Message to Offer-holders of UCL’s Environmental Design and Engineering MSc for 2020/21 academic year on teaching in term one

Sent 31st July 2020

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We look forward to welcoming you to the UCL community in September.

We’ve been putting a lot of thought into our teaching for 2020/21 in the light of the current coronavirus pandemic and the comments and feedback we have received from applicants and current students. As the situation is still developing globally, it’s clear that we are going to need to make some changes to how we will deliver the MSc Environmental Design and Engineering (EDE) to give you an excellent learning experience, whilst ensuring the health and safety of all our students and staff.

In addition to the information below, please refer to the UCL frequently asked questions page for prospective students this year.

**Teaching in 2020-21 - Term 1 (28th September 2020 – 18th December 2020)**

After careful consideration we have decided that all teaching for the MSc EDE for Term 1 (i.e. up until Christmas) will be conducted online. This means that all students will be able to complete all teaching taking place in this term without attending UCL in person. This includes all lectures, tutorials, seminars and assessment.

We have already been teaching successfully online since March 2020. We are now drawing on this experience to develop a range of new teaching techniques and are working with a number of software applications to enrich the programme’s online delivery. These developments will ensure that the teaching of the EDE MSc can be delivered in an engaging, exciting and effective way, irrespective of where individual students are based in Term 1.

The MSc EDE is accredited by CIBSE. We can confirm that the all the proposed options for delivering the MSc in 2020-21 will meet the requirements of the CIBSE accreditation.

**Attending UCL during Term 1**

UCL will be open in September. Where students are able to come to London in Term 1 we will provide limited events, following social distancing guidelines to ensure your safety. These may be social or extra-curricular events such as seminars related to the programme but which do not form part of the formal taught content and which will not be assessed. Our excellent campus facilities, such as the Library and Student Centre, will also be open for you to use with safety precautions in place. If you are unable to travel to London, you will be able to complete Term 1 remotely and will have online access to facilities such as the UCL Libraries.
Timetable for Term 1
At present we are looking at various modes of delivering online teaching. Many activities will be ‘asynchronous’ meaning you will be able to access them at a time that suits you. We do however also plan to hold some ‘synchronous’ activities where all students, or groups, will engage in the learning activity together at the same time. Timetables for these events will be available before the start of term.

We’re pleased to say that all modules currently scheduled for Term 1 will still be taught in Term 1.

**Teaching in 2020-21 – Term 2 (11th January 2021 to Friday 26th March 2021)**
We are hopeful that we will be able to undertake teaching face-to-face during Term 2. During the EDE programme we have lots of design-related content and encourage group projects. We therefore feel that it will be very important for students to have some face-to-face tuition, provided that this can be delivered safely. We are confident however that we will be able to successfully replicate this community experience online, if required.

There remains, however, uncertainty about what the situation will actually be. We will adapt our teaching to adhere to all social distancing requirements that are in force at the time. Our current intentions for Term 2 are:

- If it is safe to do so, all teaching will be in person.
- If social distancing is still required, we will focus the face-to-face teaching on those sessions where this will be most beneficial. We will undertake other teaching events (lectures etc.) online
- If no face-to-face teaching is possible, we will deliver teaching and assessment online

Of course, the situation is uncertain at the moment and will continue to change. We do not know when we will be in a position to confirm how Term 2 will be delivered. Students should plan on the basis that they will be required to be present at UCL, in London, from Term 2 onwards.

**Dissertations – Term 3.**
Due to the independent nature of writing a dissertation, you will be able to complete with online supervision. However, if it is safe and appropriate you will be able to have dissertation support in person, subject to any social distancing requirements at the time.

**Changes to module availability**
We regret to announce that we will not be running the following optional modules during the 2020-21 academic year:

BENV0043 Post Occupancy Evaluation
BENV0044 Smart Energy Systems: Theory, Practice and Implementation

At present we expect all other optional modules to be available, subject to there being sufficient student uptake.

**Field Trips**
As you may be aware, MSc EDE students usually have a field trip to the Centre for Alternative Technology in North Wales at the end of October. This trip will not take place in Term 1. We do however intend to rearrange this for a date in either Term 2 or Term 3.
Past students have found this an invaluable (and fun) opportunity to explore some of the design and technology solutions we cover in the MSc, as well as an opportunity to see a different part of the UK and, of course, make friends with your fellow students.

We are working closely with the venue for the field trip to ensure this can be done safely and to identify a date. We will only run the trip if it can be done safely and in line with any social distancing that is required at the time.

Note that this field trip is optional. Students are not required to take part. No formal part of the syllabus is covered on the trip and no activities undertaken on the trip will be assessed as part of the MSc.

**Visas and immigrations**

If you have any questions relating to Tier 4 visas and immigration issues, please see the UCL Immigration Pages which provide comprehensive information and advice. Please note that unfortunately we in the academic department cannot provide any advice or information about Tier 4 visas or other immigration issues. If you have further questions, you can book an appointment with UCL's Student Immigration Advice Team.

**Contacting us**

If you have any further questions about the programme delivery please contact our departmental teaching administration at bseer-studentqueries@ucl.ac.uk