

Student life in the time of COVID

Protect yourself, your university and the wider community - remember 'Hands. Face. Space'.

[Wash your hands regularly](#)

[Wear a face covering](#) where rules apply

[Keep a 2m distance](#)

Socialise only with your 'household' or maximum of 6

[Get a test](#) and [self-isolate](#) if you develop symptoms

Use the NHS Test and Trace app

Whether you're a fresher, returning student or a postgrad, you'll no doubt have lots of questions or concerns about how the COVID-19 pandemic will impact your student life. As a responsible adult possibly moving into a new town, you'll need to know what actions you should take - to keep yourself safe but also fellow students, university staff and the local community, as well as your family and friends when you visit home again. This summarises the important public health advice and information to remind you of what you need to know before the university term starts.

Moving to your university home

Check to see which [areas have additional restrictions in place](#) – you could be moving from a low risk area to a higher risk area and there might be extra measures you'll need to follow. Your university will also be able to give you guidance on their rules and those for the area. It's also a good idea to get up to speed on the overall advice on [staying safe outside your home](#). Both international travel and local restrictions can change quickly and without much warning so it's worth keeping an eye on the latest guidance; visit [Bath & North East Somerset Council's website](#) and sign-up to receive email updates via the [e-connect newsletter](#).

Public health basics: a revision session

You've probably been looking forward to getting back to university, your friends and freedom, or discovering it all for the first time, but it's essential to keep the public health basics front of mind and always remember 'Hands. Face. Space'.

It remains vital that we all continue to [wash our hands](#) regularly for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser. Try not to touch your face and remember respiratory hygiene lessons from school – 'catch it, bin it, kill it!' [Keep your distance](#) – 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household. Your 'household' will consist of your housemates or flatmates that you share your student home with or if you are living in university halls your university will let you know what makes up your household.

Follow the rules set out by your university on wearing face coverings in lectures and other teaching situations. In other university settings, you should [wear a face covering](#) where it's difficult to maintain a 2 metre distance, such as in corridors and communal areas and in social groups such as student clubs and societies.

To stay safe while travelling try to avoid car sharing and using public transport at peak times. Walk or cycle when it's possible and safe to do so. These basics will help protect you, university life and local residents, especially those that are more vulnerable. If you're a student in the [clinically extremely vulnerable group](#), having previously been shielding, and you have a particular health concern you should seek medical advice or speak to your university.

Safer socialising – max of 6 keeping a 2m distance

When moving into your student accommodation with others you will be forming a new household which will be a key part of how you will be able to socialise. There are still opportunities to meet new people outside your household and socialise safely at university but remember to keep a 2-metre distance.

Also keep yourself and your friends safe by following the guidance on [how many people you can safely meet with in different social situations](#) – currently a maximum of 6 people indoors and outdoors, whether in a beer garden, bar, restaurant or cinema etc. Go out, socialise and enjoy student life but be responsible.

By following this guidance, hand-in-hand with the public health basics set out above, you'll keep on track with your social life and, as far as possible, avoid getting coronavirus and having to self-isolate.

What to do if you need to self-isolate

If you test positive for coronavirus while at university, the rules on self-isolation remain the same. You must self-isolate for 10 days. That means staying at your university accommodation and avoiding contact with other people as much as possible, including those you live with.

If you share a student house then your housemates should self-isolate for 14 days starting from the day you became ill. If anyone in your household becomes unwell during the 14-day period they should get tested for COVID-19. If their test is positive they'll need to self-isolate for 10 days from when their symptoms started but if their test result is negative they should continue to self-isolate for the 14-day period.

If you're living in university accommodation where someone in your 'household' (as set out by the accommodation management team) has symptoms of coronavirus or tests positive you must let the management team know.

Whichever type of accommodation you live in, you should also tell your university and course leader or tutor, so they can offer any extra support you might need. Your other close contacts that will be informed by NHS Test and Trace if they should [self-isolate](#).

NHS Test and Trace

Many returning students will have a new address after moving from halls of residence into private student housing, so it's a good idea to make sure the university has your latest personal details to ensure the [NHS Test and Trace](#) can get in touch if they need to.

If you or anyone you've had close contact with test positive for coronavirus, you'll be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and asked to self-isolate. If you are contacted, you will be asked to provide them with information they'll need to help stop the spread of the virus.

The NHS Test and Trace app is part of the national effort to get us back doing the things we love and every person who downloads the app will be helping in the fight against coronavirus. The app will help you to report symptoms, order a coronavirus test, check in to venues by scanning a QR code and help the NHS trace those who may have coronavirus. The app will do all this while protecting your identity and data security. The app will be available shortly so do the right thing and download it and encourage your student household and friends to do likewise.

Got symptoms – get a test

Make sure you are clear about the symptoms of coronavirus and when you should get a test. You can book a test on line at GOV.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by phoning NHS 119. If you have any of the following symptoms you should get a test:

a high temperature / a new, continuous cough / a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

Be mindful of your mental health

Recent months haven't been fun or easy for anyone - not least of all students. The new online resource at [Student Space](#) has a variety of useful mental health and wellbeing materials that can support you. Public Health England has also published general [guidance on mental health and wellbeing](#) during COVID-19.

Your role is crucial

Young people play a crucial role in preventing the spread of coronavirus to protect those at much greater risk. By following the guidance on washing your hands; keeping your distance; not socialising with more than 6 people; wearing a face covering; using the NHS Test and Trace app, self-isolating and getting a test if you have symptoms you are helping to save lives. Respecting the rules will keep you, your friends and family healthy, and your university town a safe and enjoyable place to live.