



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast

bulletin

student

Issue 6 - Feb 2021



Tailored Online
Wellbeing **Support Tools**



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
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inspiresupporthub.org/students

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Student Support Bulletin

As you are only too well aware we continue to traverse very difficult and turbulent times which have created significant challenges for us all, staff and student alike. In the midst of a climate of potential negativity we want to promote a message of positivity, and there are many things to celebrate and to be thankful for.

Semester One

We would like to congratulate you as you have successfully navigated the challenges of Semester One: just think of all the new things you have experienced – “blended learning”, “online (live)”, “online (pre-recorded)”, “Canvas”, “the Big Blue Button”, and so the list goes on . . . You have worked very hard

throughout Semester One and our External Examiners have consistently made positive comments about how you have engaged with your studies, the exceptionally high-quality work produced by the Stranmillis students, and the clear commitment and engagement of you the student. You have impressed them and us and you are to be congratulated so well done! We know you would join us in acknowledging the hard work, the dedication, and the commitment of all the Stranmillis staff in helping to support you in your efforts. You can view Semester One results by logging onto your QSIS account.



Still Here to Support You

We would like to remind you that Student Support continues to be available. The Student Support Team can be contacted by email at studentsupport@stran.ac.uk or by phone on 028 9038 4510. 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.

Remember - if there is anything we can do to support you at this time, please do make contact.

Ken

Dr Ken Gibson
Director of Student & Learning Services



Semester Two

Teaching in Semester Two is now well underway and we would want to encourage you to engage with your various modules by taking part in the different online sessions, by reading prepared materials, listening to and watching the pre-prepared presentations, and by attending when possible any timetabled face-to-face sessions.

Placements



For those students who are due to take part in placement activity the Placement Team has worked, and indeed continues to work, exceptionally hard to secure placements for all students. As you will appreciate, this is a real challenge when placement providers are not operating in a normal manner. Dr Eaton has already circulated detailed information about BEd placement along with a comprehensive set of

FAQs and other teams have also kept you updated. I would strongly advise you to: (i) read the information sent to you by email about placement, (ii) keep a frequent and regular check on your emails for important updates as information is constantly changing, and (iii) if queries still remain after having checked module guides, Canvas, FAQs etc. then please get in contact.

Final year students

For those students who are in the final year of their course our objective is to work with you to enable you to successfully complete your studies, to enable you to graduate, and to take up graduate employment. We know that

your graduation is scheduled to take place at some stage during the period 1st – 7th July 2021, however the precise date, time, and nature of that event is still to be determined by QUB. Please be assured that whatever is planned, and delivered, the key objective will be to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of the graduate and their family and friends. Celebratory events will be planned to take account of prevailing government guidelines. We will update you of plans as information is provided by the University so please check your emails for important updates. Even if we can't celebrate with you in person we will still mark your achievements.



IT Access - PC and Laptop Purchase and Loan Schemes

Computer Purchase

If you are thinking about purchasing a personal computer/laptop to assist you with your studies, please remember as a registered student most of the major suppliers will give you discount. The level of discount offered will usually depend on the manufacturer concerned, the specification of the machine selected, and the normal retail price of the product being purchased.

Dell

- Visit dell.com/en-uk/shop/dell-advantage/cp/students
- On this page there is a link “Redeem Your Voucher Codes Here” with further instructions if required.
- A link will take them to a page where it requests that they enter their University email address – it will then send the student their unique voucher codes to their email inbox.
- From this point the process is the same.

Students will receive the following discounts:

- 5% on Inspiron
- 10% on XPS, Alienware, Inspiron Gaming, Monitors, Projectors

- 20% on Accessories
- Discounts stack on top of the money off deals on the Dell Deals pages however they cannot be used in conjunction with another coupon code. (i.e., if our site is running a SAVE10 code in a sale you cannot add both the SAVE10 and the Dell Advantage code.)

Lenovo

- [Discount Programs: Student, Military, and Seniors 50+ | ID.me | Lenovo UK](#)
- Staff/Student Discounts -

exclusive discounts by signing up at: [JOIN NOW \(lenovo.com\)](https://lenovo.com/join-now)

- **Outlet Store Deals** - Low prices on new and refurbished systems. [Explore now \(lenovo.com\)](https://lenovo.com/explore-now)

HP

- HP Store offer students up to **30%** discount via the HP Student Store, with a valid .ac.uk email address. No need for a HP student discount code, any offers will be applied automatically.
- Find out more at: [HP Student Store - HP Store UK](#)





Microsoft

- Student can have access to Office 365 Apps at no extra charge and can download up to 5 active versions of the Office App suite on any device for free (for the duration of their time at Stranmillis University College).
- By signing up with a University email account Staff/Students can get extra discounts on the purchase of Surface devices and accessories.
- [Back to School - Discounts and offers for Students | Microsoft Store](#)

Apple

- By signing up with a University email account Staff/Students can get extra discounts on the purchase of devices and accessories.
- <https://www.apple.com/uk/shop/campaigns/education-pricing> or via
- https://www.apple.com/uk/shop/browse/home/education_routing/find_your_institution/access

Short-term laptop loan scheme

The College is delighted to announce that in response to student requests and based on the results of the recently completed student survey into Remote IT Access we will very shortly be launching a 'short term laptop loan scheme'. We are currently in the process of purchasing a number of internet-enabled laptops which will be made available for short term loan. This scheme is designed to enable students to engage more readily in remote study and it is primarily aimed at those students who have been affected by one of the following problems:

- Broken device - either a

temporary or permanent breakage and/or irreparable damage;

- Currently using a device which you are having to share with another family / household member;
- Current device is no longer fit for purpose, or incompatible with your studies
- Solely relying on the use of on-campus Student Computing Areas to carry out your studies;
- Only access to a device is a mobile device;
- Current device has been stolen;

Please keep a check on your emails for further information on this new scheme.

