



College life: a guide for students

Updated: January 2021

Introduction

As of 6 January 2021, England is in national lockdown because the number of COVID-19 cases is rising rapidly across the country.

The guidelines below are subject to change in accordance with government rules and advice. We will update these guidelines when required and will keep you informed of any changes via email and other appropriate communications channels.

Accommodation and households

What constitutes a household?

In a College context, a household is defined as those people with whom you share a bathroom, kitchen or toilet facilities.

Do I have to social distance/wear a face mask within my household?

You are not required to wear a face mask in your household but we do encourage all students to maintain social distancing, wash their hands regularly, clean surfaces after use and take other sensible precautions to limit the spread of COVID-19.

In addition, it's important to remember that on occasion, you will have to pass through other households in order to move around College. Wearing a face mask in all corridors is a courtesy and good practice.

Do I have to clean my own room and shared facilities?

- Students are expected to clean their own rooms and en suite bathrooms in order to minimise risk to both students and staff. En suite bathrooms will be inspected in the middle of the Term (advance notice will be given).
- Kitchens and other shared facilities will be cleaned on an occupancy basis:
 - Where there are one or two students in a household, housekeeping staff will clean once a week;
 - where there are three in a household, cleaning will take place twice a week;
 - where there are four to five students in a household, cleaning will take place three times a week;
 - and where there are six to eight students in a household, cleaning will take place daily.
- Hand contact areas in College will be cleaned three times a day, seven days a week.
- All communal and shared spaces in the Colleges houses will be cleaned five days a week.



Public spaces in College

Do I have to social distance/wear a face mask around College?

When moving around the public spaces in College, please wear a face mask unless you are exempt from doing so. Public spaces include: the Porters' Lodge, the Dome, corridors (including those in accommodation areas) and walkways.

You do not have to wear a face mask in the College gardens or in the marquees but please remember to maintain social distancing at all times.

Is hand sanitiser available in College?

You are encouraged to use hand sanitiser, and there are contactless sanitiser dispensers at the entrances to main buildings. However, hand sanitiser is not a replacement for thorough and regular handwashing.

Can I move around College freely?

You may move around College freely but please follow the routes and movement advice signposted around College.

What communal spaces can I use in College?

- **Meeting up with friends from other households within College**
From 6 January 2021, you are individually allowed to meet up with one person at a time from another household but only to exercise in a public outdoor space. You cannot meet with someone else in any other social setting. Unfortunately this means you cannot meet friends from other College households in the marquees, the bar, the Dome, the JCR or the MCR.
- **Socialising with members of your College household**
You can continue to socialise with your housemates in your accommodation areas. You can also continue to meet them in the marquees and the College gardens.

Is the MCR open?

In order to comply with government rules, the MCR will be closed until further notice.

I am a Murray Edwards student but I live in private accommodation, can I still visit College?

At present, students living in private accommodation are not permitted to visit the College or make use of the facilities (apart from to collect post). We hope to be able to change this rule once the pooled Asymptomatic Testing Programme resumes.



University card

Do I have to keep my University card on me at all times?

Yes. All students should carry their University card with them at all times. Your card does not need to be on display (i.e. you do not need to wear it on a lanyard) but you should be prepared to show it on request when entering College(s), Faculties, Departments, Libraries or other University buildings.

Catering

Is the Dome open?

The Dome will continue to offer a takeaway service. Please visit the [College website](#) for more information.

Supervisions/teaching

Where are supervisions and lectures taking place in Lent Term?

All supervisions and lectures will take place online until further notice. If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with your supervisor/DoS or Tutor.

College Library

Is the College Library open this Term?

For information about using the College Library this Term, please visit the Library pages on the [College website](#).

Social activities

Will there be any College-led social activities this Term?

Yes! Due to the restrictions in place, the majority of social activities will be online but we already have lots of ideas for fun activities that you and your household can take part in over the course of Lent Term.

Sports and fitness

Is the College gym open and can I use the tennis courts?

In accordance with government guidelines, the College gym will remain closed and the tennis courts are no longer available for use.



