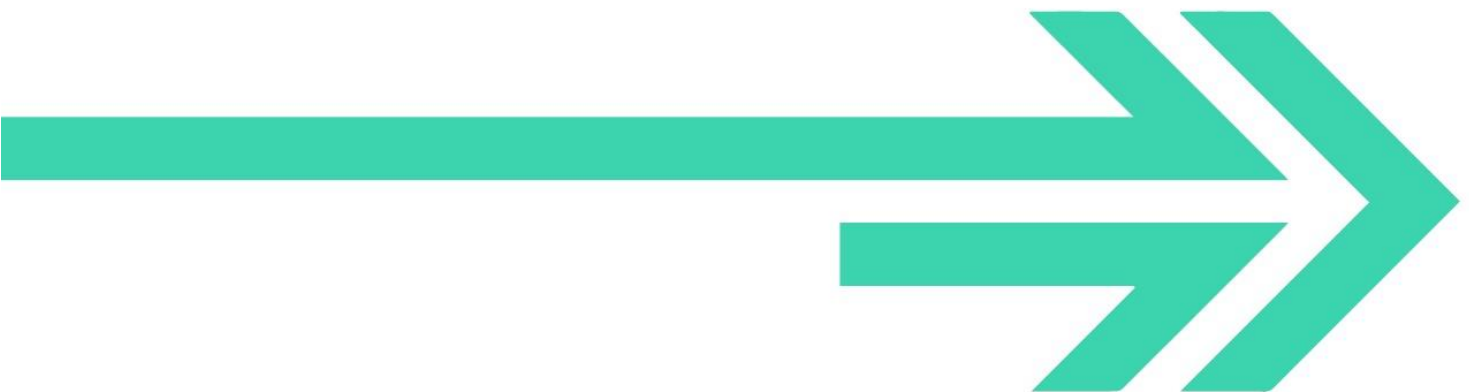




STUDENT HANDBOOK:

Advice and guidance on learning and interacting with QA Higher Education remotely



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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DEAN



Hello everyone

A very warm welcome to all of our new students, domestic and international and to our returning learners at different stages in their courses. I hope that you and your family and friends have all remained safe and well.

It is hugely positive to see that the UK government has started a programme of vaccination. However, this doesn't mean that Coronavirus has instantly gone away or that we can relax our approach just yet. Restrictions are still in place and are likely to be so for a while. We still need to observe sensible precautions like social distancing, wearing a face covering where required and taking extra care to wash our hands regularly and thoroughly.

Extra care needs to be taken when using public transport and it is important to be mindful of any updated government advice on safety precautions and any advice on where not to travel to.

To help protect your health and the health of our staff we have taken the decision to continue delivering our programmes live online. This also means that whatever may happen over the next semester we are then in a position to ensure the continuity of your education. Our plan is to supplement the live online tuition with opportunities to take part in optional face-to-face support sessions on campus.

We continue to follow all government guidance regarding the opening of our campus buildings for use. When our campuses are open for use, you will need to book a place 24 hours in advance of coming in so we can maintain safe numbers in our buildings. You will be able to do this through our online booking tool.

Some of you will have been on campus pre-Covid. For others it may be the first time of visiting. Either way our campuses have undergone a number of significant changes to ensure social distancing can be maintained.

We have produced a separate guide on using our campuses and a copy of it can be found [here](#).

Please take time to read this as it contains lots of useful information both on how to use our buildings as well as what to do if you feel ill and need to be tested.

One thing that hasn't changed though is the friendly teaching and professional support staff at QA Higher Education who are available to support you both face-to-face on campus and online. While learning online can feel different to what you are used to there is no reason why you cannot achieve your full potential with us over the next few months.

If you are an international student travelling to the UK you will have been receiving additional information on what to do when you arrive, particularly if you are required to self-isolate on arrival. You should also be receiving information on additional support available to you from us if you are in this position. Even if you have to stay in your accommodation for a period of time you will be able to study online until it is appropriate for you to go out.



I know the desire on arrival is to explore your new environment but it is essential that you follow any instructions you have been given on self-isolation and do not go out until it is appropriate to do so. The information you will have been receiving tells you how to contact us if you are uncertain on what to do on arrival or if you are experiencing difficulties while self-isolating.

