

Bristo Square Student Village now open to students

A two-floor Scandinavian-style lodge serving hot drinks is one of several bespoke spaces being created for University of Edinburgh students to safely interact between their studies.

The lodge in Bristo Square, alongside the McEwan Hall is one of a number of covered structures, called Student Villages, which will be assembled across the Edinburgh campus this month.

The spacious venues have been designed to provide students with extra hospitality space, as capacity in buildings has been greatly reduced, and it is part of a range of measures hoping to safeguard the wellbeing of students, staff and the local community.

Student Villages will also be provided at King's Buildings, Pollock Halls student accommodation and a courtyard near George Square. The University is considering additional venues to ensure all students can benefit.

Each Student Village will provide catering and will be professionally managed to ensure that safety measures are adhered to in line with Scottish Government Covid-19 guidance, both for universities and the hospitality sector.



As well as reducing building capacity to allow for appropriate

physical distancing, a range of measures are in place to ensure students can safely return to the University's campus this term.

Changes include ample access to hand sanitisation facilities, one-way systems, a booking system for study spaces and enhanced cleaning regimes.

A hybrid learning experience will be implemented, which means that students' studies will include a mixture of in-person teaching and digital learning.

New students who have to self-isolate because they are arriving from countries on the Scottish Government's quarantine list will be able to do so in their University accommodation. The University is also offering support to those who are self-isolating in private residences.

A range of societies, volunteer opportunities, peer learning and support schemes – either taking place online or in person with appropriate safety measures in place – are also available to students this year.

Professor Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students at the University of Edinburgh, said: "This has been an incredibly challenging year for students and we want to give those arriving with us this semester the best experience possible, while also ensuring their safety and the safety of the wider Edinburgh community. I am thrilled that we are able to offer our students these welcoming, covered areas to enjoy when they are on campus this year. As numbers within our buildings are greatly reduced, we felt that it was important to provide them with space in which they can safely relax and chat with friends in between classes."