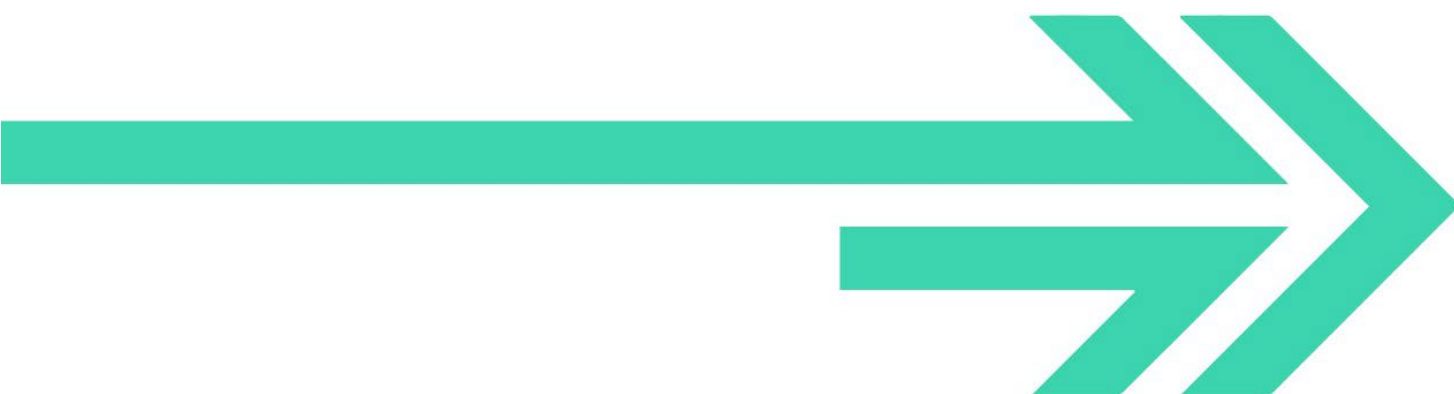




STUDENT HANDBOOK:

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 you, and your family and friends have all remained safe and well.

As the pandemic subsides life is slowly returning to normal, and it has been fantastic to see our campuses starting to come back to life as students return. Covid has not gone away of course so please be mindful of the need to take basic hygiene precautions while out and about. While mask wearing is no longer mandatory in most situations, everyone is free to continue wearing one if they wish to out of individual choice.

Many of you will now be studying on a permanently blended programme where part of your time is on campus and part of your time is spent live online. Please remember that both elements of the programme are of equal importance to you so it is really important that you engage fully with all of your learning opportunities. Also please remember that we take attendance both online and face to face

As the pandemic falls away the UKVI rules around international students and compliance are changing back to the pre-pandemic position where all learning and teaching needs to be face-to-face on campus. By the end of June, the ability to study part of your programme online will have ceased if you are an international student on a Tier 4 visa.

With the campus now open it is possible to access support services (Student Services, Library, Student Finance and Welfare) face to face if required. It is also possible for you to continue to access these services online if this is more convenient for you.

Engaging with your study in terms of attending classes, taking an active role in sessions, submitting formative assessments are all activities that will help you to do well on your degree programme. If you sit back and don't attend or engage and fail to submit formative assessments all of our evidence shows that this will increase your chances of not being successful. So, I would urge you to engage as much as you can to get the most you can from learning opportunities and to empower yourself to do the best you can.

Enjoy being back on campus, making and meeting friends as well as interacting face to face with your tutors.



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.

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 <https://qahighereducation.com/about-us/blended-learning/>

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 by email or telephone.

Any **additional** ways of contacting us 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 any online learning resources and activities. To protect your privacy and personal details we cannot use personal email addresses.

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 access my 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.

If you have sessions which are timetabled to be live online, a 'How to' guide has been produced to help you access the system and understand your timetable. You can access this online [here](#). For those studying through blended learning, your timetable will show whether your class is live online or on-campus.

How do I know if my session is on-campus or live 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

For those on a blended learning programme, we will be using two systems to deliver your live online learning:

- 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 a university student you will have access to **Microsoft Office 365** which will enable you to use 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

We have a dedicated support team available to help support you with accessing and getting the most from the live online element of your programme. 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 for dissertation students

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. You will be able to agree with your supervisor a pattern and method of contact that works best for you.

