Important information from Dr Paul Newbury, Director of Student Experience

Dear Informatics student,

Welcome to the Department of Informatics. Here is some information that may seem of limited relevance to you right now, but will become important for you when you arrive at Sussex. Do read it now so that you are aware of what to do should you need help during your time with us.

I'm the Director of Student Experience in the School of Engineering and Informatics. One of my tasks is to make sure that all students in the School have the support they need in order to achieve their best. There are many people and services at the University dedicated to helping you with any difficulties that could interfere with your studies. This isn't an exhaustive list, but here are some of the most common points of first contact:

- Your **Academic Advisor** is often your first contact, especially if your problem is related to your academic work. Your Academic Advisor is a member of Informatics faculty and you will be introduced to them during Welcome Week. Your Academic Advisor can refer you on to many other sources of information and support.
- For welfare issues, you can contact the **Student Life Centre**. Have a look at http://www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre. Do contact them straight away if you are experiencing any personal difficulties, especially if these problems are impacting on your studies. The Student Life Centre staff handle a wide range of issues including: course transfers, financial issues, disability issues, personal concerns, budgeting, fees, funding, exceptional circumstances, and so on.
- If your academic advisor isn't available or if you want to talk to someone else, you can contact the **Director of Student Experience**. You can make an appointment to see me via email at P.Newbury@sussex.ac.uk
- The **Engineering and Informatics School Office staff** (located at the front of Chichester 1 building, Room C1-002) are a good first point of contact for a wide range of requests, particularly any administrative queries concerning timetables, lecture rooms, registration and so on.
- **Module lecturers** can of course provide specific module information — contact them after a lecture, during their student consultation times or via email.
- In Informatics we run a highly successful **Peer Assisted Learning** (PAL) scheme where students (who have already taken the module) run non-compulsory additional classes to provide subject-specific support. Go to: https://sussexpal.wordpress.com/ for further details.

In your first week in Sussex, you may be deluged with information about the University, including a great deal about student support, but here are a few key points you should know about now:

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND INFORMATICS
University of Sussex | Chichester 1 | Brighton BN1 9QJ | United Kingdom
T +44 (0)1273 678195 | m.williams@sussex.ac.uk
www.sussex.ac.uk/ei

- **How to find out what you will be studying**
  Descriptions of all Informatics courses can be found at:
  http://www.sussex.ac.uk/ei/internal/coursesandmodules/informatics/ugcourses
  which gives really important reference information, especially on each of the modules you will be studying. If you can, look at this information before you arrive.
- **Skills Hub**
  Also, have a look at http://www.sussex.ac.uk/skillshub — a website designed specifically for foundation and first year students. There's information there that will help you prepare for university as well as providing support information while you are here.
- **What to do if you can't attend a teaching session**
  If you have to be absent from a lecture, seminar, exercise class or other teaching session, contact the module tutor by email. If you have to be away from teaching for longer than 2-3 days (due to illness, for example), you should let the School Office know by email to: enginf-attendance@sussex.ac.uk giving details of your absence and expected return date. Attendance at teaching sessions is compulsory, and is monitored.
- **What to do if you miss a deadline for a piece of work or are absent from an exam**
  As soon as a module starts, make sure you understand the rules about the individual pieces of assessed work by reading your module documentation carefully and then check your Assessment Deadlines and Exam Timetable on your Study Pages on SussexDirect. If you can't make the deadline for any formally assessed work or if you are absent from an exam and you have an appropriate excuse, you should fill in an 'exceptional circumstances' claim online (available via **SussexDirect**). The form tells you what evidence is needed and when and how to submit the evidence. Staff at the Student Life Centre (www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre) can help you with this process.
- **What to do if you need long-term 'time out'**
  It may be possible to withdraw temporarily from your course ("intermit"). The Student Handbook has details and conditions. If you are thinking of intermitting, you should seek advice from the **Student Life Centre**.
- **Other sources of help**
  The University of Sussex web site: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/ contains a huge amount of information that you will find useful. Also, have a look at the School website http://www.sussex.ac.uk/ei/internal/ and the University's Student Handbook http://www.sussex.ac.uk/students/essentials/studenthandbook/. There are *many* other sources of support and information and you will be introduced to some of them during Welcome Week.
- **And the most important piece of advice**
  If in doubt, ask a member of staff, another student — anyone!

I wish you a really happy and trouble-free time at Sussex. Don't hesitate in getting in touch if you have any queries.

With very best wishes,

Dr Paul Newbury
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School of Engineering & Informatics

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