

St John's College and Covid-19

The importance of our community working together to mitigate risk continues to be our focus as we look towards welcoming you to College for the Michaelmas Term and this note is designed to give you some idea of what to expect. Please read and digest it carefully.

The University of Cambridge and the individual Colleges have worked together during the Covid-19 pandemic to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of the entire community. The Covid-19 virus brings significant risks in terms of public health and mitigating these risks is the responsibility of us all. The University has issued a 'Covid-19 Student Community Statement' (<https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus/news/covid-community-statement>) which represents a commitment by all members of the collegiate University community to behave in a way that minimises the risk of spreading the virus.

Cambridge currently has a low incidence of COVID-19 but the prospect of a new and rapid spike in cases remains a real risk, particularly as people return to College. All resident members of Colleges are expected to stay alert to minimising the risks of virus transmission in all aspects of your life, to limit the number of external contacts outside your household, observe social distance when you go out and **not** to leave home if you, or anyone that you live with, has symptoms. You should also stay up to date with Government and Public Health England (PHE) advice. <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

St John's College Guidance

- Familiarise yourself with the content of your updated student room licence, the revised student handbook and the newly updated Coronavirus Student Guidelines section of the website. These will be available in mid to end September. Much of what you need to know to keep yourself and others safe around College and beyond are in these documents. In the meantime, the FAQs on the College website <https://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/covid-19-faqs-undergraduate-students> <https://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/covid-19-faqs-postgraduate-students> provide details of how the College is operating through the summer period.
- Ensure that you promptly notify the College through the online reporting form <https://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/college-covid-19-symptom-reporting-form>, get a test for Covid-19 at the Universities facilities at either Engineering or at Addenbrooke's <https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus/students/health-and-wellbeing> and self-isolate if you have any symptoms of a viral infection. The ability to keep the virus under control in College, the University and Cambridge relies on each of us knowing what it means in practice to self-isolate and how to get tested.
- The University and Addenbrooke's Hospital combined have a well-developed system of testing and close contact tracking, with subsequent advice for self-isolating and further action where appropriate, in accordance with national Public Health England management protocols. The Senior Tutor's Department will also arrange to notify close contacts of anyone with symptoms to ask them to self-isolate – this is key to ensuring that we manage any local resurgence of coronavirus cases.

- Keep a daily record of people you have been in close contact with. This will mean that these people can be informed quickly if you show symptoms or are diagnosed with Covid-19 so that they can also self-isolate.
- Follow the instructions from the Government, PHE and the University/Colleges relating to social distancing, queuing arrangements, activities and sport, and the use of face coverings etc. In some areas, a one-way system will be in place and there will be a booking system for many activities. These guidelines (which will be on the website) may also change from time to time, as may those in your Department or Faculty, so please ensure that you keep yourself informed and up to date.
- As per prevailing PHE guidelines, 2m social distancing is required for all activities at the University, with localised risk assessment and management measures taking this into consideration. Where 2m distancing between individuals is not possible, 1m+ distancing can be adopted, but only with other mitigating measures in place. These include the use of face-coverings, face shields and physical barriers, and consideration for limited time at this distance.
- The College has ordered two cloth face coverings for each student which will be available for collection with your room key. You may wish to bring additional face coverings with you to supplement this supply. Please look at the relevant information on where face coverings will be worn in College in the attached link in the relevant section of FAQs (<https://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus-information>)
- Information relating to supervisions and education in College will be circulated separately. However, where supervisions are taking place face to face, adjustments will be made to ensure the appropriate social distancing and necessary hygiene measures are in place. Please bear in mind your mutual responsibilities to keep one another safe, follow the guidelines given and do not attend if you are feeling unwell. All supervisions can be switched to online if necessary.
- All College rooms have been deep cleaned over the vacation and additional hand sanitiser stations have been installed across the College. Assessments have been made of the capacity of meeting rooms under social distancing guidelines and of other social and essential communal spaces.
- Overall, we ask you to understand that this situation will mean that, at times, College rules may be stricter than usual and some activities that we all cherish e.g. Formal Hall may temporarily be suspended or run in a more restricted way. When the Government relaxes or alters restrictions, College will need to make its own risk assessment and adjustments in the context of the physical configuration of the buildings, fire safety, staff availability and other factors but will endeavour to adapt to the new guidance as quickly as possible. Please bear with us in this situation.

