

Message from the Director (8 April 2020)

New Year's Greetings from the British Council

Dear all,

As we approach the Thingyan holidays, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy New Year.

Usually at this time of year in Myanmar, people are busy preparing to visit pagodas, see family and friends, celebrate a new year by throwing water over each other, and enjoy delicious Thingyan snacks.

This year, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the celebrations will understandably be different.

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As I mentioned in my last message, due to the current situation, we are not able to connect people and institutions in Myanmar to the UK face to face. However, our desire to build trust and understanding between our countries remains as strong as ever. There are many ways to keep connected and hopefully help enjoy the holidays:

If you are a learner of English, our online resources are available 24/7. Please try one of our English lessons for free [here](#).

If you are a teacher of English, please use our free resources to enhance your skills and confidence in the classroom [here](#).

Our digital library remains open, 24/7 in all corners of Myanmar here. You can find out how to join and access the best digital books, magazines, music and cultural content [here](#).

You can also sign up for one of our Mass Open Online Courses (MOOCs) which start just after the new year holidays:

Understanding IELTS: Writing - starts 27 April:
www.futurelearn.com/courses/understanding-ielts-writing

Understanding IELTS: Listening - starts 27 April:
www.futurelearn.com/courses/understanding-ielts-listening

We're also busy making plans for other services after Thingyan. We're offering virtual placement tests for our English courses and planning to start virtual classes by the end of April. These virtual courses are a flexible online learning programmes, they will be led by highly trained British Council expert teachers and have a balance of interactive online coursework and guided learning activities.

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As for me, I will celebrate the new year at home here in Yangon. Usually I enjoy going downtown and taking part in the celebrations. This year, I will throw a small and safe amount of water over myself at home and try to make my favourite Myanmar Thingyan treats - Mont Lat Saung and Shwe-Yin-Aye.

Wish me luck!

On behalf of the British Council, I would like to once again re-assure you of our ongoing commitment and support to Myanmar.

Even though this new year will be different, I hope it brings good fortune to people all over Myanmar and in the UK. Despite the many challenges of Covid-19, it is also an opportunity to connect people and institutions in Myanmar and the UK in new and innovative ways.

A very happy new year to you all!

Dr Richard Sunderland
Director, Myanmar
British Council