Visitors

Can friends from other households in College visit me in my room?

In order to comply with the rules of the national lockdown, you are not permitted to socialise across households within College accommodation.

Can friends from other Colleges visit me in my room?

We had hoped by now we would be in a position to allow you to have friends and partners from other Colleges into your rooms. We know how much this would mean to you. However, the new national lockdown rules do not permit individuals from two separate households to socialise indoors and they may only socialise in a public outdoor space for the purpose of exercise.

Can I socialise with friends from other households (including from other Colleges) anywhere in College?

The restrictions associated with the national lockdown mean that you cannot meet socially with friends unless they are part of your household. You can meet with one other person at a time from another household but only to exercise in a public outdoor space. You cannot meet with someone else in any other social setting.

From a College perspective, lockdown restrictions mean that you will still be able to use the marquees and sit in the gardens with members of your household but you will not be able to socialise with friends from other households in these areas.

The College will be closed to all non-members and students living in private accommodation until further notice.

Can I have guests from outside Cambridge visit me in College?

In accordance with government guidelines, we are not allowing visitors into the College until further notice.

Can I visit friends or family outside Cambridge?

In accordance with government guidelines, students in College accommodation will have to stay in Cambridge for the duration of the national lockdown. If there are exceptional reasons for you to return home during this period, please discuss these with your Tutor in advance.

Testing

Is the Asymptomatic Testing Programme running in Lent Term?

Yes. The Asymptomatic Testing Programme will continue to run throughout Lent Term. The College's pooled testing day for students in College accommodation is Wednesday. The first pooled test will take place on Wednesday 20 January.

Students living in private accommodation are also eligible to take part in the programme, and will be screened every Monday.



For further details, please visit the [#StaySafeCambridgeUni webpages](#).

Please also check your email regularly for College communications about the Asymptomatic Testing Programme.

Feeling unwell

What should I do if I have COVID-19 symptoms?

Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever
- Cough
- A loss or a change of your usual sense of smell/taste

If you develop one or more of these symptoms, you and all other members of your household must self-isolate in accordance with [NHS guidance](#).

You must email or call the Porters' Lodge if you believe you have symptoms of COVID-19 – **do not go along in person**.

Please then follow the steps outlined on the [#StaySafeCambridgeUni webpages](#).

What happens if I test positive for COVID-19?

If you test positive, you will be contacted by the team that performed the test (University or NHS as applicable) and you will be instructed about how long to self-isolate for. Current requirements are that anyone testing positive must self-isolate in their accommodation for 10 days from the onset of symptoms. Everyone in your household group will also be required to self-isolate for 10 days from that same date.

If you test positive, you will have to self-isolate in your bedroom and the College will provide you with the support to do so. Please refer to the College's 'Key Information for students in self-isolation' document for further information.

Please also ensure that you are familiar with [government advice on when to self-isolate or household isolate](#).

Can I catch COVID-19 twice?

If you get symptoms of COVID-19 again, you must self-isolate immediately and get a test.

You should also self-isolate again if someone in your household develops symptoms.

You must self-isolate again even if you have tested positive for COVID-19 before. You probably have some immunity to coronavirus but it is not currently clear how long it lasts, and there is no guarantee that you will not contract COVID-19 again.



Murray Edwards College

University of Cambridge

Behaviour outside College

Do I have to adhere to these guidelines outside of College?

These guidelines are specific to Murray Edwards College. However, many of the principles and requirements will be similar elsewhere within the University. All students are expected to adhere to the guidelines or rules outlined by individual Colleges, and Faculties and Departments while they are in their grounds or buildings.

Summary

We know this is a really tough time but the guidelines in place are there to protect all of us and to ensure that we adhere to rules of the national lockdown.

The good news is that this strange situation isn't permanent and more importantly, you're not alone. If you need some support, academically or otherwise, please get in touch with your Tutor, DoS, the Deputy Senior Tutor or the Senior Tutor. You can also find helpful information about available welfare support during the lockdown on the [UCS website](#).