

# Homerton College

## Guidelines for Supervisions, DOS and Tutor meetings 2021-22

Cambridge University prides itself on its individual attention to students, and in particular on its supervision system. The use of small group academic teaching sessions enables a very bespoke approach to student learning, and helps the students to be able to keep up in the intense, short, teaching terms. Memories of an inspiring supervisor stay with students for life. A number of other academic interactions, such as meetings with Directors of Studies or Tutors, also normally take place on an individual 1:1 basis.

During the COVID pandemic and the 2021-22 teaching year, it is the stated aim of the collegiate university to deliver as much of the normal programme in person as possible. However, there may be many reasons to do with health, demographic, vulnerability of those at home etc that mean that a member of academic staff or student may not feel comfortable taking part in prolonged in-person sessions, and in that case the college would like to make it clear that it is perfectly acceptable to deliver meetings and teaching sessions remotely. Additionally students or staff may be in quarantine or may end up in self-isolation at short notice, so that remote meetings may be the only option.

If you do not feel comfortable running face to face sessions in person please can you keep the Senior Tutor informed ([pb29@cam.ac.uk](mailto:pb29@cam.ac.uk))?

### 1. Use of spaces in college

Supervisors, DOSes and Tutors may use their own offices (where applicable) or a booked supervision room for student meetings. Some staff may prefer to meet students outside – please contact the Tutorial Office for suggestions of venues. All the supervision rooms have an assessed maximum occupancy for 2m spacing, and several additional larger rooms have been made available for booking as supervision spaces (email [supervisions@homerton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:supervisions@homerton.cam.ac.uk) to book your room). Academic staff wishing to check room spacing can borrow the Senior Tutor's 2m stick (a white plastic pipe kept outside her office) – please return after use. At the start and end of supervisions surfaces, door knobs etc, should be wiped down by the students using alcohol wipes provided. Ventilation is thought to be key to avoiding a build-up of viral load, and windows and doors should be kept open as much as possible to ensure good air flow. Face coverings should be worn if anyone present feels uncomfortable without them. Students should not be borrowing stationery and equipment from Supervisors or each other. Supervisors might want to think how to delineate 'their' area in the room and differentiate it from the 'student' area.

### 2. Arriving to a supervision

Students and staff must follow Government guidelines on public transport, and should sanitise hands on arrival. Visiting Supervisors should sign in at the Porters' Lodge, and will be asked for a mobile number in case tracing is needed. Students from other colleges may come to Homerton for supervisions but should go directly to and from their supervision location by the shortest route from the outside, using hand sanitiser along the way. Supervisors should record attendance at every supervision.

### 3. Moving around college

Students and staff are expected to adhere to all the guidelines about hand sanitiser, routes around college, wearing of face coverings. All public toilet facilities, door handles and other frequently touched areas will be cleaned several times a day.

Supervisors should keep a record of all students attending each supervision in case tracing is required – this should not be onerous as such a record is a normal part of the reporting process.

### 4. Student groupings

Resident students are still grouped in households of between 3 and 12 (mostly 8-10) who share a kitchen, and sometimes bathroom facilities. It is assumed that within a household it may not be possible to maintain social distancing. Students from year 2 onward are in households defined by friendship groups at the time of the room ballot, and are not necessarily split into subjects. First year households each contain several students from several subjects (in groups of 2-4 students in 2-4 subjects per household): ideally students in the same subject and same household might form a supervision group, but it is also recognised that this may well not be feasible given that the housing allocation has been done blind to academic needs and course choices. In so far as possible students should be kept in the same supervision groups to minimise interaction.

If any student in a household displays symptoms or tests positive, any member of the household who is over 18.5 years or has not been double jabbed in the UK will be required to self-isolate. During this time isolated members of the household may be perfectly well, and we will have to try and deliver as much as possible of their academic programme remotely.