It is impossible to predict the course of the pandemic and public health guidelines regarding Covid-19 are likely to be relaxed and/or tightened for periods of time throughout the academic year. Accordingly, it is difficult to spell out in exact detail what kind of measures will be in place when you return to College or during the next academic year. It is therefore imperative that you follow all the latest guidance from the Government, PHE, University and Colleges.

Some guidelines to bear in mind as you prepare to return:

- Return to College: We will be operating a booking system to ensure that returns to College are staggered across a number of days to protect your health and safety (maximum 50 students per day). International students have already been sent details of dates for return to College. All other students can book to return from Monday 21st September. Full details of how to book a 'slot' will be sent to you at the start of September.
- We need to know who is in College, and where people are if they are away from Cambridge, to be able to operate 'track and trace' effectively. We will therefore require you to notify us when you are going to be absent from your allotted room for more than 24 hours (and, in particular, at the end of Term). Details of how to do this will be available on arrival in College.
- Please be prepared to ensure that a member of your College household can contact you quickly at all times if your household is required to self-isolate. This may happen at any time if a member of your household shows Covid-19 symptoms.
- It is possible that events may mean that you may be required to move rooms/households at short notice. St John's is aware of how disruptive this measure would be and it is very much hoped this can be avoided.
- In the event of a Covid 'spike', it may be necessary to implement temporary lockdown of a household, a staircase, a hostel or a court. Please identify two 'self-isolation' supporters **from outside your immediate household and vicinity** who can provide provisions to you in the event that you (and your household) need to self-isolate for a period. If you have not already done so, you are asked to let Student Services know the names of these people prior to your arrival in College at the start of Term by completing this online form: <https://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/form/self-isolation-supporters>.
- We would also recommend that you ensure that you have three days' supply of non-perishable food that you store in your room for use in the event of a lockdown. If you cannot nominate self-isolation supporters, the College will provide catering support to you, but it would help if you are also well prepared.
- Medical supplies: We would also like you to bring a thermometer, a supply of disposable masks and gloves, and some paracetamol with you when you return.
- Luggage – please think carefully about what you really require for academic purposes and basic living standards in College and reduce what you bring to College accordingly. The Porters have worked hard throughout the summer to help reunite you with your belongings or pack them for storage but it is obvious that many have possessions that far exceed those strictly necessary for College activities. You may need to move with short notice during the pandemic and you must be able to pack up and move your own belongings if required.

- Cleaning responsibilities: all undergraduate rooms on the main College site will now be cleaned once a fortnight to enable cleaning staff to clean ‘high touch’ areas around the College seven days a week and more frequently. Communal areas will continue to be cleaned daily both in College and in the hostel accommodation. However, please note that you will be asked to take responsibility for the cleanliness of the room allocated to you and to maintain high levels of hygiene in any bathroom or kitchen facilities that you share with your household. Cleaning materials will be provided accordingly and you may wish to bring your own gloves.
- Visiting restrictions – Main College Site. No visitors are currently permitted on the main College site except for designated academic purposes. All visitors to the main College site must be met outside the Porters’ Lodge and are required to register their presence in the Lodge. Please come prepared to abide by these rules and to keep up to date with the current regulations.
- Visiting restrictions – Households. Whilst we will be reviewing this policy for the start of term, it is likely that visitors to ‘households’ will be restricted by Government, PHE and University/College policies. Currently, under Government guidelines, any household is permitted to host a visit from one other household provided social distancing is maintained. You will therefore need to work as a household to organise visitors to your accommodation areas. To avoid having visitors from multiple households visit your own household at the same time, you may want to consider using group-chats to coordinate visits. Please note that ‘support bubbles’ as defined in Government advice (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household-from-4-july>) will not normally be permitted in College accommodation as to do so in a multi-person household setting would compromise both safety and equity across the whole household.
- The effectiveness of all of the policies, procedures and guidelines depends on each and every one of the College community playing their part and respecting the dignity and concerns of others at all times.

Support and Welfare

Should you have any concerns or encounter difficulties, please raise them promptly with your Tutor. The College has recruited an additional Health and Wellbeing Advisor to support the Lead Clinical Nurse and College Counsellor and the SBR and JCR are working hard to ensure that you have access to friendship and mutual-support groups in the case of the need to self-isolate.

The College will maintain up to date information on the website provide guidance throughout the Term. Please be aware that this is likely frequently to be updated as things change and may be amended at any time.

We know this will be a different academic year than we are all used to but we are confident that the St John’s community will continue to work together to make it as safe and enjoyable as possible. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Senior Tutor