

**Dear DCM students,**

First, we hope you and your families and loved ones are all well. We know that you will be keeping up with the university and UK government announcements regarding coronavirus (COVID-19). We are sure many of you are also following events very closely elsewhere, too, e.g. in your home countries.

Here is the link to the university coronavirus website: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/alerts/coronavirus/>

1. The university remains open but there is **no face-to-face teaching** and we will deliver **online sessions** instead. For each cohort of the DCM there are different priorities which we have summarised below:
  - a. **Year 3** – you have just completed the final taught session with Peter Jackson on Issues in Qualitative Research please keep working on this assessment for the submission date of the 2<sup>nd</sup> April. The next module Doctoral Research Design will mainly be delivered virtually, and the module guide will be available next week. In the meantime please do keep in touch with your supervisory team and continue to work on identifying the focus for your investigation and the outline literature review.
  - b. **Year 4** – the focus for this cohort is really to undertake your fieldwork though this may be a challenge given the current circumstances where face to face interviews are planned. Please do review the University guidelines on fieldwork and talk to your supervisory team about amendments to plans where alternative routes may be required. It may be that many potential participants may not be forthcoming – this will settle down as we adjust to the situation. Do not lose hope and if fieldwork has to be postponed keep writing!
  - c. **Year 5** – this cohort the priority is to focus on your writing and data analysis. Keeping in touch with your supervisory team is also vital. If you do have fieldwork to complete discuss with your supervisors the best way of completing this given our current challenges. Remember our insights that we need to reflect on how current circumstances shape the research we do – this seems particularly appropriate now and will be important parts of your final submissions.
2. Please **check in with your supervisors** and **make contact arrangements that are mutually suitable**. Many of you already make use of Skype and other platforms with your supervisors. Your interviews for the DCM were all undertaken via Skype and, for anything that cannot be sorted on email, that will be our preferred communication over the coming period.
3. If you are **planning fieldwork outside UK (or even inside UK)** within the relatively near future, please bear in mind notices from the university (and UK government) regarding **travel restrictions**.
4. I (Judie) just wanted to share a **useful resource** with you regarding **undertaking research during the pandemic**. A colleague shared this link with me and I thought many of you would find it useful. The link is to Doing Research During a Pandemic:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cIGjGABB2h2qbduTqfqrribHmog9B6P0NvMgVuiHZCl8/preview#>
5. In terms of offering more support I (Judie) am offering a **regular drop in for all DCM students** – a version of office hours if you like. I'll be available on Skype **every Thursday between 16.00-17.00** – my Skype address is judie.gannon - the idea behind this is you can drop in and ask me any queries about the programme.
6. I (Judie) am also about to set up a **Google Chat group for all DCM students** – this will help us stay connected across the cohorts and also means we can address one of the requests made by the student representatives at the last subject committee earlier this month.

We hope the best for you and your families.

Regards,

**Dr David Bowen and Dr Judie Gannon**