want to ensure that every student in the University is on this app.

I appreciate that these restrictions are unwelcome – especially as you settle into University life and establish new friendships. However, given the seriousness of the situation, we must take swift action to avoid a much worse outcome for ourselves and the wider community. Everyone has a role to play in stopping the further spread of the virus, with all the dreadful consequences this could bring. And in these difficult times, we may all need support and advice at various points.

Please do not hesitate to access our [Covid-19 Support Service](#) if you feel we can be of help, particularly if you are self-isolating. We are all in this together and are here for every member of the University community.

Thank you for continuing to play your part and for the mature, thoughtful and respectful way in which you have already listened to our requests. I believe – deeply – in the community that is the University of Edinburgh. That community sits nested in a wider community, a city, a region and a nation that is fighting COVID-19. We can only succeed if we act as a community now and work together. Our [Good Citizen Guide](#) has more information on how we can all do this, with the latest updates, advice and support available on our [Covid-19 webpages](#).

Stay safe, keep everyone else safe, and be the amazing people we know you to be.

My every good wish,

Colm

Professor Colm Harmon
Vice-Principal Students