

Family Programme



From the Vice Chancellor



I am delighted to welcome you to the Family Programme, which offers a range of helpful support and information and a variety of ways for you to become involved with the University.

I am sure you will be pleased to know that your family member will be joining one of the top 20 leading universities in the UK and one of the top 2% of universities globally. At Leicester we believe that teaching is more inspirational when delivered by passionate scholars engaged in world-changing research. You can read about our investment in cardiovascular research, generously supported by Family Programme members, on page 7 of this brochure.

The results of the 2011 National Student Survey are perhaps the strongest evidence of Leicester's commitment to the student experience and I am proud that the University has been placed top after Oxbridge amongst mainstream universities for student satisfaction. I am sure you will recognise this commitment to a high quality experience reflected in the range of student support services and in the buildings on campus, including the David Wilson Library and the newly refurbished Percy Gee building, home to the Students' Union.

I am pleased to welcome you to the Family Programme and look forward to meeting you at one of the welcome receptions.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Burgess."

Professor Sir Robert Burgess
Vice-Chancellor

Family Programme

The University of Leicester Family Programme keeps you up to date with the activities of the University during the time that your family member studies here. In addition to the Family Programme Pack and informative website, we publish an e-mail newsletter several times a year containing important dates and news of interest.

If you would like to find out more about your family member's area of study, each department has its own website with information about staff, courses, departmental projects and resources. These can be accessed through our main web page at www.le.ac.uk. The University's web site is also an easy way to keep up to date with news and information about activities and developments on campus.

There are many other ways in which you can choose to be active in sharing the University of Leicester experience, from attending social events and public lectures, to taking a postgraduate or lifelong learning course, or sharing your professional experience and getting involved in supporting Leicester's graduate careers and employability programmes.

There is something for everyone and you can keep up to date with the Family Programme on our website www.le.ac.uk/alumni/supportyou/family



Empty Nest – Looking Forward

Entering University can be an emotionally challenging time for first year students – making new friends, academic expectations, living on a student loan, together with the responsibilities which independence brings. This is also a transition period for parents and significant others.

Until now your family member will, to a lesser or greater degree, have relied on you for emotional and financial support – this continues whilst they are a student, but at a distance.

Letting go is an individual experience and unexpected emotions can arise. Some parents feel lost and redundant, they miss the nurturing and protecting role and feel empty; others experience freedom, with time to focus on their own interests. For most there are mixed feelings – freedom and loss; pain and pleasure.

Tips for successful adjustment

- Agree on how frequently contact will be made, and keep communication promises;
- Be there to listen – organise for a friend to listen to you;
- Don't just 'drop in' to see your son or daughter without making prior arrangement – they may be out;
- Buy a Safety Bus Pass for your family member's security and your peace of mind;
- The Data Protection Act means that the University can only give information to the student – do not ask for progress reports or exam results, we cannot give them;
- Expect change – if your family member returns home with different ideas, appearance and attitudes don't be alarmed, this is part of the change process. University years will pass all too quickly and most students emerge as qualified, sensible individuals – our graduation photographs provide evidence;
- Take advantage of the 'empty nest' to do things for yourself – you may even want to enrol for a distance learning course at the University of Leicester!
- Finally, remember that students do tend to return home during vacations; and many return home at the end of the course, so that empty nest may be relatively short-lived.

You can view videos from the parents of our recent graduates on our website:
www.le.ac.uk/study/parent



Student Support and Development Service

The Student Support and Development Service (SSDS) provides an integrated service to meet the needs of students in three major areas: learning & career development, practical matters and health & wellbeing.

- We provide advice, resources, training and events to support each student's individual needs and skills.
- The AccessAbility Centre offers a range of services to all students who have specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, and with disabilities or long-term conditions.
- The Student Welfare Service provides advice and support for students on a variety of issues including finance, accommodation, childcare and international student concerns.
- The Student Counselling Service provides counselling sessions on a one-to-one or group basis for students who feel they need more support or who want to address personal issues.
- The Student Support (mental wellbeing) Service assists students who are managing mental health issues to lessen the impact that these may have on their studies.



- The Student Healthy Living Service delivers health and wellbeing activities that help students enjoy a balanced life.

Whilst your family member is studying with us please encourage them to make full use of our learning and career development services and to contact us if they have any practical or health & wellbeing issues. Full details for all the above services are available on the SSDS website: www.le.ac.uk/ssds



“The Welfare Service gave me lots of support and advice and were, just generally, really helpful. I recommend any student who gets into hardship to definitely contact them and they'll tell you what to do.”

Recent graduate



Finance

Many parents are understandably concerned about how their family members will cope with their finances whilst at university. Students receive a combination of income from various sources including student loans, grants and bursaries often 'topped up' by family and/or their own income from part-time work or savings.

The best advice we can give is to encourage your student to prepare a realistic budget before coming to university. This may seem like a very boring activity but for many students, preparing (and sticking to!) a budget can make a huge difference to their enjoyment of university life.

Try our simple calculator for first years as a starting point: www.le.ac.uk/welfare
The calculator can be found in the 'Budgeting' section.

For advice about how to manage their finances please encourage them to contact the Student Welfare Service to discuss their situation with a Student Finance Adviser: welfare@le.ac.uk

“My top tip to parents: teach your child to budget.”

Parent of graduate



Accommodation

We ensure that each hall is supported by a group of Residential Advisers who live in halls and whose primary role is to help and offer advice to the students. Residential Advisers are often mature students or those continuing their studies beyond their undergraduate degree, making them a good source of information about living in accommodation, studying at university and spending time away from home.