Stay safe

We would once again encourage you to observe the key Covid measures of “hands”, “face”, and “space”. Please practice good hand hygiene – wash your hands thoroughly and frequently; please wear a face covering at all times for your own protection, and others; and please make sure you maintain a 2m social distance. By adhering to these simple measures you will keep yourself safe and protect others.

Stay Well

We appreciate that the current situation can be both mentally and emotionally challenging for all and the key message is that your health, safety, and wellbeing continue to be our primary focus.

With 24-hour news and social media all of us could very quickly become overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information we are being bombarded with, and to make matters worse some of that information may well be misleading or even false. Such situations can create further anxiety and stress and it is therefore very important that you look after your:

- **Physical health** by following good hygiene routines and taking exercise.
- **Mental wellbeing** by caring for your emotional self.

We would like to reiterate to you some helpful guidance that has been supplied by our partner agency Inspire Students (Counselling Service provider) to help you stay well:

1. Connect with others around you

Establish relationships with others (friends, family and colleagues) and build positive thoughts by connecting through text, e-mail, and phone calls. It is however important that you follow current government advice on social distancing.

2. Be active

Exercise will improve your physical health by making you feel good and it is also important to keep your mind active as well - physical and mental exercise are both important.

3. Pay attention

Try to look beyond the social media and the news feeds and focus on the more pleasant aspects of everyday life, your friends, family, hobbies, and other things around you.

4. Focus on facts

It is important to stay up-to-date with current events but make sure you base your actions and thoughts on facts, not emotions.

Be cautious of social media and the influence it can have upon you. If you find that the materials upset you then you might want to make use of the ‘off’ switch. Factual information can be viewed at [NHS guidance](#) and this is constantly updated.

5. Be Kind

At times like these it is natural for everyone to feel anxious and nervous. It is also very important to think about others around you, for example, those who are more vulnerable and lonely; can you do something to help someone else?

St Patrick's Day

I would like to remind you to be very careful over the St Patrick's day holiday period. It is important that you fully respect



current Covid regulations and restrictions around social gatherings both indoors and outdoors. Please remember that any student who breaches Covid regulations is liable to receive a COV4 penalty notice from the PSNI, and in addition face disciplinary action from the University College.

Covid - A Quick Reminder

If you think you have COVID-19

- If you think you have COVID-19 symptoms, **you and everyone you live with must stay in your place of residence in line with [guidance from the Public Health Agency](#)**.
- **You must update the University College via the Security number (078 5071 2556) and should arrange a test for COVID-19 [here](#)**.
- If you are on-campus when you begin to develop symptoms, please put on a face covering and contact Security (07850712556) immediately.

If you test positive for COVID-19

- If you have tested positive for COVID-

19, you should immediately:

- Stay at your place of residence along with any other members of your household for the period of time set out in current [guidance from the Public Health Agency](#).
- Update the information on your **StopCOVID NI** app.
- Contact Security using our **telephone line (078 5071 2556)** immediately to notify us.

If you have been notified that you are a contact of a confirmed case

- Students who have been notified through the StopCOVID NI

app or PHA contact tracing service that they are a contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 should email covidcases@stran.ac.uk

- You should immediately self-isolate at home and follow all [guidance from the Public Health Agency](#).

Guidance and information

- It is important that you follow all guidance provided by the [Public Health Agency](#).
- Your wellbeing is the University College's first priority. **Please do not let any concerns about your work or studies stop you following this advice.**

Asymptomatic Covid-19 Testing Update

The College has been working very closely with the Queen's University (QUB) to offer asymptomatic testing to Stranmillis students and I am pleased to announce that this arrangement has now been extended – so testing is still available! Asymptomatic testing is conducted to screen for Covid-19 in those who do not display Covid-like symptoms. The test is completed using a Lateral Flow Device (LFD), which will give you a rapid result. This is yet another way in which the College is seeking to ensure that the Stranmillis campus remains a safe place to live, work and study.

We **would strongly encourage** all students to arrange an asymptomatic test before returning to campus or embarking on placement. You can do this by [booking online here](#) at a date and time that suits you. You will be asked to attend the Whitla Hall on QUB Main Campus to undertake the test. You will be required to have two tests no less than three days apart. For more information on the testing procedure please see [Asymptomatic Testing Programme](#).

Please note, if you should, at any stage, develop any of the key Covid symptoms it is essential that you immediately self-isolate and [book a full Covid test test](#).