

Our Campus Commitment: Offering our students a safe campus experience in 2020/21

The following commitments have been agreed by the University Executive Board to articulate how the University will operate from a student's perspective for the forthcoming academic year.

This information will be provided to current and prospective students over the coming days.

All of the commitments below are subject to any relevant public health guidelines that may be in place at the time. Therefore, our approach may flex accordingly.

Teaching and Learning

- We consider face-to-face teaching to be an integral part of a Queen's education and it will continue to be so for the 2020/21 academic year. It will be complemented and supported by the use of technology to enhance the learning experience and provide greater flexibility as necessary to meet the needs of students.
- Teaching will still be delivered face-to-face when it is possible to do so in accordance with social distancing, and it remains the optimum method of teaching.
- Where it is not possible or preferable to deliver teaching face-to-face, it will be delivered via our dedicated, state-of-the-art digital platforms that allow for high-quality interactive learning, teaching and assessment, which may include live-streamed lectures, interactive discussions and pre-recorded material.
- The balance of face-to-face, interactive online and pre-recorded teaching that each student receives will be determined by the availability of space to facilitate social distancing restrictions and the aims of each module as determined by the academic. How this will relate to each student specifically will be provided by Schools in due course.
- Teaching in small groups such as seminars, tutorials, etc. – which is a crucial element of the approach at Queen's – will be done face-to-face wherever possible, with social distancing applied, as long as it remains the optimum method of delivery. We can accommodate both online and face-to-face, and movement between the two delivery formats will be seamless.
- Additional space is being secured across campus and alternative approaches to timetabling are being examined to provide additional capacity for face-to-face teaching with social distancing applied.
- Teaching that is delivered face-to-face will be recorded or live-streamed, if possible, to meet the needs of students.



- Traditional lectures with large groups of students are likely to be delivered online at the beginning of term as a result of social distancing measures. They will transition back to face-to-face as guidelines allow and if they are still considered to be the optimum form of delivery.
- Remote delivery of teaching will include additional directed learning using Canvas, the University's state-of-the-art virtual learning environment.
- High-quality, robust Wi-Fi is provided in all student accommodation. Study spaces will be open across campus, with Wi-Fi access to allow students to engage with online teaching.
- We will deliver practical teaching/lab-based learning in creative ways within the context of social distancing. Lab-based learning that can be conducted in-person with social distancing applied will go ahead as normal. Any practical teaching that cannot be delivered initially will be delivered at a later stage in the academic year or at the next stage of study. Schools will advise of these changes in due course.
- All work placements that can be conducted within the context of social distancing/in line with public health guidelines will go ahead, as long as placement providers are happy to do so.
- Students can contact academics and lecturers via the University's dedicated virtual learning environment, Canvas, as well as other digital platforms. Many of our students have told us that they have found this easy and accessible since lockdown began in March. It will also be possible to meet lecturers face-to-face for one-to-one meetings as long as social distancing can be applied.
- In-session English language support/programmes will be available and provided by our partner, INTO Queen's, and will be available both face-to-face and online.
- The INTO Queen's Centre will be open and offering both face-to-face and online teaching in the same way as the University.
- Dual teaching: all teaching will be available remotely to students who are not able to travel to Belfast for the start of the academic year.

Campus Life/Facilities

Accommodation

- University Accommodation is open and available. The majority of accommodation is provided en-suite so social distancing/isolation is easily achieved.
- Rota systems will be employed in shared spaces (e.g. kitchens/living areas) to preserve social distancing but to also allow some social interaction in small groups where the space allows.



- All shared facilities in accommodation (e.g. launderettes, coffee bars, social spaces, study areas) will be open and available. Capacity will be restricted where necessary to adhere to social distancing.

