

10th December 2020

Dear {FIRST NAME}

I hope that you are safe and well despite the ongoing challenging circumstances. I am writing to update you about some changes regarding travel for Semester 2.

Following conversations with many of you and as the external situation has evolved, we have kept the position on travel for undergraduate international placements under review. After careful consideration and discussion, we have determined an alternative approach to considering travel for undergraduate international placements in Semester 2, 2020-21 (from 1 January 2021). This will mean that many of you have the opportunity to undertake a period abroad if you wish to.

### **What is the alternative approach?**

We will retain a risk-based approach for approval of travel. However, our approach will no longer rest entirely on Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) travel advice. Instead, we will require every student who wants to travel to complete a detailed individual risk assessment. We will use this to determine whether travel can be approved. The risk assessment will require a consideration of your personal risk factors and the specific Covid-19 measures in place at your host organisation. In addition, you will be asked to confirm that you have understood a range of key considerations in making your decision to travel.

### **What does this mean for me?**

Travel to the vast majority of European countries is likely to be supported. However, there will still be countries to which travel for the purpose of undergraduate international placements will not be approved because of the levels of risk. Factors outside of our control such as border closures, visa restrictions and/or host organisation decisions may also continue to mean that some placements are not viable. We also recognise that everyone has different personal circumstances and that some of you may not wish to go abroad even if you are able to. Let me reassure you that working or studying abroad is not a requirement in 2020/21 for any undergraduate degree programme. Alternative language provision will continue to be available throughout the year for all language-based programmes. On all other programmes speak to your placement co-ordinator if you are unclear as to the alternatives available to you.

We are pleased that this will mean that more of you can consider undertaking your placements. Whilst this won't be possible in all cases, we very much hope that our revised approach will provide a greater degree of certainty for you in making your plans for the remainder of this academic year.

As the external environment continues to evolve we will keep the situation under review and will be in touch if there are any further changes.

Further information about next steps will be provided by your Department, School or the International Programmes Office tomorrow (Friday).

With best wishes,  
*Professor Fiona Smyth*

**Chair, International Mobility Group  
Vice-Dean, Teaching, Learning and Students (Faculty of Humanities)**