

Update from the Vice-Chancellor

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To: All Staff <AllStaff@bournemouth.ac.uk>



Dear colleague

When I wrote to you in September, we knew that this academic year would be one of change and challenge – sadly for many friends and family around the UK it has already seen increased restrictions, and numbers of cases have been growing locally too.

I appreciate that it is hard for many at this time to balance demands and commitments outside work, especially as we have seen schools sending increasing numbers of children home to self isolate, with restrictions on family visits and during the half term holiday. We have all been worrying about family and friends.

In Jim's regular updates, you have seen information about what we are doing across BU and I am glad that, at least for the moment, the number of cases amongst staff and students are falling. I am proud of the effort that staff are making to support each other and our students, and the care that everyone is taking of each other. I am also proud of our students, who are making the best of the circumstances to engage in learning and to socialise safely. The kindness and caring approach demonstrated by staff and students is a defining feature of our community at BU, and one that will create an enduring legacy after these challenges have subsided.

Staff have commented on how communication and collaboration have improved over the last 7 months, despite the practical challenges, and I hope that this is also something that we can continue. Along with BU's extended leadership team we have been looking carefully at the requests that we all make on each other and supporting teams to consider how they can best work with others to achieve our shared objectives.

It has also been fantastic to see staff receiving external funding for research projects linked to Covid-19 – particularly in the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences and also in the Faculty of Media and Communication. As well as advancing knowledge, these projects will have rapid impact in society.

And of course the virus is not the only major challenge for society at the moment. I am pleased that the work on our Race Equality Charter application is progressing well and am looking forward to a series of events that is being planned for November, more news on this will be shared soon. While the impact of the pandemic has included some positive environmental changes in the short-term, we have seen the impact of climate change in recent extreme weather events around the world. The Institute of Socio-Environmental Transitions (IMSET) is having a virtual launch event on Wednesday 11th November. This is a great opportunity to learn more and get involved in collaborating with the team. If you want to participate please email sia@bournemouth.ac.uk.

In terms of policy developments, many things are on hold as the government has again postponed the longer term spending review planned for the Autumn. This means we are unlikely to hear more this year about the outcome of the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding for HE, although

announcements have already been made about plans for FE and technical education. You will have seen that the Office for Students are reviewing the NSS, and are expected to consult on other regulatory requirements before the end of the year.

I was delighted to hear that there have been lots of nominations for the VC staff awards. As some of you have asked for a little longer to make your nominations, we have extended the deadline to Monday 16th November. Please have a look at the [categories](#), including two new ones this year, and make a nomination – it takes a small amount of time and staff have commented on what a positive and energising it is to reflect on the impact that colleagues have had over the last year.

I have been enjoying meeting with staff to discuss what is on their minds, the way that things have changed for them and the things that they are doing to adjust. You can [sign up here](#) and we will invite you to one of the informal online chats. I look forward to talking to you soon, or please get in touch to tell me your stories of what you are doing at work or outside it. You can also find my latest podcast [here](#).

Best wishes

John Vinney
Vice-Chancellor

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