



Dear Students,

I am sure that like many in the country, you have been seeking to understand how the Prime Minister's recent guidance to the nation regarding the new Omicron Covid-19 variant and the direction to 'work from home if you possibly can', will affect you. I was taken a little by surprise when the PM addressed the nation on Wednesday evening. This letter/email will explain to all our students how we intend to finish 2021 and our plans for the start of 2022.

Starting 2022

It is our expectation that **the College will continue with 'in person' delivery of our education programmes starting on 4 January 2022**. Theology and Counselling programmes will continue 'in person' in the New Year unless the Government explicitly instructs higher education institutes to move to a digital delivery mode. At this moment, it is my understanding that there are **no plans** to move to a digital delivery; the College is expecting and planning to deliver its courses physically at the College from January 2022.

Finishing 2021 (13-17 December)

As theology students will know, Monday (13 Dec) and Tuesday (14 Dec) are the last two days of teaching in College. There is no teaching on Wednesday (15 December). Counselling students have no classes at College in the week 13-17 December.

The College will remain physically open from 13-17 December. Students will be able to access the library as normal until its planned Christmas closure, the details of which will be announced shortly.

Theology classes timetabled for 13 and 14 December will be delivered digitally. Tutors are preparing material for their classes scheduled for 13 & 14 December and this will be available via Moodle. Students will be able to access the relevant unit tab on Moodle and find the material the tutor will have prepared for that class. This may include a video recording of the lecture for that specific week/lesson and/or a Zoom link for students to access a live tutorial. Students will find the guidance they require in the relevant unit tab on Moodle. Please do not hesitate to contact your tutor by email if you have any questions.

Most pastoral groups will also go ahead by Zoom on 13 and 14 December at the normal times; your pastoral tutor will be in touch to confirm details and links.

We are planning to hold a virtual chapel on Tuesday (14 December) at 1040. You will be sent details on Monday of how to access the worship service. As we are a worshipping Christian community we

wanted to finish this term with an appropriate worship service and you are warmly invited to attend. There will be no chapel service (virtual or in-person) on Monday.

I realise that the Government's decision will come as a disappointment to many and be welcomed by many. As a College we have always had the interests of students at the heart of everything we do. I understand that studying at College, learning with peers, tutors and professional staff is critically important. I believe that our response to the Government's direction to 'work at home if you possibly can' is balanced and has been carefully thought through for both students and staff. Our approach also saves many of our student body from travelling from all over the country to College and it will save some students the expense of hotel bills for the final academic week of 2021.

I look forward to starting 2022 on 4 January and to seeing you in person in the New Year.

May you, your family and those whom you love know a blessed Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Yours faithfully

Philip

The Revd Prof PJ McCormack MBE
Principal
Spurgeon's College, London