You should be aware that anyone in the UK, resident or international visitor, can be fined for failing to self-isolate when required to do so. This would not be the best start to your studies with us so please be mindful of this and be sensible.

If you are an international student initially studying at home with a view to joining us in the UK at some point during your programme, please remember that you are very much a part of our community of learners and that you are able to access all of the services outlined in this handbook. We will also be contacting you to let you know of additional support available to you while you are studying from your home country. We look forward to welcoming you in person when you arrive in the UK.

This handbook tells you about our way of working online and what to expect and, just as importantly, how to contact our different teams if you need support.

If you are a new student or a returning student that has not yet studied online with us you should take time to read the whole of the guide. If you have already experienced online learning with us you should also read it as it has been updated from the version that came out in October last year.

This document contains lots of important information about your studies and how to work with us so it is really important you take time to read it and keep a copy to hand, it is also available online at qahighereducation.com/online-learning-support

Best wishes

Dr Tim Harris

Executive Dean QA Higher Education

Phone: 020 76568404

Email: Tim.Harris@qa.com



GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

Communications about things that affect students as a whole will be sent to you in the following ways:

- a. Via email to your University email account – please check this regularly
- b. Posted on the [QA Higher Education website](#)
- c. Text alerts to the mobile telephone number you have provided

If your contact information has changed please email Student Services using the contact information provided in this document.

Your programme handbooks provide you with details of how to contact staff remotely by email or telephone.

Any **additional** ways of contacting us put in place because of Covid-19 will be shown in the relevant sections of this handbook.

University email guidance

It is important that you are regularly checking your University email account for updates, and to access your online classes. To protect your privacy and personal details we cannot use personal email addresses with the new online delivery system.

Guidance on how to access your University email account, to add your account to other devices, and access Office 365 can be found by at: qahighereducation.com/online-learning-support

How do I know when the campus is open or closed?

We continue to follow government guidance regarding campus openings.

You can check the status of the campus from the link below which will be updated with the latest information, including opening hours.

qahighereducation.com/covid19/

If we have to close a campus at short notice, in addition to updating our Covid-19 page online we will also contact any students booked in to visit the campus, via email and text alert. Please make sure you regularly check your university email.

Will I have a different timetable?

Timetables are available via the 'Semestry' application. You will receive a link and password details. The system allows you to view all timetabled activities for the coming semester. A 'How to' guide has been produced to help you access the system and understand your timetable. You can access this online [here](#).



How will I know when to go online?

The times of your sessions will be detailed on your timetable, along with the unique passcode for each session. It is essential that you check your Semestry account regularly.

What if I have problems when I try to join my online sessions?

Please refer to the How to guide which includes contact details if you are experiencing any difficulties joining your sessions.



LEARNING AND TEACHING

To help ensure you remain healthy and well and to prevent disruption to your studies in the event of local restriction being put in place we are going to be delivering your programme online during this Spring semester with some opportunities for optional support sessions face-to-face on campus.

We will be using two systems to do this:

- 1) WebEx – this is a system that allows you to see your tutor's slides, see and listen to them teaching, as well as interact by asking questions either in text form or by voice. The system also allows the tutor to break you into smaller groups, just like in a seminar.
- 2) A separate online system that allows you to log into a computer remotely to replace sessions where you would normally have had access to classroom-based computers on campus. You will be sent information on how to access this if you need to use it.

As University students you all have access to **Microsoft Office 365** which will give you access to Word, Excel and PowerPoint. If you don't already have access, the link below will give you instructions on how to activate your free licence:

library.qahighereducation.com/guides/office365

To help support you with this move to online learning we have created a new team to support you. If you are having problems or need help please contact:

Email: QAHEOnlineLearning@qa.com

Phone: 0345 074 7958

You will receive some advice and training on how to use the system in the form of a handy how to guide as well as some useful videos.

These systems are very accessible and can be viewed on laptops, PCs, smartphones and tablets.

