

Dear Dan, Amy, Sophie, Emma, Tom and Gavin

Thank you to each of you, and to the Students' Association and Athletic Union, for the work you have done on this survey, the analysis of the results, and the very clear presentation of the findings.

Through you, we would also like to thank every student who has taken part. Each of you is helping to make St Andrews safer, more welcoming and supportive.

This survey offers hugely helpful and pragmatic feedback which will allow us to shape our response to Covid more effectively.

We will address each of your key recommendations in turn to outline what we are already doing, and what changes we will action or consider as a result of your survey findings. We hope you and the students you surveyed find this a helpful and transparent way of responding.

- **Providing queue markers outside every teaching space for the same number of people as room capacity** would help ensure that social distancing is observed outside of teaching spaces as well as within them.

Our current advice to students is to arrive at the classroom no earlier than 5 minutes before the class begins. This is to give the preceding class time to leave, and to specifically avoid queuing and mixing in corridors. These arrangements were put in place on the recommendation of our health and safety experts. There is also already extensive signage in buildings, and we want to be careful not to overdo it and risk people becoming desensitised. We will however look at this again to consider whether improvements can be made to the current signage, and if physical distancing issues are arising.

- **Clear communication on what Covid safety protocols are in place for different environments (including the regularity of cleaning, use of PPE, ventilation, and equipment sharing) and making risk assessments available online** would help to reassure students about measures already in place, and allow them to decide with confidence whether they want to enter these spaces.

We know that students have been presented with a huge amount of information in the lead up to this semester and through the first weeks of teaching, that it can be confusing sometimes, and that advice and guidance sometimes has to change as Government policy changes. We'll review how we're making key information available for the use of teaching and living spaces. The amount of cleaning we deliver has been enhanced and additional cleaning materials are now available in teaching spaces. Heating and Ventilation systems have all been adapted following a detailed review and meet Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers guidance. All of these [measures](#) were put in place with an extensive and comprehensive programme of risk assessments, carried out by trained and experienced staff.

- **Clarifying the reporting mechanisms for students and staff to flag breaches of Covid safety protocols** would help make sure that our spaces remain safe and any issues can be quickly resolved.

There are a number of routes by which students and staff can flag breaches of Covid safety protocols or areas where, for example, additional cleaning materials are required. These details are;

- For breaches of Covid safety – discipline@st-andrews.ac.uk

- For cleaning materials in teaching spaces – estcovidsup@st-andrews.ac.uk
- For issues in residences – residences@st-andrews.ac.uk

We shall later this Semester be introducing a Report and Support tool which will have a specific button for reporting Covid breaches.

- **Providing contactless methods of completing Track and Trace** such as a QR code for those with compatible devices or a verbal register of attendance would avoid sharing pens and crowding in the entrances to teaching spaces.

This is being introduced. Teaching spaces will have clear signage with QR codes on desks to allow students and staff to simply record their presence via student mobile phones. These have been tested using both Android and Apple phones. We expect the roll out of this to be complete by 16 October 2020

- **Opening up the teaching estate to make empty rooms available for individual and group study** when not formally being used for teaching would allow for students to study and attend online classes in between teaching in-person. This would also give students options on where to work if they struggle to work at home.

As part of the 'Can Do' initiative, we will shortly be re-launching the FindSpace app which will open up the teaching estate and enable students to see which rooms are free to use to study. They are all risk assessed and compliant with current government regulations and while not bookable, this will open up a large number of spaces to study in, when teaching is not taking place in these spaces. Information on the library managed bookable and drop in spaces also can be found [here](#).

- **The option to study online should be made clearly available to all students that may wish to engage in this way for any reason.** The University has already taken steps to revise its Remote Study Policy, but greater clarity is needed on how students can opt to engage with their studies online where they would prefer to.

Thank you for this opportunity to clarify the option to study online. The remote study [policy](#) has indeed been revised and all students have received an [e-mail](#) extending the current option to study online for the rest of the academic year. To request permission to study online you can click on the link for [MySaint](#), and the task is available in the Personal Details tab. When you request to study online, we ask your main reason for administrative purposes only and we strongly advise that students in the Faculty of Science contact their Adviser of Studies before making the request. Students on the ScotGem or BSc Hons Medicine programmes are not able to study online from ILW. Students who are temporarily studying online due to self-isolation are asked to notify their module organisers and complete a self-certificate. Only students who are not planning to engage in person for the rest of the semester or year are asked to complete this process. Many students have already had their application to study online approved in this way.

Thank you again for this very constructive approach and the suggestions and requests which have emerged from the survey. Although these are difficult and unsettled times, our aim is to constantly adapt and improve the living and teaching environment in St Andrews, and we can do that most effectively by having regular input like this from the student community.

Please do not hesitate to contact us again if there is anything you feel we have not addressed sufficiently here.

With very best wishes

Professor Sally Mapstone FRSE
Principal and Vice-Chancellor.

Professor Clare Peddie
Vice Principal Education