Dear Student,

You are receiving this message as you are either still overseas on placement in your host country or you have recently returned from your host country.

Important Updates and Reminders:

1) **Securing Flights**
   - Please be aware that borders are closing in many countries, travel restrictions are in place worldwide and the availability of flights is increasingly limited. The UK Foreign Secretary announced yesterday that they have signed a partnership with the airline industry to help secure the return of British citizens stranded overseas this will include arrangements for charter flights from priority countries - flights will be prioritised according to the number of stranded British travellers and their vulnerability. In some places, access for flights to land and the ability to move around within the country to assemble for return flights will also be key. You can find more information here:
   - The FCO pages for many countries now include specific ‘return to the UK’ sections. The following is an example for Argentina:
   PLEASE make sure that you have signed-up to receive updates from the FCO for your location and look NOW at the advice for securing your return. You are strongly encouraged to sign-up to the social media feeds for the British Embassy in your country. We are aware that there is still very limited guidance for students stranded in certain locations eg. Jordan. We would encourage you to contact the relevant British Embassy/High Commission if you have not done so already to establish what support they are planning, to request assistance and to make sure that they are aware of your presence in the country.

   - You can also find additional tips/guidance on securing flights on the Go Abroad website: [http://www.goabroad.manchester.ac.uk/emergencies-and-insurance/covid-19/](http://www.goabroad.manchester.ac.uk/emergencies-and-insurance/covid-19/) (see the Flights FAQs section).

2) **Phone Call from Manchester**
   If you have indicated in your response to the Covid-19 International Placements Questionnaire ([https://forms.gle/eekLht9rbsVfJpLE7](https://forms.gle/eekLht9rbsVfJpLE7)) that you are ‘In my host country and intending to remain’ or similar, you will have received/be receiving a message from a member of the team here in Manchester to arrange a phone conversation with you to talk through your decision and to work through any outstanding issues/concerns. Please use this phone call to raise any issues that may be preventing you from returning home where you would otherwise wish to do so, for example, flights, housing in the UK/your home country, finances etc. Colleagues will then be able to identify any potential support/options available to you. Following that conversation you will be required to complete and submit the attached ‘Covid-19 International Placement Risk Awareness Form’.

3) **Information and Resources**
   You can view copies of core communications, responses to FAQs etc. on the Go Abroad Website: [http://www.goabroad.manchester.ac.uk/emergencies-and-insurance/covid-19/](http://www.goabroad.manchester.ac.uk/emergencies-and-insurance/covid-19/)
This may be a useful website to which to direct parents/carers/partners if they want to understand the information that you are receiving from the University and to enable them to support you in decision-making.

4) **University Travel Insurance Reminder – DO NOT travel back to your host country**

Hopefully it goes without saying, but please note that if you have returned to the UK you should **NOT** seek to return to your host country/placement at the present time or at any point in the foreseeable future. Travelling out of the UK against the current FCO Advice – ‘the FCO advises British nationals against all but essential international travel’ ([https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)) – invalidates your University insurance cover. In addition, undertaking non-essential travel at this time puts yourself and others at risk and is in direct breach of the Government’s measures to reduce the spread of Covid-19.

5) **Academic Arrangements**

Please stay in touch with your academic School here in Manchester with respect to adjustments to your programme of study/placement for this semester. If there is online provision from your host university/placement provider that allows you to study/work remotely then you should engage with this fully. We appreciate that there will be some time zone challenges particularly for those of you back in the UK seeking to engage with provision in Australia – please make your host organisation and your academic School aware of issues that are insurmountable.

6) Please don’t forget to keep us up-to-date with your current situation by completing the Covid-19 International Placements Questionnaire ([https://forms.gle/eekLht9rbsVfJpLE7](https://forms.gle/eekLht9rbsVfJpLE7)).

7) We are receiving a large number of complex enquiries/support issues via the **IPOincidentsupport@manchester.ac.uk** inbox. If you are awaiting a response we will be in touch as soon as we can.

Finally, we do appreciate that the impact on your placement plans and learning is significant and many of you will have invested so much emotionally, financially and intellectually in your overseas placement that it is very hard to see your experience curtailed in this way. We wish the situation were different. On behalf of all the staff here at the University in Manchester, I’d like to thank you for the resilience you are all showing and the maturity and determination with which you are dealing with such hugely challenging decisions and circumstances. We will continue to be here to support you.

Take care and stay safe,

Caroline

Dr Caroline Whitehand
Manager, International Programmes Office