

**July 2020**

Dear Offer Holder

We are delighted you are interested in coming to the University of Lincoln. We are writing to let you know about arrangements for the new academic year, as you may not have been able to visit us since the Covid crisis began. We are writing to you as you currently have an offer of a place at the University. We wanted to give you information so you can think carefully about preparing for your future should you be successful in meeting any outstanding conditions of your offer.

We are working very hard to make our students' time over the next year exciting, fun and academically challenging and engaging. Given the Covid impact and the guidance from Government at the University of Lincoln we are making sure our campus and our activities are as safe and as student friendly as they can be for the coming year. You will be joining a strong community where students and staff seek to be friendly and supportive of each other. We have a whole range of activities, facilities and events planned for you, all of which have been checked to make sure we take account of Government guidance and safety requirements. This means that we have adapted the way we teach, with socially distanced face-to-face teaching and online learning, the way we offer services to provide a safe environment for socialising and relaxing and how to safely navigate our campus. In all the changes we have made we have kept in the front of our minds our focus on friendliness and community spirit at Lincoln and we look forward to your participation in that community.

This letter sets out in detail various aspects of the planned experience at Lincoln, and we hope the information is helpful as you plan for your future.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Our starting point is to deliver all of the learning outcomes of your programme of study in an environment that prioritises your health and wellbeing in line with Government guidance. Our plan therefore is to deliver programme content by a combination of face-to-face and online provision, known as blended learning.

Being on campus is an important part of the University experience. The blended approach enables face-to-face learning in an appropriately socially-distanced way by reducing capacity in our teaching rooms in line with Government guidelines. To achieve this without reducing your timetabled hours, blended learning supplements face-to-face sessions with timetabled online provision, including live interaction with your peers and academic staff.

For at least the first semester, we aim to deliver three to four hours per week of face-to-face teaching across all our programmes. For first year Architecture students, our aim is that face-to-

face teaching will take place in a studio setting on Fridays. For Architectural Science and Technology students, our aim is that face-to-face studio will be on Tuesdays. There will also be digital studio catch up sessions. Both of these programmes also involve lectures and seminars. In non-pandemic restricted times, lectures would be when all of the students on a module would gather together; seminars are smaller groups allowing for more discussion, debate, and engagement with tasks. However, while current social-distancing restrictions remain in place, lectures and seminars for these programmes will take place online.

For those studying Construction, Science and Management, or Architectural Science and Technology students, lectures and seminars will be delivered as a mixture of face-to-face (around three hours a week) and online teaching. These will be alternated each week, so you will need to keep a close eye on your timetable.

In addition, we are aiming to provide bookable workspaces on campus in which up to 45 students can work independently. This will be a collegiate environment in which to work, with places to charge your laptop, as well as University computers with relevant software on them. Use of these spaces will require students to be responsible, socially distanced and to sanitise as necessary.

Blended learning typically means that before your studio, or lecture, you will have to prepare something. This may be watching an online lecture, following an online learning session, or reading and adding your views to a comment thread, for example. Our digital learning tools have been chosen based on what students have told us they enjoy using, and are intended to facilitate on-line personal engagement with lecturers and fellow students. Full training will be provided in their use.

It is highly recommended that you have a laptop and wifi available for use, and that you have Microsoft packages for writing.

One aspect of our standard provision, which is particularly important in these times, is the allocation of a Personal Tutor to each student. They will be your designated 'go to' person for advice and support throughout your time at Lincoln.

Our assessment processes will likewise follow Government guidelines in relation to social distancing and safety. The majority of assessments for all programmes in the school will be submitted online.

There is a big challenge planning the session times for our face-to-face, socially distanced teaching and in some cases, similar to many other universities, our teaching week will include evening sessions (up to 8pm, Mon-Thurs only). We will let you know your timetable as soon as possible

Our blended learning approach is in place as a result of current circumstances. Should a change in Government advice require a return to lockdown, at any stage, then we would move to online-only provision for the period required. We did this with short notice in March this year, and the School received an unsolicited letter from our student representatives thanking us for the way in which we met the challenge. If we have to do this again, although of course we hope that such a return to lockdown is not required, then we will be well prepared, having developed our blended learning approach alongside appropriate training on online platforms. More optimistically, it is possible too that social distancing restrictions will be eased. In that case, we would anticipate increasing the number of face-to-face sessions, whilst retaining an online element, in line with

official advice.

