

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 have designed your programme to be as collaborative and stimulating an experience as possible, as well as making sure that you will be learning in an environment that prioritises your health and well-being. All the learning outcomes for your programme are the same; in other words, when you progress from your first year, you will have achieved everything you need to for your degree up to that point. To achieve this, we will teach your programme using a combination of face-to-face and online provision, an approach known as 'blended learning'.

Being on campus is an important part of your University experience, but we have had to reduce capacity in our teaching rooms to enable social distancing, in line with Government guidelines. This won't mean, however, that we will reduce your timetabled hours. Instead, your face-to-face teaching will be complemented by timetabled online provision, including live interaction with your fellow students and academic staff. In some cases, similar to many other universities, our teaching week will include evening sessions (up to 8pm, Mon-Thurs only).

Using best practices in digital education, we will make use of a variety of approaches and technologies to make it easy for you to study, on your own, and in groups. Our digital learning tools have been chosen based on what students have told us they most enjoy using.

Your programme of study would typically be taught through a combination of lectures and seminars. In non-pandemic-restricted times, lectures would be when all the students on a module would gather together; seminars are smaller groups allowing for more discussion, debate, and engagement with tasks. While current social-distancing restrictions stay in place, and for your first semester at least (until the end of January), all lectures will be timetabled as online sessions, while seminars will be a combination of online and face-to-face teaching. The principle we are adopting is that most seminars will be timetabled on a rota system, so that you will alternate face-to-face and online seminar sessions on each module, each week. On some modules this might vary a little, but the principle of a mix of face-to-face and online provision will be kept across your programme of study. Online and face-to-face activities will be happening every week on all modules, both in live sessions and in guided independent and collaborative learning. Our Programme Leaders will ensure, through continuous activities, whether face-to-face or online, that you feel part of a strong, vibrant learning community.

Our assessment processes will likewise follow Government guidelines in relation to social distancing and safety. Most of our assessments are submitted online as standard in normal circumstances. Where there are exams, in-class tests, or oral assessments, we will decide nearer the assessment period as to whether they go ahead in this form, or in an online variant (for example, 'take-home' exams) depending on Government guidelines on the pandemic at the time.

We will be supporting your learning of SPSS, STATA, and other digital packages for quantitative methods, from a distance, using a site and remote licence. It is therefore advisable that you have a computer that can run Windows 10, or OS 10.11 (or newer).

We would also note two other aspects of your studies that are particularly important in these times. First, you will have a Personal Tutor – a member of academic staff who is your designated 'go to' person for advice and support, both pastoral and academic. You will see your Personal Tutor online and in small socially-distanced face-to-face group sessions, and they are available for any one-to-one meetings you would like. Second, independent learning continues to be an essential aspect of university learning, and guided reading and other independent engagement still is key, this year as any, to performing well in your studies.

Our plan for this blended learning approach is now in place for your first semester. Should a change in Government advice require a return to lockdown, then we would move to online-only provision for the period required. All your tutors have designed their delivery to be able to respond quickly if the need arises. We did this with short notice in March this year, and the School received excellent feedback and support 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 even better prepared, having developed our ability in the blended learning approach. 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 for the second semester.

We hope you will take part in all the induction activities we plan for you in College, some of which

will be online this year. These include meetings with your teaching team, including your Programme Leader, your Personal Tutor, and your College support services. Social events in your first few weeks of term will give you the chance to meet our current Global Certificate students and hear about their experiences. These socials will include games, coffee and catch ups, quizzes and other activities designed to make you feel part of our global community.

We look forward to you joining us in Lincoln.

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 sgoggin@lincoln.ac.uk



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