If you need help in using the systems you can contact the following for support:

Email: QAHEOnlineLearning@qa.com

There is also an online FAQ page here as well as copies of how to guides:

qahighereducation.com/online-learning-support

Will I still need my VLE access?

All students will have access to a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) specific to their University partner. If you are a returning student you should already have access and if you are a new student, access to the VLE will be provided shortly after you start your



course and your programme teaching team will be able to keep you up to date on when you will get access.

Access to your VLE (Moodle or Blackboard depending on your University) is really important as all of the materials you will need are stored there. A lot of what we do online will also be recorded and put on your VLE so you can go back and refer to it in future.

Who should I contact if I have problems accessing my VLE?

If you are having problems accessing your VLE, in the first instance please contact the Library Team at library@qa.com, who will be able to determine whether your access issue requires referral to your University Partner VLE support team.

University VLE Support

University	Support
London Metropolitan University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• student.londonmet.ac.uk/it-resources/it-help-and-support/
Middlesex University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• unihub.mdx.ac.uk/support/unihelp
Solent University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• learn.solent.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14720
Ulster University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service desk: www.ulster.ac.uk/isd/getting-help/service-desk• Phone: 028 9036 6777• Email: servicedesk@ulster.ac.uk
University of Roehampton	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• http://roehamptonlearning.com/eLearningServices/?page_id=4324

Information on assessment and assessment changes

As you know different modules are assessed in different ways and you may be wondering about the impact of the switch to online delivery and the wider impact of Covid-19 might have on your end of module assessments.

All of our programme management teams have reviewed the assessments for forthcoming modules and are working with their respective University counterparts to identify where the assessment regime needs to be changed to reflect current remote working and Covid-19 related issues. We will keep you up-to-date with any changes in the format of assessment as well as the dates by which work has to be submitted. The best source of this information is the relevant module page on your University's VLE though the academic team will also be able to tell you key dates.



We will not be asking you to do face-to-face exams at this point as this would require you to come in numbers that would not allow social distancing to be maintained.

We are working hard to make sure than nobody is disadvantaged by these changes and that your progression between semesters or years is not delayed.

Information for dissertation students

Some of you will be about to start your dissertation this semester. Under current ways of working you will be supervised remotely using a combination of email, phone calls and online face-to-face meetings using Microsoft Teams. To date, several hundred students have been successfully supervised online and you will be able to agree with your supervisor a pattern and method of contact that works best for you.

If you are due to start a dissertation this semester you will be contacted by your supervisor at or just after the start of your semester. We will also provide you with their contact details.

It is important that once your supervisor has been allocated that you engage with them in a timely way so you can start the process, research and ultimately production of your dissertation.

Information for students on Advanced Practice

If you are currently placed with an employer and have any concerns about your internship, please contact your Academic Supervisor. If your employer asks you to work from home you should do so but please let your Academic Supervisor know as soon as you can.

If you are an Advanced Practice student hoping to complete an internship as part of your future studies, we will continue to update you with next steps via your University email. If you have any questions about internships, please email Stella Charalambous, Internship and Employer Engagement Manager at Stella.Charalambous@qa.com.

What if I get ill and cannot study, or what if I am caring for someone who is ill?

The first thing to say is that your health comes first so getting well again must be your priority.

You should, as soon as you can, let the Attendance Team know if you are ill and unable to study.

They will:

- a. Update your attendance record accordingly
- b. Make any necessary referrals to QA Higher Education's support services
- c. If you are ill for a prolonged period of time, then they can advise on whether you need to interrupt your studies temporarily.



You can contact the Attendance Team at QAHE.Attendance@qa.com.

We are working with our University partners to be as flexible as possible in terms of absence to accommodate illness or other Covid-19 related absence including the impact on assessment related matters such as not being able to complete assignments or assessments and we will communicate to you updates as and when arrangements or guidance changes. If you or a member of your household develop Covid-19 symptoms it is essential that you and your household self-isolate in-line with current UK guidelines. For further information please refer to our [Return to Campus Handbook](#).

