

Dear colleague,

The University will officially close its doors at the end of Tuesday, 23 December and will reopen on Monday, 5 January 2025. In recognition of your hard work and in response to Your Voice Matters survey feedback, this period includes an additional closure day (Friday, 2 January). Throughout this period all Faculty buildings across campus will remain closed and inaccessible unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We strongly encourage you to use this closure period for some well-earned rest and relaxation. Taking this time away is important for all colleagues and it is for this reason that we are asking you not to return to campus during this time. To help meet our sustainability goals, the heating will be turned down in all of our closed buildings and technical staff and cleaning services will not be available.

Action for all colleagues

It's everybody's responsibility to ensure we are coming back to a clean and maintained working environment in the new year. As you and your teams prepare to leave for the festive period, please take a moment to:

- remove any perishables from fridges;
- ensure food items are not left out, either securely storing these in sealed containers or disposing of these via the green waste caddies;
- ensure all waste is put in the appropriate waste or recycling bins to assist House Services colleagues in cleaning and closing up the buildings for the festive break;
- turn off lights and equipment at the mains (wherever appropriate and safe to do so);

Action for Academic Staff, Researchers and Technical Operations

Please make safe any ongoing experiments and turn off and isolate any cooling water systems and/or gas delivery systems related to laboratory equipment (including house gases) where safe to do so.

Please contact your local Infrastructure and Facilities team if you have any concerns, need help or advice before turning off and isolating any systems, or think you need to maintain gas or water supply over the festive period.

Process for exceptional circumstances

Whilst we hope that you can take a break over the festive season, we do appreciate that this is not always possible and there may be exceptional circumstances, outside of day-to-day research activity, which require an on-campus presence. If you must return to campus, you will need to make arrangements in advance of the closure period to facilitate out of hours access to your workspace (laboratory, office or technical area). This will require:

- completion of a risk assessment for out of hours working, alongside the approval of your supervisor/line manager and Head of Department or Institute Director;
- you to ensure that you are not undertaking lone working, or that you are working in adherence with our [lone working guidance](#);
- your staff ID card to be enabled for out of hours entry/exit if you work in a building with swipe card access. Please be mindful that this process can take 48 hours to activate

and cannot be completed during the closure period so any requests must be received by Friday, 19 December at the latest.

If you are working during this time, you should under no circumstance permit others into the building. Furthermore, we strongly encourage all colleagues to download the [University SafeZone app](#), particularly in circumstances where you know you will be lone working on campus.

Information about facilities open to those students remaining on campus (particularly our international students) and Library open hours during the holiday are available on [this page](#). Thank you to those staff who need to be on campus to carry out essential services over the festive period – your work is very much appreciated.

Should you have any questions about the upcoming campus closure and what it means for you, please do discuss arrangements with your supervisor or line manager in the first instance.

With all best wishes,

Sarah, Chris and Catherine

Sarah Cartmell, Head of School of Engineering

Chris Hardacre, Head of School of Natural Sciences

Catherine Grills, Executive Director of Faculty Operations, FSE