Dear Student,

You are receiving this message because you have a place on the International Exchange Programme in 2020/21.

Further to the communication we sent on the 22nd March, we are actively working through scenario planning for 2020/21 and are in discussion with other UK Universities, our overseas partners and national bodies to determine the best way forward.

As you’ll appreciate there are a considerable number of unknowns facing us as we explore the options and the way forward is influenced by:

- the academic impact of any decision for the different degree programmes each student is pursuing;
- the approach being taken by our partners overseas (some of whom have already cancelled exchanges for 2020/21 as those of you affected will be aware);
- Overseas Governments - borders have been closed and visas are not being issued indefinitely for a number of countries;
- funding bodies e.g. Student Finance, the European Commission/Erasmus+ National Agency;
- the UK Government - we do not know when the current advice against all international travel will be revised.

We fully understand the significance of any decision with regard to your studies and experience and we are seeking to balance making a decision too quickly in a situation that is evolving rapidly with enabling you to have clarity academically and financially to plan for the coming academic year. The health, well-being and safety of all our students is fundamental and we are equally mindful of our broader responsibility to the wider local and international community.

As we work through the decision-making process as rapidly as possible, we ask you to do the following:

1) Continue with any preparations for your semester/year abroad that do not require a financial commitment eg. course enrolment, housing applications (if a deposit isn’t required or is fully refundable) etc;
2) Avoid making any financial commitments associated with your semester/year abroad;
3) Alert your Country adviser (see list below) if your host university notifies you that the exchange has been cancelled – normally they alert us too but sometimes you may be notified before we are; discuss alternative options (if any) that the host university may be offering with your Country adviser before making any kind of commitment;
4) Speak to your School undergraduate office about registering for course units here in Manchester for the next academic year – we would encourage you wherever possible to register for courses at The University of Manchester and only drop these at the point at which you have certainty that you will be able to undertake the exchange.

Please also prepare for the possibility that your exchange may not be able to go ahead in 2020/21 due to the widespread impact and implications of the pandemic. We do know this would be incredibly disappointing.

If the impact of, and the level of uncertainty associated with, the pandemic means that you feel you would prefer to withdraw from the exchange ahead of any decision that the University takes then please just let your Country adviser know and they will undertake the necessary steps to withdraw you and advise you as to any other actions that you need to take. Please do not feel that you are in
any way expected to go ahead with your exchange given the unprecedented situation we are all facing.

A reminder of the Country advisers:

- Denise (USA, Canada and Israel) – 0161 275 3053;
- Deborah (Australia, New Zealand, Asia and Europe) – 0161 275 4973
- Vicki (Netherlands and Scandinavia) - 0161 306 8292
- Lisa International Programmes Officer (Outbound Team Lead) – 0161 275 4979

We will be in touch again as soon as possible to confirm the position for 2020/21 and/or if there are any significant new developments.

Take care and stay safe,
Caroline

Dr Caroline Whitehand
Manager, International Programmes Office