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

Due to the exceptional circumstances we find ourselves in, teaching will be different, but the School of Sport and Exercise Science aims to maintain the characteristics that make our programmes distinctive. We believe that individuals learn best by ‘doing’ and we intend to continue with this approach where possible and ensure that applied practice is embedded in our programmes - this may be in the form of classes in labs, clinical settings, or the Sports Hall. Below is an outline of our plans for the new academic year.

We are planning to deliver all learning outcomes relating to our programmes in an environment that prioritises your health and wellbeing in line with Government guidance. Our plan is to deliver programme content through a combination of face-to-face delivery, which is appropriately socially-distanced, as well as online provision. This is known as blended learning. We will reduce the capacity in our teaching rooms without reducing your timetabled hours.
Lectures will be delivered online, however, we intend to deliver all laboratory, practical and seminar sessions face-to-face, but in appropriate sized groups to accommodate social distancing. These will run in either shorter timeframes facilitated with online material, or will be delivered via a rota system, so that students alternate face-to-face and online sessions.

Laboratory and practical classes will continue to provide engaging and applied sessions. The use of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) may be required in some lab classes to ensure the safety of all those in the session and the School will provide any necessary PPE for practical and applied work. Module Co-ordinators will choose the approach that best suits their module. To support students all staff will offer two weekly virtual drop-in hours for you to access should you require it. Our Personal Tutorial system will continue to provide academic support and careers guidance and monitor your attendance.

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 Programmes will continue to be academically rigorous and vocationally relevant. We intend to continue to embed industry recognised qualifications within the relevant modules, however, the delivery of these will differ to previous years. As a School, we are noted for our student-centred curriculum which is underpinned by real world experiences including placements. Wherever possible these will continue, but it is recognised that some organisations may not be able to accommodate these. Alternative plans are being explored, for example, students may be placed with the Students’ Union in the role of supporting student sport. We will continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure that wherever possible we can provide opportunities for you in the community to support your studies.

Our assessment processes will likewise follow Government guidelines in relation to social distancing and safety. Where there are exams, in-class tests, or oral assessments an online variant will replace this. If assessment involves community engagement, this may be adapted.

By the time term starts in October, we hope that the Covid-19 situation will have improved and that there could be a relaxation of some of the measures we have taken, but in the case of a further lockdown, all face-to-face seminars and practical sessions will be converted into online sessions, with face-to-face sessions continuing once the lockdown has been re-lifted.

The School of Sport and Exercise Science is a genuine community, built on strong staff-student engagement with a formal structure of student representation and Personal Tutoring. Our School Director of Learning and Teaching, Dan Bishop, recently met with current students to discuss the next academic year. There was a mix of all years and programmes and they were appreciative of the time taken to consult with them. The meeting outlined the School plans for teaching and these were viewed positively by the students and it was encouraging to see our School ‘community’ working together.

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://lncn.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 cthomas@lincoln.ac.uk

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