

Dear Professor Mapstone and Professor Peddie,

We are writing to share with you the results of the student consultation we ran on the University's plans to reintroduce in-person teaching in a phased manner throughout the first half of this semester. In just under a week, over 5,000 St Andrews students completed the survey which is unprecedented for an exercise of this kind, showing just how strongly students wish to share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas right now. We hope you will consider them carefully as you make decisions in the coming weeks.

As student representatives we value the way in which we have been included throughout the planning for this semester, and we think this work is well reflected in things like the "Can Do" initiative and the practical support for students in isolation. However, we felt that this issue required the gathering of a broader range of opinions to make sure the voices of all students are heard.

In response to the survey, a majority of students expressed their desire to have at least some in-person teaching this semester and overwhelmingly, those who had experienced in-person teaching, often in labs, reported feeling safe in those environments. Many students are pleased that the University has decided to teach in-person where it can be done safely and would not want to see the entirety of their learning moved online.

What is important to recognise however is that this survey demonstrates that these feelings are not universally held among the student body. Many students feel that the speed of reintroduction of teaching is coming too quickly and others too slowly. Some have deep concerns about returning to classes in-person at all and others feel that the return to campus should be much more widespread than it is at present.

For this reason, having carefully reviewed the data from this report and the written comments and suggestions of students, we are asking that you consider taking a number of steps to ensure that where students engage in teaching on campus it is as safe as possible and to allow students to make informed decisions about the risks they may or may not wish to take.

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

- **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.

We feel that by taking these steps, we can help ensure that the widest possible range of student feeling is catered for and that nobody is forced into a situation that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. We understand that not all of these measures are simple or quick to implement, but we hope that you will give them your consideration as they represent a significant proportion of the views expressed by the student body.

Best wishes,

Amy Gallacher	Director of Education
Dan Marshall	Association President
Emma Walsh	Director of Wellbeing
Sophie Tyler	Athletic Union President
Tom Groves	Director of Events and Services
Gavin Sandford	Director of Student Development and Activities