



UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN

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

We understand that you will have many questions regarding University study and whether your degree programme will remain as you expected as a consequence of Covid-19. We are pleased to confirm that all programmes within The School of Life Sciences have been designed so that programme and module level learning outcomes can still be met.

We are looking carefully at how we can best deliver a full learning experience to students while maintaining social distancing and physical and mental wellbeing. This will obviously lead to some changes in how we deliver material, with our aim being to provide a blend of online sessions to replace large group lectures, but to maintain in person practical classes, alongside a mix of in-person and online seminars, workshops and tutorials.

To provide the maximum learning benefit for students we are planning to ensure online sessions will become much more interactive than a traditional lecture format, and students will be

encouraged to engage in preparatory work in advance of these sessions to gain maximum benefit from them. Our aim is to make students active participants in their learning as we move to new ways of delivery that maximise student engagement. Planning the session times for our face-to-face, socially distanced has been challenging, and in some cases, like 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.

Laboratory practicals and field trips

One of the distinctive features of the Life Sciences is hands-on practical experimentation in laboratory sessions and experiencing the world around us through fieldtrips and visits. We have reworked our practical timetable to ensure that students are still able to take part in practicals as in-person events.

To achieve this we have reduced the maximum number of students in any one session to maintain social distancing and arranged to run more repeat sessions so that every student can receive the practical experience required to meet the learning outcomes of their programme of study. In the case that local or national lockdowns prevent access to campus we will move to online delivery of practicals as virtual events.

We are currently scheduling external trips and events as usual, being mindful of travel restrictions and the requirements of external providers. We will continue to cover all mandatory costs for compulsory trips and events. Our planning for our overseas field trip module continues, and we will be guided by Foreign Office and Government advice on whether trips can be undertaken as these trip dates approach.

Student support

Our aim is to continue to support all of our students through a mix of online and face-to-face contact with academic staff members. This will take the form of one-to-one and small group sessions and we will be maintaining our personal tutor system so you have a named academic to support you as an individual.

The University's support mechanisms, including Student Wellbeing, Student Services, The Students Union and support services such as the library, careers service and student administration also remain available for students.

Assessment

Within the School of Life Sciences, we offer a wide mix of assessment types including written coursework, oral presentations, posters, video presentations and vivas among others. We also use the traditional exam as an assessment method in some modules. Where possible we will keep our assessments the same to continue to provide a range of opportunities to students, but delivery may be altered such that in person assessments now become online assessments to maintain social distancing. It is likely that traditional exams will be replaced by a form of assessment known as a Time Constrained Assessment (TCA). This is where a question paper is released to students at a set time, completed by the student and uploaded by a set time the same day. The use of traditional exams in an exam hall is unlikely to be possible due to social distancing requirements. We have used these TCA assessments successfully previously and the marks achieved by students have been comparable to traditional exams.

Accreditation

We recognise that those students undertaking our Biomedical Science programme will want to be reassured that their accreditation with the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) remains as part of their programme of study. We can confirm that we are in close contact with the IBMS about the changes to our programme in light of Covid-19 and accreditation of our programme is not at risk as a consequence of the changes we have made to delivery. All programme requirements, including content required by the IBMS will still be delivered to students as we move forwards.

Changes to delivery in the event of lockdown

Should local or national lockdowns be required during the academic year, we aim to move our delivery fully online. This will alter the way in which practicals are delivered, and we are actively preparing video and online material to support this in case it becomes necessary. We do not anticipate a reduction in teaching in the event of a second lockdown and all students should be able to continue with their studies remotely.

We are very proud of our student engagement and the quality of our teaching within the School of Life Sciences. The National Student Survey 2020 placed all of our programmes in the top 10 nationally for student satisfaction, with two of our degree programmes ranking first in their subject area among all universities in the UK. We aim to support students throughout their studies, whether in person or online, and look forward to sharing the University experience with you next year.

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 sbevan@lincoln.ac.uk

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