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 internships@qa.com.

What if I am 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

Attendance at both online and on-campus sessions is key to your success. Attendance will be taken for all seminar group sized sessions (around 30 students) irrespective of whether the session is online or face-to-face on campus. Attendance is not normally taken for larger lecture sized groups; however, 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: uuacademickenquiries@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 face-to-face and online to the services below between core operating hours of 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. Where you require support outside 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 face-to-face on-campus and or virtual online meetings.

You can make an appointment by contacting your local team.

Email: qahe.welfare@qa.com

Phone: 01217 569 578

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: QAHE.learningsupport@qa.com

Phone: 0121 756 9578

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

Tutorials

You can book a one-to-one tutorial by using our online booking system, just simply click on the link below to find a day and time that suits you:

<https://qa-higher-education-ace.appointeddd.com/group/603113235a275734e60d17c7>

You will receive a confirmation email with the date and time, and if your tutorial is online, you will also receive a link to join it (via Zoom). Closer to the time of your appointment, you will also receive a reminder email so you can easily find it again! If you have any questions or do not receive the email and/or Zoom link, please do not hesitate to contact ACE using the contact details below.

It is possible to share documents in both face-to-face and online tutorials. If online, you will be able to share your screen, so please be prepared with your documents open and ready to take notes during the tutorial.

Workshops

The ACE team deliver a wide range of workshops throughout the semester. Check your ACE page on your VLE for further information or you can book via the link below so that you can pop it into your calendar and get confirmation and reminder emails:

<https://qa-higher-education-ace.appointeddd.com/group/60e44b5a13f7cc2878058f75>

Resources

There is an ACE page on your virtual learning environment e.g. 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 as well as computing and mathematics.



The ACE Team's contact details:

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.

Interacting with Library services

You have two libraries: your university library and QA Higher Education Library. All your library resources and services are explained on the Library Portal at <https://qahighereducation.com/library/>

In addition, guides to 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=qabusiness (Business programmes) https://library.roehampton.ac.uk/friendly.php?s=qacomputing (Computing programmes)

Campus libraries in Birmingham and London are open:

Monday to Thursday, 9.00 am to 9.00 pm

Friday and Saturday, 9.00 am to 4.45 pm

Please bring your student card if you wish to borrow textbooks or a laptop. A small selection of good MSc dissertations is available for viewing too. Both libraries have study spaces and desktop PCs for students to use.

In Manchester, textbooks can be borrowed too. Please speak to the reception staff. For all library related enquiries, please contact the QA Higher Education Library in the first instance: library.qahighereducation.com/contact. There, you can also request an individual consultation with a librarian – face to face or over a video call.

Email: library@qa.com

Phone: 020 7656 8448



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

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.

Phone: 02045 796 407

Email: studentservices@qahighereducation.com

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: 0203 918 7078

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: 0121 756 9578

If you are travelling from outside the UK

What do I need to know before travelling to the UK?

There is currently no 'red list' countries or territories. Please continue to monitor the [Government guidance as this is subject to change](#).

Before travelling into the UK, please ensure you regularly check the latest information and advice on [travelling to the UK from another country here](#) as this may be subject to change.

It is vital that students arriving in the UK have followed the correct arrival procedure to avoid additional costs and any delays. This includes ensuring you have the correct travel documents to present, testing requirements before travel and any steps or actions required on arrival in the UK.

I have plans to travel outside the UK, what should I do?

If you are planning on travelling outside the UK, the FCO website has advice regarding any necessary precautions you may need to take. You can [check the FCO advice regarding coronavirus](#).

If you are travelling from/to the EU, please also make sure that you have consulted the relevant guidance regarding the UK and EU transition. You can check our [FAQs regarding Brexit here](#).

USEFUL CONTACTS AND LINKS

Support Service	Email	Telephone
Student Services	studentservices@qahighereducation.com	02045 796 407
Library Service	library@qa.com	020 7656 8448
Welfare Service	QAHE.welfare@qa.com	01217 569 578
Compliance Team	ulstercompliance@qa.com	020 7 656 7420

ACE Team	London - aceldn@qa.com Birmingham - acebm@qa.com Manchester - acemcr@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	0203 918 7078
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:** https://roehamptonlearning.com/eLearningServices/?page_id=4324