Update for students on COVID-19 - from the Student Advice and Wellbeing team

We are working with key higher education bodies and the UK Government to help ensure that our students are supported effectively during this crisis - and we are getting answers to the questions you are asking us.

There have been a number of concerns raised regarding issues such as tuition fees, payment of loans and grants, accommodation, visas for international students and financial hardship.

We have tried to address them in this note. If you still have concerns or need further support after reading this, please contact the relevant team(s) within Student Advice and Wellbeing. All contact details are listed here: www.ljmu.ac.uk/studentsupport

Travelling from Liverpool at this time

The Government has ruled that students travelling from their city of study to a home address are NOT classed as essential travel and therefore all students should now remain where they are until the restrictions are lifted.

This means that if you are still in Liverpool, you will need to remain in your accommodation until the Government announces an easing of the travel restrictions. Please see the full text of the letter from the Government Minister at the end of this email.

Accommodation

All accommodation provision for students at LJMU is through private providers - we do not own or run any accommodation. These providers have been working with the university and Government to seek solutions to the issues and concerns raised by students, especially about their current contracts.

Further information is available on the COVID page of our website, under guidance for students on accommodation: https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/about-us/information-on-coronavirus

International students

As the UK Government has stated, any student who is in the UK legally, but whose visa is due to expire, or has already expired, and who cannot leave because of travel restrictions related to COVID19, will NOT be regarded as an overstayer, or suffer any detriment in the future.

Anyone whose leave expired after the 24 January and who cannot leave the country because of travel restrictions or self-isolation will have their visas extended to 31 May 2020.

Students are advised to contact the Coronavirus Immigration team via email to advise them of their situation – email CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk. International students can also contact internationaladvice@ljmu.ac.uk for further advice and support.

Money and Funding

Tuition Fees

As long as you continue to be a registered and enrolled student of the university, your tuition fee loan will still be paid by the Student Loans Company (SLC). This in turn ensures that you can continue to have access to our online materials, your academic tutors, have your assessments marked and receive appropriate feedback on your work. It will also mean you can either graduate or progress to the next level of your studies as quickly as possible (given the ongoing global situation).
The Department for Education have confirmed that there are currently no plans in place to withhold or amend any of the expected tuition fee funding anticipated for the next term.

**Maintenance funding (Loans and Grants)**

In line with your continued enrolment as a student, you will continue to be paid your Student Loan and any applicable grants at the beginning of April (for September start courses) or subsequently if you are attending a course on a non-standard academic year. This position will only change if you suspend or withdraw from your course. You can check your anticipated payment date by logging onto your student finance account and checking your individual payment dates on your financial notification.

**LJMU Progression Bursary payments**

The LJMU Progression Bursary will still be paid to eligible and enrolled students. You can also check this via your student finance account (letters and correspondence file). The anticipated payment date is Friday 24th April 2020.

**Earnings from Employment**

If you have recently lost your job you may wish to read the following information from the Government. Your employer may be willing to (re)employ you as a furloughed worker through the recently announced support package for employees/employers. This will also apply to those on zero hours contracts. You should contact your employer ASAP and ask what their plans are for claiming funds and paying staff.


**Student Support Fund**

For those students experiencing financial hardship at this time, please read the information around eligibility for the Student Support Fund – http://myservices.ljmu.ac.uk/. Applications are assessed online and it may take a few weeks before payment can be made due to processing times. We are processing and approving payments as quickly as possible to support students.