



We're now very close to the end of the first term and we hope your student is progressing well with their studies and coping in these challenging times.

You will have heard that the Government has asked universities to provide pre-Christmas asymptomatic testing for all students to support their designated 'student travel window'. The university has made a huge effort to set this up this and you can read more about the arrangements below.

At this time of year, students should be working towards meeting their first set of deadlines for the academic year and some should be starting to receive feedback from tutors about their work and progress. We know that some students can find this time particularly stressful and that they can feel nervous as they anticipate that feedback. We strongly encourage students to speak up if they believe that feelings of stress or anxiety are beginning to overwhelm them. The circumstances created by the pandemic may exacerbate these feelings. Information on self-help resources and useful apps can be found on our [student intranet](#) and students can seek additional support by speaking to their Personal Tutor or a [Wellbeing Adviser](#).

While the Government has advised universities of plans for testing and travel prior to the holiday period, we have not yet received guidance for start of the next term. As soon as we have more information we will share this with our students. Please encourage your student to continue to check their College email address over the holiday period for updates.

Best wishes,

Helen Groenendaal
Head of Student Advisory & Wellbeing

Asymptomatic Covid-19 testing

We're offering our students asymptomatic Covid-19 testing in partnership with both the NHS and the Department for Health and Social Care starting on **Tuesday 1 December**. Access to testing will help our students to return home as safely as possible during the Government's designated 'student travel window', which runs from **Thursday 3 December** to **Wednesday 9 December**.

These tests are called lateral flow tests and students can be voluntarily tested for free using two tests taken three days apart. If their results are negative for Covid-19, students who wish to leave their term time address for the Christmas holiday period should travel within 24 hours of receiving the results.

To give as many people as possible the opportunity to take the test, we have allocated slots for the tests and travel window should students wish to return home.

In accordance with government guidance to support the student travel window, we'll move all face-to-face, on campus, teaching to online from Wednesday 9 December to the end of term, Friday 11 December.

We're keen to do everything we can to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and it is important that we all play our part in trying to stop the spread of the virus. Please encourage your student to take the tests as they will be playing their part in helping to keep others safe and they can be more confident that they're not taking the virus home, or unknowingly infecting friends and family or those in the local area over the holiday period.

Our blended learning approach of face-to-face, on campus, and online teaching and learning support will continue next term and we look forward to welcoming our students back to campus for the start of term, which is **Monday 11 January 2021**.

Disability & Dyslexia Services: Exam Access Arrangements

Exam Access Arrangements (EAAs) are designed to make reasonable adjustments for students who are unable to sit formal examinations under standard exam conditions because of a disability or other medical condition. The Disability & Dyslexia Services team are able to advise on whether a student is eligible for EAAs as well as on the application process. It is important for eligible students to apply before the deadline on **29 January 2021**. Students who have EAAs approved by the College will be emailed the details and will need to check

that these are correct so that any adjustments can be made ahead of the exam period in term three. If your student has or needs an EAA, please help them by reminding them of the January deadline.

[Find out more about the Disability and Dyslexia Service.](#)

Accommodation for the next academic year



Living in halls

Did you know that our halls of residence are not just for first year students? Many students may be starting to think about accommodation for their next year of study here at Royal Holloway, and it is worth considering that we have some availability in halls for current students. Applications will open early next year and more information on accommodation applications for current students will be provided via the **student intranet** and in the weekly student newsletter in term two.

Advice on housing

At this time of year, students will be looking at housing options for the next academic year. They are advised that there is no need to rush into signing a contract. Our Students' Union offer a range of housing advice on their [website](#) and provides a free, independent service for all students. The **Advice Centre** team specialise in providing private sector housing advice and academic advice. They also work with the university provided services and are able to refer or signpost students to these teams.

Support over the festive season

We know that some students may be staying on campus or in the local area over the festive period. Many of our services are still available to support students during this time and we have put together a list on the student intranet, including support if students need to self-isolate, which can be found [here](#).

Join us for a festival of lessons and carols

Sunday 6 December, 6pm, Online event

We invite students, staff, parents and supporters to join us online for our annual service of lessons and carols, exploring the joyful themes of Christmas through music from the Choir of Royal Holloway, and readings in the context of our diverse university community.

