July 2021

Dear offer holder,

You are currently holding an offer to study at Cambridge and I am therefore writing to you to share the latest information on our plans for the academic year 2021-22.

Following the lifting of social distancing and other restrictions by the UK government, and the latest guidance from the Department for Education, I am pleased to say that we are planning to provide as much in-person teaching as we possibly can, along with access to libraries and other facilities in Cambridge.

We are ensuring that our plans take into account measures to stay as safe as possible. We will be reviewing our approach regularly. There may be changes to the health situation or government guidance between now and the start of the next academic year and so our plans may need to respond accordingly. The information below sets out what we plan to deliver, and how we will amend our plans if need be.

**Teaching next academic year**

We expect to offer as normal the small-group teaching that is at the heart of the Cambridge experience: supervisions, practicals and seminars. We are planning to deliver this teaching, and as many lectures as possible, in-person. However, where there is a strong reason (for example, it improves the educational experience, or where we are assessing the safe use of lecture theatres for large cohorts of students during the first term, or where members of staff are unable to teach in person) we will use online delivery. If a Faculty or Department will be conducting some of its teaching online for any of these reasons this will be announced on the web page of the Faculty or Department by 30 September.

Students will be expected to be in Cambridge for their studies. Those who cannot come to Cambridge should read the University’s [policy on temporary permission to study remotely](https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus/students/guidance-for-all-students/guidance-on-exceptional-circumstances-2021-22). Any application made will be judged on a case-by-case basis and in close discussion between the student and their college.

We have contingency plans in place that will respond to changes in the public health situation or if the UK government imposes restrictions. At the centre of our plans is the need to keep staff and students as safe as possible, while retaining as much of the normal learning and wider student experience as possible. Our contingency planning is therefore based on the following hierarchy of actions:

* If it becomes necessary to have some mitigation measures in place to enable in-person teaching to be delivered safely, we will implement the appropriate measures, which may include social distancing or wearing face coverings.
* If it becomes necessary to move some or all teaching online due to safety concerns or to government guidance, we will do this and then revert to in-person teaching once this becomes possible. The first teaching to be moved online in these circumstances is likely to be lectures. We will do all we can to preserve small group teaching sessions and practicals for as long as we can.

We will let students know if it becomes necessary to implement these plans.

**Staying safe in Cambridge**

We will continue to work together as a community to keep ourselves and others as safe as possible while making the most of life at Cambridge. All students are strongly encouraged to get fully vaccinated as soon as they can. Information on vaccinations – including for international students – is available on our [vaccination webpage](https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus/stay-safe-cambridge-uni/vaccination).

The University will arrange COVID-19 testing for students on arrival and is prepared to provide appropriate testing throughout the first term and beyond if the public health situation requires it.

The University is currently in a transitional phase in which we have recommended the ongoing use of face coverings and social distancing in indoor work settings. We will provide more detail on the measures we will continue to adopt in our buildings closer to the start of term.

**Supporting students**

Colleges are our students’ Cambridge home and offer practical and pastoral support. This includes supporting those who have to self-isolate. If students have any concerns they can contact their Tutor, Director of Studies or college nurse. There is also help available from University services: for more information see our [wellbeing webpages](https://www.studentwellbeing.admin.cam.ac.uk/). For general information on the University’s response to COVID-19, see our [coronavirus webpages](https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus/students/all-students).

We know that the pandemic is causing unexpected financial hardship for many people. See our [information on central sources of financial support](https://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/financial-hardship-support-access-funds): these include funds for exceptional or unexpected hardship, unexpected medical costs, and hardship due to COVID-19, including support for quarantining costs if this is needed.

We wish you an enjoyable summer.

With very best wishes,

Professor Graham Virgo

Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)