### 5. Concerns about illness

If you are concerned that a student in your group is displaying ANY symptoms of COVID, ask them to return to their room immediately and directly, and from there they should phone the Porters (01223 747111) for advice: there is a detailed protocol to deal with this from then on. Other students in the group should also return to their rooms and await instructions. The Supervisor should telephone the Porters' Lodge with a report of everyone present, and room number where the supervision took place. The Supervisor should arrange a test for themselves as soon as possible, and should not return to college until they have been cleared. The supervision room should be closed for further use until it has been thoroughly cleaned.

If a Supervisor is unwell with symptoms of COVID they should not come into college (or if here should go home immediately). Please let the Porters' Lodge know – 01223 747111 – you will be asked for the names of all students you have supervised in the past 14 days. Visit [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk) for advice, and also book a test at the university facility.

## 6. Concerns about student behaviour

If you have any concerns about the behaviour of your supervisees in terms of social distancing etc we ask you to explain this to them once, but if they are still causing concern you should ask them to leave, terminate the supervision and let the Senior Tutor know ([pb29@cam.ac.uk](mailto:pb29@cam.ac.uk)). You are not expected to supply an alternative session and you can of course claim payment for the terminated session.

## 7. Submission of work

It is recommended that students are asked to submit work electronically. The college can reimburse printing expenses to supervisors if needed. If work needs to be handwritten it should probably be 'quarantined'. As always, please emphasise to your students that they are normally expected to hand in work at the agreed time for each supervision, and supervisors are within their rights to decline to supervise any student who repeatedly fails to do so.

## 8. Remote supervisions

Even if a student is present in Cambridge it may be necessary for some or all of their supervisions to be by zoom/teams/skype – perhaps because the Supervisor is not able to supervise in person, perhaps because the student is in isolation within their household, or in quarantine. Except in an emergency, it is better not to mix remote and in-person supervisions in the same session. Students taking part in a remote supervision are expected to have their cameras and microphone on, and the Supervisor may decline to continue if they do not do so: a Supervision is meant to be an interactive experience. If the sudden need to supervise some students remotely involves an increase in teaching hours the college is happy to pay for them through Camcours as usual. If the increase is more than the Supervisor is willing or able to provide, they should let their Director of Studies know who will try to find additional capacity. As a rule of thumb, we should be trying to provide the normal number of hours of supervision per student – this will have been indicated by the DOS at the start of term, but please check with them if you have any doubts.

A small number of students may have been given permission to study remotely for the whole term, and so may therefore be based away from Cambridge. Special arrangements may have to be made to supervise them alone or with other remote students: please note that Supervisors are NOT expected to provide supervisions at unsocial hours because of different time zones – it will be up to the student to make themselves available.

Remote supervisions and meetings can be conducted from home or from Fellows' rooms or booked supervision spaces in the college. Please contact [supervisions@homerton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:supervisions@homerton.cam.ac.uk) to book a room and/or a zoom licence. If you have a desktop in your office please contact IT for help with patching zoom if needed, and for webcams and headphones as required.

## 9. Meals for Supervisors in college

We would like to show our appreciation to Supervisors working from the college by providing meals whilst you are working here. Unfortunately until further notice the facilities will be somewhat restricted, but you can pick up a voucher/token from the Tutorial Office

that will entitle you to a lunch or evening meal which you can collect from the dining hall. Further protocols available when you sign in the Porters' Lodge.

#### 10. If you are worried about the welfare of any of your students

We expect the term ahead to be stressful for everyone, and supervisors are often the first to notice welfare issues amongst their students. If you are concerned about any of your students please speak to their Director of Studies as soon as possible, who may well hand on concerns to the student's Tutor or the Senior Tutor. You can also approach these people directly yourself. You should never promise to keep a matter completely confidential if it raises concerns about the safety of the student or others, so that you should not feel that speaking to a DOS or Tutor in this situation constitutes a breach of confidence: we are all here to help our students in a sympathetic way.