

I'm writing to you about your application to study the Chinese Studies and Business Management BA (TN12) in the School of East Asian Studies and Sheffield University Management School at the University of Sheffield. As you know, the University will be adjusting how it delivers its courses in the autumn to accommodate the social distancing measures required to combat the coronavirus pandemic. The current plans involve a blend of face-to-face teaching in small groups in Sheffield, where social distancing can be maintained, supported by digital delivery. In this email, I'll explain what this will mean for your studies on the Chinese Studies and Business Management BA.

Course content

There's no change to the overall learning outcomes of the course and all modules remain the same. You'll still obtain proficiency in Chinese Studies, an advanced understanding of Business Management, and a wide range of transferable skills.

You can find full information about the course next year on [our webpages](#).

Teaching

As you know, the majority of our teaching comprises lectures, seminars and practicals, and we'll still be using these formats in 2020-21. Teaching will be spread across the usual two semesters and will start the week commencing Monday 28 September.

Your dual course is taught through the Sheffield University Management School and the School of East Asian Studies. Rest assured that we are working together to ensure that you received an excellent education in the safest manner possible.

It's not possible to social distance in a crowded lecture theatre, so we'll be delivering all our lectures online. Lectures are primarily presentations by one of our subject experts, and online delivery suits the format well. Lectures will be pre-recorded.

For our interactive classes, we'll be using a combination of face-to-face and digital teaching, and you'll have regular, timetabled sessions of each form. Our interactive classes can be either at the level of the programme or an individual module. We will be using a combination of face-to-face and digital teaching.

The language component of your programme, provided through the School of East Asian Studies, will include some content delivered asynchronously through a range of online discussion tools, meaning you'll have plenty of time to consider what you say when responding to the comments and questions of both your teachers and fellow students.

Asynchronous teaching will be supplemented by live, interactive classes via the University's online learning platform. In these, you'll be able to see, hear and talk to teachers and other students in real time. You will also have some face-to-face teaching in language classes as these are the subjects which most benefit from being in a classroom with other people. Both synchronous digital and face-to-face classes will be timetabled, so you'll know what your regular weekly schedule will be. You'll also get a weekly schedule of tasks for all modules, telling you how much time you should spend on different activities, so you'll know exactly what you should be doing, and when.

Our academic staff will be available as usual for tutorials and other one-to-one meetings, and will still hold their regular office hours. It may not be possible for these sessions to take place in person, but if not you'll be able to make an audio or video call.

Learning resources

Most of our learning resources are already available online. Our physical libraries will be open as soon as it's safe to do so, and our librarians are committed to providing as full a service as possible, taking into account social distancing requirements and all the latest government advice.

Assessment

Coursework assignments are already completed electronically, and submitted and marked online.

We're still finalising our plans for exams and we will be using a variety of assessments in 2020-21, just like we do in a normal year, but there won't be any formal, invigilated exams in the Semester 1 exam period in January/February.

In language modules, you will have a combination of assessments, including assessed written homework; and listening and speaking tests. For these you may need to record yourself speaking and submit it, or they may be live sessions where you have to answer questions from a teacher in real time via video call.

It's likely we'll use an 'open book' format instead, where exam questions are made available online and you have a certain amount of time, for example two days, to answer them. You'd complete your answers electronically at home, and you'd be able to consult your books and notes. Some other universities use open book exams as a matter of course. We'll confirm the arrangements for Semester 1 exams in the individual module handbooks you'll receive when you join us.

We will also be using a range of other assessment methods such as online tests, multiple choice questions and online group work. You will be supported by our staff throughout all of these.

Accreditation

There is no impact from current adjustments to our present Triple Crown Accreditation.

Costs

The tuition fee for the course will stay the same, and we don't expect students will incur additional costs as a result of the changes we're making. You'll be able to participate in all the online activities using a regular laptop or tablet connected to the internet, although you will need a microphone and camera to contribute fully in virtual discussions. If you are concerned that you might not be able to afford equipment or have a broadband connection to study remotely, please contact the University's Financial Support Team (financialhelp@sheffield.ac.uk). The University can provide laptops on loan or a grant depending on your circumstances.

I hope this email has given you an idea of what to expect when you join us in the autumn. As you'll be aware, this pandemic is a fast-moving and unpredictable phenomenon, and we might need to make further changes as the situation develops and the University responds to updates in public health guidance. Please be assured that we'll be approaching the next year as a single departmental family of staff and students together, and we're committed to ensuring that you're supported, and that you still receive a world-class university education here at Sheffield.

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with the School of East Asian Studies' Learning and Teaching Team (Clea, Susie and Emma) at seas@sheffield.ac.uk. Please also let the team know if you have any medical or personal circumstances that might affect how you're able to participate next year by emailing seawelfare@sheffield.ac.uk.

Further information

Please keep looking out for emails from the University and checking our [frequently asked questions](#), which are updated regularly with all the latest developments. We also have some on demand content from our online [applicant open days](#) which you might find useful.

I hope you enjoy what's left of the summer and stay safe,

Best wishes

Tom McAuley
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School of East Asian Studies
and
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