

## MPLS PGR Covid-19 Update 27/3/20

To: MPLS PGR Students, MPLS PGR Supervisors

Here is the latest update on MPLS Divisional activity and advice to PGR students during the Covid-19 public health emergency.

**Stipends for students funded through departments will continue to be paid.** Departments and supervisors are engaging with external funders, including industrial partners to try to ensure payments continue for all students. We are discussing what provision can be made for self-funded students.

We are aware that there are lots of concerns about **stipend extensions**, particularly for students who are nearing the end of their funded period. We are not able to provide any guarantees, but we are working on this and expect to be able to provide further information in due course.

**[ACTION]** Please continue to **keep in regular contact with your supervisor** and **keep a log** of anything that disrupts your studies. If you didn't receive the log template on Friday/Monday, please contact your departmental graduate studies administrator who should be able to provide you with a copy.

**[ACTION]** In order to help us to support you, please log on to student self service to ensure that **your current address, phone number and an alternative email address are up to date.**

For the duration of the current crisis, **DGSs can authorise remote vivas** for transfer, confirmation and final DPhil examination. There are some protocols to follow for this to ensure the viva is carried out successfully. We are working on improving the clarity of this to circulate shortly.

For **remote working** and vivas the University's preferred platform is Microsoft Teams. While there are many other platforms, the University isn't able to provide IT support for these facilities. Microsoft Teams has been assessed by the University's IT Services to ensure that data is held securely and in accordance with GDPR. Check the IT Services [Remote Working](#) pages for more information.

**If you are a Tier 4 visa holder** then maintaining regular contact by email or online conferencing with your supervisor will help the University to complete information required to maintain your visa status.

Graduate School Committee met again on the afternoon of 25<sup>th</sup> March to discuss issues relating to PGRs. Student representatives attend that meeting and we are in contact with them between times.

We are setting up a **website to archive these communications** and provide links to key documents (such as the log template). We'll let you know the URL for this shortly.

You should have received an email via your college relating to **student welfare**. The University also provides various [student welfare services](#). There is some additional information on student welfare on the University's main coronavirus page (link below).

If you are experiencing acute financial hardship (i.e. you are struggling to pay for essentials such as housing and food), please consult the University's [hardship funding](#) pages for advice.

For other information, the University's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): advice and updates](#) page is an important source of information and is updated frequently.

I hope that you are keeping well and staying safe. We'll be in touch again soon.

Best wishes,  
Mike

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