

Working together to stay safe – a message from Leeds’ higher education leaders, students’ union leaders and the city council

During September, we warmly welcome students back to Leeds and together look forward to the start of the new academic year.

This year, we understand there may be concerns about the impact on the safety of our communities. Together with Leeds City Council, the police, hospital trusts, community groups and other partners, we are working to ensure the wider community is supported when it comes to staying safe.

We are proud of the long-standing and positive relationships we have forged with our local communities. Universities and colleges are important to the local area, boosting employment and spending. Their social and cultural influence places them at the heart of the community.

A huge amount of work has been undertaken to make campuses welcoming and covid-secure, and to ensure our students and staff understand what we must all do to keep each other and our neighbours safe.

More than ever, it is crucial that we all protect and share responsibility for the communities we all work and live in – and that we respect, support and show consideration for one another.

This includes not organising or attending gatherings which break laws and Government social distancing guidelines, and showing kindness and support for everyone who is vulnerable or needing to self-isolate.

We all take reports about anyone organising or attending illegal house parties very seriously and make students aware of the potential sanctions they could receive, which include police fines and disciplinary action.

Anyone with concerns about behaviour in their neighbourhood can contact the [Neighbourhood Helpline](#) (via web, email or 0113 3431064), which is operated by the city’s universities, in partnership with the city council and police.

The higher education providers have established guidelines to help keep each other safe. These include encouraging regular handwashing and using newly-installed hand sanitisation stations, wearing face coverings where required and maintaining a safe distance from each other on and off campuses. Students and staff are advised to remain at home if they feel unwell – booking a test if appropriate and following official guidance.

Some students arriving from outside the UK will need to self-isolate when they arrive. They can get support with food and essential supplies from their respective institution to help them during this period.

We are also introducing a wide range of measures related directly to learning and teaching to reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission, including delivering large lectures and teaching online, limiting room capacities, enhanced cleaning on campuses and asking staff to work from home whenever possible.

Finally, the University of Leeds also hosts a COVID-19 testing centre to support the NHS Test and Trace service. This is currently open to everyone experiencing symptoms and needing to [book a test](#), whether they are staff, students or members of the public.

Please rest assured that we are all committed to doing everything we can to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for everyone in our communities throughout these difficult times.

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