Self-isolation/Quarantine

In the event that quarantine measures are still required in September, the University will support students as follows:

- Students who are required to quarantine upon their arrival in Belfast will be provided high-quality en-suite accommodation. For students arriving before 21 September, and who will go on to live in Queen's Accommodation for the duration of the academic year, the quarantine accommodation will be free of charge.
- During quarantine, the University can provide three meals a day* and/or students will be able to order food from local restaurants or supermarkets for delivery to their accommodation. * *Food will be charged for.*
- Students arriving in Belfast and who are required to quarantine will be met at the airport and transported to their accommodation.
- If students living in University accommodation are required to self-isolate at any point in the academic year, the University will fully support them and ensure they have an en-suite room with food brought to their accommodation* as necessary. * *Food will be charged for.*

Induction/Welcome/Orientation

- The induction programme will be delivered on a School-by-School basis using a combination of online and face-to-face delivery. Social interaction and the opportunity for students to meet fellow members of their course will be facilitated in both environments, providing as much face-to-face interaction as social distancing measures will allow.
- Students will be provided the same support as normal to open bank accounts, etc.
- The University and Students' Union will be providing a range of (socially distanced) activities during the Welcome period to make students feel welcome and provide the opportunity to meet other students.

SU/Clubs/Societies

- The Students' Union will be open from the beginning of term and will provide a comprehensive range of services and facilities to students, with relevant social distancing measures applied. This includes opportunities for student volunteering and enterprise.
- New students will have the opportunity to meet, engage with and join Clubs and Societies. There are over 200 clubs and societies at Queen's and, while some



activity is likely to be restricted due to Covid-19 guidelines, there will be plenty of opportunities to get involved in Clubs and Societies across the year.

- Whether or not sports can be played (especially team sports) will be governed by the decisions of the relevant sporting bodies/national associations/governing bodies.

Facilities

- All facilities will be open for students from 21 September (including coffee shops, study areas, social spaces, etc.) with the relevant social distancing measures applied (e.g. spacing out of furniture, capacity limitations on rooms, etc.). The only exceptions will be facilities where it is not possible to operate according to the current social distancing measures or Public Health Agency guidelines.
- The McClay Library, Graduate School and other shared study spaces will be open from 3 August (with a reduced capacity). Students will be able to borrow material and use University computers/access the internet from the library as normal.
- The University intends that the PEC, Upper Malone and other sporting facilities will be open for students from the beginning of term on the assumption that it is safe to do so according to the guidelines in place at the time. Plans are in place to relocate fitness equipment throughout the PEC to ensure students can access classes and courses in a safe and enjoyable manner. Different activity areas (gym, outdoor sport, climbing wall, swimming pool, etc.) will be opened with a phased approach predicated on sporting governing body guidelines.

Hygiene/Health and Safety Measures

- We are committed to providing a safe campus and will ensure that all guidelines issued by the Public Health Agency of Northern Ireland will be adhered to as a minimum.
- The University will provide all staff and students with face coverings. Students may wish to also bring their own.
- Staff and students will be asked to wear a face covering as necessary in accordance with relevant health guidelines that may be in place at the time.
- Hand sanitiser and handwashing facilities will be provided across campus, particularly in high traffic areas and at the entrance/exit of buildings.
- One-way traffic systems will be employed where appropriate in buildings to enable effective social distancing.
- Screens and additional signage will be put in place where necessary to preserve social distancing measures.
- A significantly increased cleaning regime will be put in place so all shared study, teaching and social spaces will be cleaned on a regular basis to the required



standard as advised by the Public Health Agency. In most cases this will be several times a day.

- Additional consumable cleaning material (e.g. wipes) will be widely and freely available for staff and students to use in public spaces, teaching and study areas etc.

Testing/Tracing/Self-isolation

- If staff or students show symptoms, they will be asked to self-isolate and be tested as soon as possible.
- All students who develop symptoms will have access to testing that will be supported by the contact-tracing system already in place in Northern Ireland.
- Northern Ireland has in place an established, high-quality testing/contact-tracing system and students will benefit from that as soon as they arrive in Belfast.
- Any students living in University accommodation who receive a positive test or are identified via contact tracing will be fully supported to self-isolate with food*/medical supplies brought to them as necessary. * *This will be charged for.*