Attendance Monitoring

During this period of online learning, we will continue to monitor engagement and attendance via engagement with your VLE and your attendance during online classes. Your tutor will complete a roll call register during the sessions. It is important that you engage with your learning, simply logging in to a session may not be enough to satisfy attendance, make sure you are participating and using your VLE as well.

If, due to unforeseen circumstances, an online class does not take place, the Attendance Team will be aware of this, and you will not need to notify them that your session did not take place. Please be assured that should any of your online classes not take place, this will not have a negative impact on your attendance and will not count towards your overall attendance. A replacement class will be scheduled to ensure no learning is missed.

What to do if I cannot submit an upcoming assessment

If you are unable to submit an upcoming assessment, please complete and submit a Mitigating/Extenuating Circumstances application using the below information prior to the submission deadline.

University	Required	How to submit
Middlesex University	Online application form	Submit via MyUnihub
Solent University	Application form	Email to: qahe.solentextenuatingcircumstances@qa.com
Ulster University	Application form	Email to: uuacademicenquiries@qa.com
University of Roehampton	Application form	Email to: QAHE.uormitigatingcircumstances@qa.com
London Metropolitan University	Application form	Email to: QAHE.LondonMetMitigatingCircumstances@qa.com

If there are updates or changes to these policies you will be made aware of these.



YOUR SUPPORT SERVICES

We intend to offer remote access to the services below between core operating hours of 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. Where you require support outside of the hours please contact the services to make a request.

Interacting with Welfare

The Welfare Service provides advice and guidance on a range of issues (e.g. disability support, housing, legal, financial, family and relationships, health).

The team will be available for virtual meetings, alternatively you can make an appointment to meet them on-campus.

You can contact the team by contacting your local team.

Email: QAHE.welfare@qa.com

Phone: 0207 656 8420

A telephone counselling service is also available, you can email QAHE.welfare@qa.com to arrange an appointment.

Disabled Students Allowance and Adjustments to learning

If you are in receipt of Disabled Student's Allowance and have study skills support or mentoring, it is important that you contact your provider to discuss this support. You can find details of your provider in your DSA 2 letter.

You can also contact your Needs Assessor to discuss the temporary changes to your mode of study and whether there is any additional support available.

Please contact our Disability Advisor if you require any adjustments to your learning.

Email: QAHElearningsupport@qa.com

Phone: 0207 656 8420

Interacting with the ACE team

The Academic Community of Excellence (ACE) team support you with your academic development and provide guidance on subjects such as how to write in an academic style, how to read smarter rather than longer, how to reference accurately as well as computing and mathematics. You can make a one-to-one tutorial, attend our online workshops as well as read our resources and watch our videos on your virtual learning environment (VLE). For more information about the team, please visit:

qahighereducation.com/the-ace-team

The team is currently available for online appointments during our usual hours. To request a tutorial, please send an email to:

ACE London: aceldn@qa.com



ACE Birmingham: acebm@qa.com

ACE Manchester: acemcr@qa.com

Phone: 0207 656 8446 - this number is for all students across all campuses, just let us know which campus you are based at when you call.

When you make an online appointment via email or phone, a member of the ACE team will send you an email with a link to join the online session.

All you need to do is:

- Click on that link which will open in your web browser (or copy and paste it into your web browser)
- Enter your name and university email
- Next, click on **Join By Browser** and you will see a member of the ACE team

It is also possible to share documents e.g. a Word or PowerPoint so that we can both look at it at the same time. If you wish to do so, please email that to us before the start of the appointment if possible.

In addition to having an online appointment, remember that there is an ACE page on Moodle and Blackboard where you can find many study skills resources such as videos, guides and worksheets on academic subjects e.g. paraphrasing, criticality, referencing.

Interacting with Library services

All online library resources – ebooks, databases, journals and newspapers – will be available as normal.

Effectively, you have two libraries: your University library and QA Higher Education Library.



Guides to using your University library resources are available from:

University partner	Guide locations
London Metropolitan University	student.londonmet.ac.uk/library/subject-guides-and-research-support/a-z-subject-guides-and-librarians/
Middlesex University	http://libguides.mdx.ac.uk/QAHE
Solent University	https://libguides.solent.ac.uk/?b=s
Ulster University	https://guides.library.ulster.ac.uk/
University of Roehampton	https://library.roehampton.ac.uk/friendly.php?s=qacomputing

For the resources and services provided by QA Higher Education, see the Library portal at library.qahighereducation.com.

