

Communication to WMG Offer Holders about the shape of the academic year 2020/21

9th June 2020

Hello WMG Offer Holder,

Warm greetings from the academic team in WMG!

I am very pleased to send you this update with our plans for the upcoming academic year.

With students joining us from across the world, you will all have had different challenges to deal with in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Here in WMG, we moved a significant number of modules online for our current students to complete their studies this year. Thankfully, with great support from our education technology team, this has proved to be a very positive transition. Our experienced tutors adapted modules and interactive activities into virtual learning environments, so we now have even better resources to provide a high-quality learning experience, regardless of delivery mode.

Nevertheless, we recognise that most students joining us this year would strongly prefer a high degree of face-to-face tuition. So, in order to provide you with the best learning experience, to ensure your safety, and to enable you to fulfil your conditions without undue stress, we have **restructured the autumn term and will be taking a flexible approach to the start of the next academic year.**

Starting the academic year

Enrolment and registration will be in October as usual. This year departmental registration will be managed online rather than face-to-face during the **week commencing 5th October.** For students who are able to join us on campus in October, we will hold a series of safe face-to-face events; these will be held virtually for students unable to reach campus until later in the term.

This year, **we will be providing an extended induction throughout October.** Induction focuses on bringing you into the WMG community, connecting you with the academic (and research teams) and preparing you for your Master's studies. Induction will be available online for all students, with complementary face-to-face sessions for students already on campus.

Focus for the Autumn Term

Within WMG, we have an excellent online programme of **Study, Professional and Analytical Skills (SPA)** learning, and this year we will be concentrating more time and resource on SPA learning at the very start of your course, providing you with a solid foundation for your Master's study. Again, safe face-to-face sessions will be available for those of you able to join us on campus.

As the autumn term progresses we will focus on your **individual research project** (dissertation) providing you with the guidance and tools to select your project, and connect with your academic supervisor. Through your project, you will start engaging with rich academic content around your chosen subject. This is a significant element of your Master's course, accounting for up to half of your time and effort over the academic year. Many former students have used their project to open doors to their chosen career, as it provides the opportunity to develop a deep specialism within your subject area, so it shouldn't be underestimated.

Our teaching structure and blended learning

Every year in WMG, we schedule around 400 'runnings' of **taught modules** between October and May. Thanks to the modular block-learning structure of our courses, we have been able to **apply a great degree of flexibility to the start of course specific modules for the 2020/2021 academic year**, to ensure students who are not able to join us in person by October will not miss out.

Within WMG, we will be adopting a blended teaching model going forward: this is a combination of independent online learning and small group face-to-face sessions that are interactive and provide a more flexible and personal learning experience for you. That way we all stay safe, but you can control your learning and focus on what you need to be successful.

For this coming academic year, to cater students unable to arrive by October because of visa delays and/or travel restrictions, we aim to deliver some online module teaching during the autumn term. However, the majority of **the blended module teaching will start in January 2021** and continue through to July or August.

Next steps – responding to your questions

We very much hope that you will find this restructuring of the start of your academic year positive, and that it will enable you to join the class of 2020 as intended. You will no doubt have plenty of questions though, so we've put together a comprehensive FAQ page on the WMG Master's website. We would also very much value your comments: warwick.ac.uk/wmgmasters/offerholders/faqs

This week, we will also be holding **Individual Live Chats on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 10.00am – 4.00pm** (UK time) to address any questions you may have:

Wednesday 10th June: <https://meetandengage.com/akb1zc5ee>

Thursday 11th June: <https://meetandengage.com/akb1zcyav>

Friday 12th June: <https://meetandengage.com/akacizhr4>

We will continue to run weekly live chats until the start of your course. Some of these are with current students and others with course leaders, so do keep checking the Live Chat page to ensure you do not miss one you want to join: warwick.ac.uk/wmgmasters/livechats. Alternatively, please contact us with your questions at: **wmgmasters@warwick.ac.uk**

We very much look forward to hearing from you over the coming days and weeks and will be following up soon with more course specific information.

Take care and we look forward to welcoming you to Warwick soon.

Kind regards,

Robin

Professor Robin Clark

Education Director

WMG, University of Warwick

