



15 June 2020

University Centre Sparsholt (UCS) is now able to share with you plans for the start of the new academic year starting in September 2020. Following the guidance provided by Public Health England, the Office for Students and using feedback from a survey completed by our current students, we have decided to delay the start of term by one week. This enables us to provide a phased return for all our students and provide the confidence that you will be safe in your studies. We will extend the end of the autumn term by one week so that you will still receive the same amount of teaching.

The new term dates for all MSc students are now:

**Thursday 1 October to Friday 18 December 2020**

(Reading week is unchanged 26.10.20-30.10.20)

With the safety of our community at the foremost in our thinking, the UCS campus will be open to welcome students from the start of term on Monday 21 September with the appropriate safety measures in place based on the latest UK government guidance on social distancing and relevant use of PPE.

Due to anticipated restrictions necessitated by social distancing, UCS will be introducing a blended and personalised approach to teaching, learning and assessment for the start of the autumn term.

Our current students have told us that their main concerns are the importance of face-to-face contact with staff and peers for support, motivation and wellbeing, the access to practical facilities and resources and the desire to continue to study in a safe environment. Some students have stated that they do not feel comfortable to return to the campus, for a range of reasons until the pandemic is less of a threat but wish to continue to study remotely. Our aim is to provide an experience which meets the needs of our student community and continue to provide the TEF Gold teaching, learning and assessment for which UCS is recognised.

- The UCS campus will be open for face-to-face activity, where possible, for delivery of small group teaching including: practical sessions, tutorials, seminars, and other events that can be safely accommodated with social distancing and/or the appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other measures.
- All classroom-based teaching will be recorded and be available online, allowing you to either access teaching face to face on campus or remotely if that is your preference.

- Additional safety measures will be in place such as deep cleaning, one-way systems, sanitiser stations, and other measures in line with government advice to ensure the campus is as Covid-safe as possible.
- Enrolment, induction and welcome will involve a blend of in person and online activities in the autumn
- Accommodation at both Sparsholt and Burma Rd, Winchester remains available with safety measures and guidance in place and 24/7 welfare support
- Students will be encouraged to join the academic year at the beginning wherever possible, but those who prefer to stay at home will be able to access online provision, including both one-to-one pastoral and academic support, during the autumn term.
- DSA specialist study support will be available either face to face with appropriate social distancing guidelines in place or remotely if that is your choice.
- Any changes to the guidance provided by the Government or Public Health England will be incorporated into the teaching programme as quickly as possible, it is our intention to return to all face to face teaching as soon as it is reasonably safe to do so.
- In the event that an increase in Covid 19 cases results in a return to a total lockdown situation, we will maintain a full timetable of teaching but revert to remote delivery and support our students to return home as appropriate.
- All industry work placements and UK residential field trips will be deferred until the spring term at the earliest.
- Whilst overseas field trips are optional extras associated with some degree programmes and we would hope that these trips would be able to resume in 2021, it is not possible to confirm any trips at this time.

If you wish to discuss this further or have any concerns about your programme of study for next year, please contact [degree-enquiries@sparsholt.ac.uk](mailto:degree-enquiries@sparsholt.ac.uk) who will direct your query to the relevant course tutor.

Please be assured of our best attention at all times. We remain committed to providing you with a rich and varied Higher Education experience at University Centre Sparsholt and look forward to welcoming you in September.

Kind regards



Caroline James

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