For all library-related enquiries, please contact the QA Higher Education Library in the first instance: library.qahighereducation.com/contact. Staff will be available to answer your enquiries over the phone, video-conferencing and by email.

Email: library@qa.com

Phone: 020 7656 8448

Library Portal: library.qahighereducation.com – for ongoing updates, guides and contact information for the QA Higher Education Library.

Interacting with the Careers and Employability team

Your Careers Service is operating virtually, Monday to Friday from 9am – 5pm (with evening appointments available on request). Appointments and workshops, including employer-led presentations will be delivered online.

If you have a question for the Careers Service, would like to make a virtual appointment or receive e-feedback:

Email: yourcareers@qa.com

Phone: 0207 656 8458

If you are an Advanced Practice student, we will continue to update you with next steps via your University email.

If you have any questions about internships, please email Stella.Charalambous@qa.com.

Interacting with Student Services

Our Student Services Team will be available by phone, or email. If you prefer to speak to them in-person, you can make an appointment to meet them on-campus.



To help us respond to all students and provide you with the best service during this busy time, please email your enquiry to the relevant campus inbox and we will respond as soon as we can.

We are still available by phone for any urgent queries, if you are placed in a queue please be patient, we will get to your call as soon as we can.

Please find contact details by campus below:

Campus	Email	Telephone
Birmingham	SSBHAM@qa.com	0121 616 7470
London	SSLDN@qa.com	0207 656 8460
Manchester	SSMAN@qa.com	0161 233 8733

Letter requests

We will continue to process letter requests as normal, all letter requests take 5 working days after you request it. All letters will be sent to your University email and password protected for data protection – the password for the letters is included in the email, please make sure you read this carefully.

How do I request a letter?

Please email all letter requests to your campus Student Services inbox. Please make sure you email from your University email and include your student ID number, full name, and up to date address (if different to your QAHE portal). We cannot accept letter requests from non-University email addresses.

Interacting with the Registry Team

The Registry Team are on hand to provide advice and information on a number of areas such as change of circumstances, examinations, access to IT services, enrolment and re-enrolment.

You can contact the team by:

Email: QAHE.Registry@qa.com

If your enquiry is in relation to assignment submissions, results, mitigating circumstances applications, or you have questions regarding your re-sits, our team of experienced Programme Administrators are here to help.



Please find contact details by University partner below:

University partner	Email
London Metropolitan University	QAHE.LMETacademicenquiries@qa.com
Middlesex University	mdxacademicenquiries@qa.com
Solent University	QAHE.SOLacademicenquiries@qa.com
Ulster University	uuacademicenquiries@qa.com
University of Roehampton	uoracademicenquiries@qa.com

Interacting with Student Finance

The Student Finance Team are available to contact by either of the following;

Email: QAHEFinanceSupport@qa.com

Phone: 0207 656 8450

Interacting with Compliance

The Compliance Team provides advice and guidance to all international students on aspects around their immigration permission in the UK and / or monitoring of attendance.

You can contact the team by:

Email: ulstercompliance@qa.com

Phone: 0207 656 7420.

If you are in the UK on a 'Student' permission visa, it is important that you continue to check your student emails for any updates from the University.

You can also find information relating to your 'Student' permission visa status on our FAQ pages www.qahighereducation.com/covid19/

General information and advice for international students can also be found on the UKCISA website www.ukcisa.org.uk/

If you are considering returning home, then you should speak with the QA Higher Education Compliance Team to discuss your options.

You can contact the team by:

Email: ulstercompliance@qa.com

Phone: 0207 656 8420



If you are travelling from outside the UK

Prior to entering the UK

Those travelling to the UK will need to provide journey and contact details up to 48 hours before arriving using an [online form](#).

To complete the form, you will need:

- Your travel details (including times, dates, and flight details)
- Your passport
- The address where you will stay in the UK.

