



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast

Dear Student

This continues to be a difficult and anxious time for everyone. As a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak there are clear concerns for the health and safety of our students, colleagues, friends and family. I would like to continue to assure you that the health and wellbeing of our staff and students and the wider society remains our top priority.

In order to prioritise the health and wellbeing of all we have now taken the following decisions:

1. Campus Closure

In an attempt to curb the spread of covid-19 the government and its various health agencies are advising that services not directly involved in the fight against the virus should close immediately to aid social distancing. Students should not be on campus for any reason unless they are collecting belongings from Halls (see below). College buildings will therefore begin to be closed from today. The majority of staff will be working remotely where at all possible, and can be contacted by email. If you have specific queries related to the potential impact of the covid-19 virus on you as a student you should raise such issues using the covid19enquiries@stran.ac.uk email address.

2. Halls

Resident students in Halls were advised on Saturday as follows:

*We are therefore strongly encouraging all students to return home so that they can be with their families at this difficult and challenging time as we believe this is important for the health, safety, and wellbeing of all concerned. In light of the unprecedented circumstances we now face we will terminate, **without financial penalty**, the accommodation Residential Licence Agreements for all students leaving the Halls of Residence early, i.e. before or on **Friday 27 March 2020**.*

Given the rapidly changing situation we would **now** request that all students who still have possessions in Halls return **as soon as possible to collect them and return keys**. We will attempt to keep some staff on site until Friday as previously advised so that students can remove material from Halls but please note that if government advice changes we may need to close earlier so please

act quickly if you need to access personal belongings. If the government does decide to “lock down” then you will not have any access at all to the College site.

3. Teaching and Assessment

Information about teaching and assessment has already been circulated to all students but to recap – face-to-face teaching has now ceased and teaching will be delivered by other methods, mainly remotely through the use of our Canvas VLE. Formal examinations will not take place this year and students will be assessed using alternative means. Further details in relation to both matters will be issued in due course; it is important that you keep a regular check on your emails for updates.

4. Student Support

We would like to remind you that Student Support continues to be offered. The Student Support Team can be contacted by email at studentsupport@stran.ac.uk. Should you require counselling services then these are available free of charge through our partner organisation ‘Inspire Students who can be contacted 24/7 on 0800 389 5362, or by email at stranmillisstudents@inspirewellbeing.org. We are aware that is a very stressful time for us all and ask you to please be sensitive to the impact it may be having on the mental health of friends and colleagues and offer any support that may be needed. This [article](#) from the World Health Organisation may be helpful.

Please note **further guidance and updates** will be issued if the situation were to change again; this is a constantly evolving situation. We are monitoring and implementing all current government advice and would urge you personally to check the PHA website regularly for updates

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus>

Following government advice to help keep each other safe is critical.

We would like to take this opportunity to once again thank all our students for their cooperation at this difficult time. As a College community we need to remain calm and vigilant and continue to support each other as we move into these uncharted waters. We all have an important role to play in order to minimise the impact of the virus and to support each other and our wider society at this time.

With thanks and best wishes for the coming days.

Dr Trisha Eaton

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Dr Ken Gibson

Dr Ken Gibson
Director of Student
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