Subject line: Update on COVID-19: August/September examinations

Dear students,

I hope your studies are progressing well.

It is apparent from the Prime Minister’s message earlier in the week that the current lockdown restrictions will be in place for some time to come. With this in mind, we are planning alternative arrangements for a number of important areas as the year progresses, working closely with RUSU.

Given the indications from government that social distancing and travel restrictions are likely to remain in place for some months, it will not be possible to hold examinations in August/September on campus. As such, any examinations taken at this time will need to take place as ‘take home’ exams and alternate assessment, in the same way as the current summer exams. We are aware that there are a number of examinations with practical components that cannot be undertaken remotely. In these cases the relevant Schools are liaising with professional bodies and considering how to manage this. If you have any immediate concerns about the exams period then visit the exams webpages or email take-home-exam@reading.ac.uk.

We are also planning ahead for when we are able to return to campus. In the same way that the restrictions were introduced in a phased way, it is likely that they will be lifted in stages as well. So we are working on the basis of a safe phased return to campus. We will continue to maintain as much activity as possible off-campus while social distancing requirements remain in place.

As such, even if government does make adjustments to the lockdown and distancing requirements, you must not return to campus immediately. We will need to manage the return of students and colleagues very carefully to ensure that it is done in a safe and coordinated way, including collecting any belongings you have left in Halls or elsewhere. We will contact you as soon as we can with any updates on this phased return to campus.

Finally, just a reminder that we are updating the information on our Essentials webpages on a regular basis, so please do check these pages regularly for the latest information on:

- Exams and assessment
- Accommodation related issues
- Support and wellbeing - including our new ‘Wellbeing Toolkit’
- Guidance specifically for international students
- Guidance specifically for postgraduate research students
- Careers advice relating to the current pandemic
- Money matters

As ever, I hope that you and your families remain safe and well, wherever you are in the world. If you are facing any issues with exams, please do contact us and remember that all our student support and wellbeing services remain available.

Kind regards,
Dr Patricia Woodman

Director of Student Services