

## Special Bulletin from the President –12<sup>th</sup> March 2020



University College Dublin  
An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

*President's Bulletin*  
Professor Andrew Deeks

Dear Colleagues,

As I indicated to you in my bulletin on Tuesday, the ELG and the UMT were to meet tomorrow to discuss options for teaching modes to be adopted after the mid-trimester break finishes on March 23. The Taoiseach's announcement earlier today indicating that physical classes will not be held in universities between March 13 and March 29 has pre-empted those discussions and limited the options available. Having considered the situation carefully, the UMT has made the following decisions.

Our underlying principle is that university operations will continue to the greatest extent possible, while protecting the health and well-being of our students and employees.

To ensure that our students continue their learning journeys with minimum disruption, from March 23 through to the end of the academic year we will be adopting an at-distance teaching and learning model. We will continue to programme teaching activities for each module in a timetable as usual, and academics and tutors will continue to interact with their students in line with this timetable to the greatest extent possible, but through electronic means. Some lectures will be podcasted, but opportunities for students to interact with each other and their lecturers remotely will be maintained. Tutorials and group work will be mediated through on-line chat rooms and video services. In most cases (except for a small number of clinical programmes) all assessment, including final exams, will take place at distance. I ask that each academic now works through how they can best achieve these principles in their teaching.

In line with the Taoiseach's call, employees who can effectively work from home should do that as of tomorrow. Meetings will be arranged through Zoom or other video-conferencing software, and regular meeting timetables should be maintained to the greatest extent possible. The campus will remain operational for those whose jobs or research require them to be physically present on site. All schools and units will now move to implement their contingency plans for this scenario. From a public

health perspective, with most of the students absent and with many employees working from home, the campus will be a safe working environment.

The library and student centre will remain open, although limits will be placed on the number of people present in the spaces and appropriate protocols put in place. Some buildings will remain open as usual and some will operate access control as happens currently at weekends. Catering provision will continue, although also at a reduced level. Further details will be provided in due course.

All overseas travel is suspended until further notice.

UMT will be meeting (at distance) each morning to review the situation and to address issues as they arise.

These circumstances are unprecedented, and I look forward to your support as we rise to this challenge together. I will be in touch over the coming days with further details.

Kind regards,

Andrew

Professor Andrew J Deeks

President

University College Dublin

E: [president@ucd.ie](mailto:president@ucd.ie)