The School of Architecture and the Built Environment is a genuine community, built on strong staff-student engagement, both within the formal structures of student representation and the Personal Tutoring system, and also through staff commitment to our students. We look forward to you joining this community.

### **The University Campus**

We are of course prioritising the safety of our community through careful preparation for the new term to ensure you are able to learn and study effectively. As you would expect each of our buildings has been through a thorough risk assessment process. We have provided additional hand sanitisers for everyone to use, created one-way systems where possible and the capacity of teaching rooms and other spaces has been reduced to ensure social distancing can be maintained across the campus. In line with Government guidance we expect most facilities to be open, including the Library and Sports Centre although numbers, for safety reasons, will be reduced, which will mean fewer people can use each facility at any one time and we may need to introduce booking systems in some cases to better manage access. Catering facilities will be provided and additional outdoor facilities, including two large tepees, will serve food and drinks and there will be lots of spaces to meet friends and chat. Our campus has lots of outdoor spaces and we will be utilising them more so the campus should also be a fun and vibrant place to be.

The Students' Union (SU) are working hard to make sure that students can access as many of the societies and activities offered as possible, whilst keeping safe. With current social distancing guidelines in mind, we are planning a wide range of outdoor and virtual events that students will be able to engage with and enjoy in a variety of ways including outdoor cinemas, virtual fayres, food-markets and social sport sessions. Students will be able to enjoy The Swan, Tower Bar and The Barge within Government guidelines, as well as being able to take advantage of our brand new food and drink delivery and collection service, using our Student Orders app. The Students' Union are also working closely with their sports teams and societies to make sure that there is a wide variety of activities, training and social events for students to get involved with, to meet new people and make the most of their time at University. You can read more about the SU [here](#).

### **Student Wellbeing and Support**

The Student Wellbeing Centre and the Student Support Centre are open. There is a limited face-to-face service on Campus but you can contact them and make full use of all their support online. Should you, as one of our applicants have any questions or queries about coming to Lincoln in October and any other concerns they are there for you. You can contact Wellbeing and support by going to: <https://studentservices.lincoln.ac.uk/> where all the service details are available.

To enable you to make the most out of your experience in Lincoln and to help you access course materials and other services, we strongly recommend that you have a PC, laptop or tablet device available that will enable you to easily engage with our on line learning platforms from your student accommodation or your home. There will be access to IT equipment on campus in the Library, our learning lounges and specialist academic areas; however, due to the need for social distancing, we are having to reduce the capacity in all of these areas and there may not always be a space free when you have a timetabled (on line) session or an assessment. If you are struggling to access IT equipment, please contact Student Support who can assist you with further advice and

information.

We are committed to providing you with the best possible start and to helping you to prepare for your time with us. As part of this commitment, we are offering you the chance to access our new Learning at Lincoln pre-arrival online support package. This set of resources, advice and simple exercises is designed to help you prepare for the all-important first steps into university, enabling you to learn within a supportive community and to make the most of the new opportunities that university provides. Please note, these materials are available to support you in starting your new life at University, but completion is entirely voluntary and any exercises you complete will not be assessed or marked. When you are ready, you can begin by clicking on this link <https://lincn.ac/4d>

### **Student Accommodation**

Many applicants consider taking up student accommodation and you may well have already booked your residence for the upcoming year. All University managed student accommodation will have wardens who will be there to ensure you can settle into your accommodation and will be offering flatmate and residential support activities throughout the year. If you have booked university accommodation we will be writing to you with further details next month to help you prepare but there is lots of advice and information that can be found on our student accommodation website which is [here](#).

The changes detailed above will form part of your agreement with the University. If we do not hear from you to the contrary prior to enrolment, we will assume that you have accepted the changes. Further changes may have to be made in line with Government guidance, and we will communicate these with you as necessary. May we draw your attention to the University's Admissions Terms and Conditions (in particular sections 8 and 9) which can be found [here](#). You may also wish to review the University Student Complaints Procedure which can be found [here](#).

We very much hope this information is useful to help you plan, that you are successful in meeting any outstanding conditions of your offer and can join us in Lincoln. If you have any questions, please do email me at [spretlove@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:spretlove@lincoln.ac.uk)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Pretlove". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a long, thin horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.

Professor Stephen Pretlove  
**Head of the School of Architecture & Built Environment**  
University of Lincoln