



# Cardiff Met

## A measured return



**Professor  
Cara Aitchison**

President & Vice-Chancellor,  
Cardiff Metropolitan University

I am writing to provide a brief update on the measures we have adopted at Cardiff Metropolitan University as we seek to protect the health and wellbeing of our new and returning students, our staff and our wider community at this time of great anxiety resulting from the Coronavirus pandemic.

I wish to reassure you that we have taken all possible steps to protect our university and wider community. However, I appreciate with incidences of Covid-19 rising again and a national fire-break now being implemented you may have questions about how the University will operate this coming year.

Those familiar with our campuses will see a great deal of change resulting from the work we have undertaken to ensure we do all we can to keep our One Cardiff Met community safe by aligning with current Welsh Government guidance.



Llandaff Campus

## Adaptations have included:



**Establishing and signposting one-way systems** ✓



Adapting high contact items such as doors and taps into 'touch-free' applications ✓



**Constructing covered spaces and seating areas outdoors where students and staff can meet and socialise undercover with good ventilation** ✓



Installing contactless collection points at food outlets which have been trialled over the summer months ✓



**Revising room occupancies to accommodate 2m social distancing** ✓



Providing safe and socially distanced catering for residential students including for those who might need to self-isolate in halls ✓



**Establishing over 2,000 information points across our campuses** ✓



Increasing cleaning and installing 100 hand sanitizer stations and washbasins in our buildings ✓



**Constructing safety screens at customer-facing receptions** ✓



Employing staff as Covid Safety Marshalls and implementing 'crowd control' measures for peak occupancy periods ✓



Cyncoed Campus



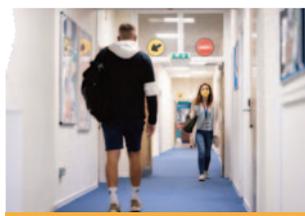
New Safety Marshalls on campus will provide information and advice to support everyone who visits, studies or works at our university and uses our facilities.



Since March, the Welsh Government has continued to recommend the 2m social distancing guidance. Unlike some of our counterparts across the UK who have dropped down to the 1m+ recommendation, we have followed Welsh Government advice and have adhered to the 2m rule across our estate. Because of this, we have had to restrict the number of people who can use our spaces at any one time to ensure safety.



Teaching for larger modules will take place online for the foreseeable future. On-campus teaching will focus on smaller groups, practical and laboratory work and will be undertaken in line with our University risk assessments. Where the 2m rule can't be adhered to due to the nature of the course, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and mobile screens will help keep our students and staff safe but even then it will be important for them to follow the basic rules and to avoid physical contact and being face-to-face.



We have also implemented a mandatory non-medical face coverings policy for areas such as corridors where social distancing cannot be guaranteed.



Our student residences accommodation teams are assisting students on campus with these new measures and students are required to remain in accommodation ‘bubbles’. A reimagined residential social programme, designed in partnership with the Students’ Union and including a range of online activities, will help students make new friends at a safe distance.

During our preparation for the return of students to Cardiff, we have worked with Cardiff Council, Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, South Wales Police and the city’s other universities to ensure we have appropriate plans in place. Colleagues have also been talking to local groups and we will ensure we keep in contact with the people of Cardiff who live near our campuses as the new academic year progresses.

As a values-driven University, we have prioritised the health and wellbeing of our staff, students and community during the pandemic, providing all the assurances that we could from the outset, and this focus will continue to be our priority.

**Professor Cara Aitchison**

President & Vice-Chancellor, Cardiff Metropolitan University





# Open for business, achieving results and supporting our Cardiff community



In spite of the challenges the Coronavirus has posed for all of us, we have been determined to continue to support our students, staff and wider communities who rely on our services.

