
LIVING IN HALLS DURING LOCKDOWN

Royal Holloway, University of London

In this blog, I will give you an insight into how your stay in a student accommodation can look like during the pandemic. I

am currently a master's student in English literature, and I decided to move into a flat provided by the university because the length of my study is only a year. As it is also my first year here in the UK, I preferred an already furnished room where I share the kitchen with a few other students who I thought I can befriend at the beginning of my stay.



Before I arrived, I made sure to request a room for self isolation from the university where they provide me with the necessities I need and even meals for the first day. However, I had to organize my food from that point on by myself and I got informed that shopping can be done through the Student Union Shop which provides a variety of essential products. They also have a quick and reliable delivery where the students who delivered my food also made sure everything was alright with my order. Unfortunately, I thought that the range of products they had on their website was not enough for my preferences from, so I decided to order from local grocery stores like Tesco or Waitrose.



After I finished self-isolation, I really wanted to explore the campus and the city of London while socializing and making some friends but that became harder than I expected as another lockdown hit the UK. I felt a bit frustrated that after my arrival in London and my self-isolation period, I had to stay in my flat for another month, but I felt it was necessary in order to prevent further Covid-19 casualties. I decided to check out how else I can stay social and I figured that joining some societies could help so I informed myself over the dozen societies we have to see which one I want to join. In the end, I chose the Taiwanese, Japanese and Film society but the activities were limited to some zoom calls and movie nights. However, I managed to make some good friends from the Taiwanese society as they are smaller, and I could meet up with another household during lockdown.

I also heard from some Facebook pages which freshers join that the Hall Life, a group of fellow students who help you with any issues concerning the accommodations, organize events usually and especially during lockdown. So, I decided to check their schedule out and they had different daily events which you have to book on the Royal Holloway Welcome app under “Living in Halls” in their calendar. I decided to participate at some game nights where they played “Jack box” and have a chat to meet more international students.

Whenever I wanted some fresh air and a small change in environment, I would take a walk around our beautiful campus and explore all the different areas. My favorite place is still the Founder’s building which strikes me every time I see it.



Even though I tried to keep myself busy with assignments and some social gatherings, I still felt a bit down sometimes in my room but unfortunately that is unavoidable at some point. I decided that whenever I would feel more negative, I would call some friends and catch up with them so I could get my mind off of those feelings. It always made me feel much better afterwards but also miss their presence in my daily life. Still, I think to myself that things will be better at some point and that I will be able to enjoy a more normal student life later on.