

Hi Cherilyn,

I'm writing to you as a 3rd year Fashion Photography course rep on behalf of my course and photography institution at Falmouth University. Our university has taken the decision to completely close our specialist facilities across the campus. All access to equipment, studios, and other valuable apparatus has stopped. The students are proposing a reconsideration on these decisions made, and would really appreciate your personal advice, opinion, and clarification on the legalities of this process.

Being able to access equipment for our practical courses such as film, photography, and fashion design, is paramount for students in order to maintain the quality of the degree standards as laid out in the 'Guidance for providers about quality and standards' from the OfS:

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/guidance-for-providers-about-quality-and-standards-during-coronavirus-pandemic/https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.officeforstudents.org.uk%2Fpublications%2Fguidance-for-providers-about-quality-and-standards-during-coronavirus-pandemic%2F&data=04%7C01%7CEJ223468%40falmouth.ac.uk%7C7e78ca7f0db44a4e630808d8b0c63174%7C550beeb36a3d4646a111f89d0177792e%7C0%7C0%7C637453712566081678%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlloiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=pgr3dFBfZg6AR%2B6UXsWziRMblfDZPfNtr8Hp2dKqs7k%3D&reserved=0>

Whether or not the buildings on campus should remain closed, there appears to be no valid reason why the equipment booking system shouldn't remain open, which could easily be achieved as operated by 'essential retail' standards; monitored socially distanced outdoor queues, PPE and sanitising wipes, which the facility stores have already been set up with, alongside screens for technician safety and appropriate social distanced floor markings indoors.

It makes no sense for our University to keep the library and campus shop open whilst closing our studios and access to equipment, when we could keep with the government guidelines for Further Education and have the facilities open. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuseshttps://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fhigher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses%2Fhigher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses&data=04%7C01%7CEJ223468%40falmouth.ac.uk%7C7e78ca7f0db44a4e630808d8b0c63174%7C550beeb36a3d4646a111f89d0177792e%7C0%7C0%7C637453712566091648%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWlloiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=MZdELHndpRzc6Sbh%2BIJS3mx1jerpniWIBCEWcXJTq1TU%3D&reserved=0>

We have already lost months of valuable time since the first lockdown in March last year, and the 3rd year students are particularly worried for their portfolios which are the main asset in finding employment for creatives post graduation.

Please may we have your support or clarification on the topic of facilities opening for

our specific situation, as under government guidelines, a full list of exemptions can be found on closing certain business and venues in England, which includes:

- education and training - for schools to use sports, leisure and community facilities where that is part of their normal provision
- professional dancers and choreographers to work (in fitness and dance studios)
- for the purposes of TV and filming

With your personal input, the University will be more inclined to take appropriate action which will benefit thousands of students - I have personally chased up the other reps to find out how many students are already in Falmouth, who either stayed over the Christmas holidays, or returned before the 31st December, based on our replies and estimates more than half the university students are currently in Falmouth, therefore opening facilities should not promote the movement of students, and this should not be a concern, but more of a justice to the current students who have stayed put under the lockdown restrictions.

Minister of State for Universities, Michelle Donelan, said in her public letter to students concerning the staggered return in January, "We ask universities to make provision to provide appropriate support and facilities to the following," which included: "students who require access to specialist facilities for their work,"

For the students of Falmouth University, our practical courses are based on equipment and facilities. Students simply cannot complete their courses realistically, nor can they gain the appropriate experience, portfolio work, or set themselves up for the competitive industries ahead - no one would have come to this university if it weren't for the technical resources.

Many thanks, your time is really appreciated,

Looking forward to hearing back from you,

Eva

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