## Adopting a Values-Driven Approach

Our Covid-19 Business Continuity Planning Group was established in January 2020 and, in line with our Strategic Plan, took a 'values-driven approach' to our response to the virus and has prioritised health and wellbeing above all else. For example, we were the first university in Wales to offer a refund to all

students in Cardiff Met residential accommodation for third term accommodation and the first to provide all student support services on-line as the UK went into lockdown. We have continued to pay all permanent, fixed-term and casual staff, including sub-contracted staff,

throughout the pandemic and will continue to do so until January 2021. We have also supported staff in challenging circumstances who are home schooling or looking after shielding family members.



## Strengthening Our Finances

These actions have been possible because we have developed a strong sense of community across the University and because we have very solid finances. Strong financial management, resulting from extensive new course developments (27 new programmes in the last two years), growing student recruitment and increases in research and innovation, has provided a strong base from which to manage the current situation and develop into the future. Indeed, a recent report<sup>1</sup> described Cardiff Met as the most financially sustainable University in Wales.



## Improving Quality in Education, Research and Innovation

In addition to growth and diversification, we have also seen significant improvements over the summer. Colleagues and students have worked hard to deliver improvements in all major league tables and have secured a range of awards for their work.

-  **National Student Survey 2020** (July):  
**85% Overall Satisfaction**  
(2% above UK average)
-  **The Complete University Guide 2021** (June):  
**87** (from 130) (2020) from **96** (2019)
-  **THE World University Rankings 2021** (Aug):  
**801-1,000 banding in the world**
-  **The Guardian Good University Guide 2021** (Sept):  
**Up 44 places to 72** (from 121) (2020) from **113** (2019)
-  **The Times Good University Guide 2021** (Sept):  
**Up 33 places to 79** (from 131) (2020) from **112** (2019)

<sup>1</sup> Wales Governance Centre (2020) *Covid-19 and the Higher Education Sector in Wales*, Wales Governance Centre, Cardiff University.

## Addressing Global Challenges

Three Global Academies have now been established: Health and Human Performance; Food Science, Safety and Security; and Human-Centred Design. The three Global Academies all serve to tackle global challenges addressed by the UN Sustainable Development Goals and each showcases the positive impact of our interdisciplinary, international and impactful research, innovation and postgraduate education.

The Global Academies webpages are now live on the Cardiff Met website where you can view an introductory video and an introduction to each Global Academy together with case studies of the research being undertaken, student engagement and Masters courses linked to each Global Academy, and research groups and centres aligned to each Global Academy. A virtual launch event will take place on 1 December 2020 and is open to all.

# Leading Community Responses

Cardiff Metropolitan University has been helping on the front line throughout the pandemic. Here are just a few examples:

Mark Saltmarsh, a Cardiff Met Technician Demonstrator has been manufacturing face masks to donate to doctors' surgeries, care homes and pharmacies in the Aberdare area, using 3D printers from our labs.



**PhD Student, Owen Griffiths, supported NHS 111 on weekends - directly advising people on Covid 19 symptoms.**

Cardiff Met and Sport Cardiff supported services in the community like Ty Canna, the organisation working with people with acute mental health illness. We moved our 'Mind the Gap' project online during lockdown which has helped adults with mental health conditions, to remain active and engaged.



We loaned two Thermo Fisher 7500 ABI Fast platform machines to a new UK testing centre in Milton Keynes to support enhanced testing of Covid-19.



**Accounting student Floyd Haughton spent lockdown cooking and delivering Jamaican inspired meals to key workers across Cardiff providing 52 meals in one evening alone!**



**Academics at Cardiff Met Eureka Robotics Lab used three Canbot U03S robots to help GPs on the frontline to identify virus symptoms to treat patients and support people who are shielding.**



We established a Blood Centre at our Llandaff campus in partnership with the Welsh Blood Service following a 20% reduction in donors over lockdown.



**A group of our students created a free weekly home-school resource programme for Key Stage 3 pupils, helping parents with homeschooling.**



Our staff walked the distance from Cardiff to Baku (some 3,000 miles) where the first Wales Football Euro would have taken place, raising funds for the Wallich, a charity supporting the homeless in Cardiff.