Self-isolating on arrival to the UK

Depending on where you are coming from you may need to self-isolate on arrival to the UK as part of the measures introduced by the UK Government to help against the spread of coronavirus. This may also be referred to as a quarantine period.

You can find full guidance on the requirements outlined on the [Government website](#) including the [list of the exempt countries](#).

If you are travelling from a country that is exempt from this requirement, you will still need to self-isolate if you visit or make a transit stop during your journey to a country not on the exempt list. This applies if during the transit new passengers get on or passengers get off and mix with others before boarding again. Please note the requirements, including the countries on the exempt list, are subject to change.

Travelling from an EU country

If you are travelling to the UK from the EU, please make sure you have consulted the relevant guidance regarding the UK and EU transition.

Payment of Tuition Fees – Ulster International Students

Please note if you are an Ulster student and wish to make a bank payment please see the details below. Always quote your name and student ID, your student ID number begins with B00. Please ensure you satisfy your payment requirements as per the terms and conditions of enrolment.

Ulster Payment Bank details are:

Bank	Barclays Bank PLC
Sort Code	20-55-34
Account Number	7053-3971
SWIFT / BIC	BARCGB22
Address	51 Mosley Street, Manchester, M60 2AU
Beneficiary Name	QAHE (ULST) LTD Main Account
IBAN Code	GB66BARC20553470533971



Please contact the Finance Team (as per earlier in this guide) if you are experiencing financial difficulties and do not think you will be able to make your payment.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND LINKS

Support Service	Email	Telephone
Student Services	Birmingham - SSBHAM@qa.com London - SSLDN@qa.com Manchester - SSMAN@qa.com	0121 616 7470 0207 656 8460 0161 233 8733
Library Service	library@qa.com	020 7656 8448
Welfare Service	QAHE.welfare@qa.com	020 7 656 8420
Compliance Team	ulstercompliance@qa.com	020 7 656 7420
ACE Team	London - aceldn@qa.com Birmingham & Manchester - acebm@qa.com	0207 656 8446
Registry Team	QAHE.Registry@qa.com	
Programme Administration Team	London Metropolitan University: QAHE.LMETacademicenquiries@qa.com Middlesex University: mdxacademicenquiries@qa.com Solent University: QAHE.SOLacademicenquiries@qa.com Ulster University: uuacademicenquiries@qa.com University of Roehampton: uoracademicenquiries@qa.com	
Student Finance Team	QAHEFinanceSupport@qa.com	0207 656 8450
Online Learning Support	QAHEOnlineLearning@qa.com	0345 074 7958
Attendance Team	QAHE.Attendance@qa.com	



Useful links

- **QA Higher Education website:** www.qahighereducation.com/
- **Online FAQs and a copy of this guide:** www.qahighereducation.com/online-learning-support
- **Information on QA Higher Education's response to Covid-19, opening hours, campus bookings and our Return to Campus Handbook:** www.qahighereducation.com/covid19/
- **Current students Covid-19 FAQs pages:**
 - London Metropolitan University, Middlesex University, University of Roehampton students: <https://qahighereducation.com/about-us/coronavirus-covid-19-information-and-advice/current-students/>
 - Solent University students: <https://qa.solent.ac.uk/centres/coronavirus-covid-19-information-and-advice/information-for-current-students/>
 - Ulster University students: <https://qa.ulster.ac.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-update/current-students/>
- **How to download the Microsoft Office365 and activate its free licence:** library.qahighereducation.com/guides/office365
- **Information from the Library Team and how to contact them:** library.qahighereducation.com/contact
- **Roehampton & Ulster students requiring bank, enrolment or council tax letters:** myqahe.qabusinessschool.com.
- **UKCISA website for international students:** www.ukcisa.org.uk/

University VLE Support

- **London Metropolitan University:** student.londonmet.ac.uk/it-resources/it-help-and-support/
- **Middlesex University:** unihub.mdx.ac.uk/support/unihelp
- **Solent University:** learn.solent.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=14720
- **Ulster University:** www.ulster.ac.uk/isd/getting-help/service-desk
- **University of Roehampton:** roehamptonlearning.com/eLearningServices/contact-us-collaborative-partnerships