Sometimes students are initially unhappy with their accommodation. However, in our experience this often changes over a short period of time. We strongly recommend waiting a couple of weeks before requesting a transfer. One of the key things about living in halls is the people you meet and the friends you make. In those two weeks it is likely that your family member will have met and made their friends for life and will not want to move away from them. www.le.ac.uk/accommodation



“The Halls really help you settle in to university life.”

2011 graduate

Volunteering

University of Leicester students can get involved in their local community by joining ‘Contact’ – our highly popular student volunteering association. Each year over 1,000 students get involved.

Volunteering provides students with an opportunity to do something enjoyable and worthwhile with their spare time, helping them engage with the local community whilst enhancing their skills and employability. It can also be a great way for students to make friends in a supportive environment and help them to learn more about their host city while they are studying here. One of our recent graduates (and active student volunteer) commented:

“Volunteering made a huge difference to my university experience. Not only did it help me make great friends, have lots of fun and positively impact on my local community, it also gave me the skills to go straight into a rewarding job after graduating”.



Volunteering doesn't have to take up lots of time and most opportunities are flexible, enabling students to commit as much or as little time as they have available.

Further details can be found by visiting the website: www.le.ac.uk/volunteering



Students' Union

The University of Leicester Students' Union is a vital part of the student experience. It is run by students for students and offers a range of services and facilities tailored to student needs, aimed at helping each student to get the most out of his or her time at Leicester.

Welfare Services are offered by the Students' Union, such as the Safety Bus to take students from the Union building to their homes in the evenings, and a confidential helpline that operates every night during term time, from 8am to 8pm, providing confidential emotional advice for students. Students can also receive housing and financial advice.

Involvement is one of our key principles within the Union. There are many activities and societies to get involved in, with something different to suit each individual taste. If students feel that there is not a society to suit them they are encouraged to set one up.

Education remains key to the student life at Leicester and the SU Education Unit provides confidential and impartial advice to students on a wide range of issues from changing courses to problems with exams or departments.

“ I got involved in all the clubs and societies, made the most of my time and also managed to get a first...I had a very good time at university.”

Recent graduate



Introducing the Development and Alumni Relations Team

The Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO) aims to ensure that the graduate community, both in the UK and Overseas, enjoys a rewarding and enduring involvement with their University through social and educational activities, careers advice and networking, advocacy and philanthropic support or just keeping in touch with friends.

We actively work with alumni and the Alumni Association, Family Programme members, other individual supporters, charitable trusts and foundations and companies to raise vital funds that are essential for the continued development of the University, the well-being of students and the promotion of our shared commitment to inspirational teaching and world changing research. www.le.ac.uk/alumni



Two major developments at the University

The University continues to invest in world-leading research and the very best facilities.

Life Changing and World Leading Research

Cardiovascular disease is a major cause of illness and the main cause of death in this country. One in three deaths in the UK is heart related and someone dies of a heart attack every six minutes. That's why cardiovascular research is the highest priority for the Department of Cardiovascular Sciences at the University of Leicester, which boasts an international reputation for research into the causes and treatment of the most common types of cardiovascular disease. The provision of a new £12.6m Cardiovascular Research Centre (CRC) is central to the University's strategy for the future development of cardiovascular research and will build on our reputation as a leading international heart research centre.

The University launched a fundraising appeal in 2010 and Family Programme members have responded magnificently by donating over £15,000 to help complete and equip this state-of-the-art Research Centre. The new facility will benefit thousands of patients across the UK through improved treatment and care, help to save many more lives through more effective prevention and achieve worldwide research impact.

Thanks to the generous support of Family Programme members, Leicester Alumni, Trusts and Foundations, and Groups and Associations in the local community, we are well on our way to raising the final £1m to purchase the specialist equipment needed for the building.

Percy Gee Building

On 17th March 2011 the newly refurbished Percy Gee Building, home to the Students' Union, was officially opened by the President of the National Union of Students and Leicester alumnus Aaron Porter. With its stunning central Atrium, a dedicated Activities Resource Centre (ARC) and a new O2 Academy,



Artist's impression of the new Cardiovascular Research Centre

the building is now seen as one of the leading Students' Unions in the country. The University invested over £15m in this project and launched a successful appeal to help complete the building.

We are particularly grateful to Family Programme members who donated over £17,000 in 2009-10 to help build the new Training and Leadership Suite in the ARC. The transformation of the building has enabled the Students' Union to greatly extend and improve the services and support offered to students in an award winning environment. The new

Training and Leadership Suite has been a great success, providing access to more vital learning and development opportunities for course representatives, members of the growing number of clubs and societies and individuals wishing to improve their life skills.

If you would like to support the CRC Appeal or make a donation to support the University please contact Susan Rees on 0116 223 1071, email alumni.relations@le.ac.uk or visit the donation page on our website www.le.ac.uk/alumni/supportus

Introducing the Alumni Association



It may seem like a long way off, but once your family member graduates they will be able to stay in touch with their University through the Development and Alumni Relations Office and activities of the Alumni Association.

For new graduates, access to Career Services is especially important, as well as networking opportunities, a variety of social events and news updates about the University. The Alumni website contains details of all the benefits and services on offer to new graduates at www.le.ac.uk/alumni/supportyou

Key Facts

- The University won the 2009/10 Times Higher Education Award for Outstanding Student Support.
- Leicester was the Times Higher Education University of the Year for 2008-9.
- We have consistently recorded some of the highest scores for student satisfaction in the National Student Survey. Our 2010/11 results for full-time students are second only to Oxbridge amongst public universities in England.
- Leicester is ranked 17th in the Guardian, and top in the region and 14th in the UK (out of 114 Universities) by the Times Good University Guide.
- Leicester has one of the highest student completion rates in the UK which is consistently above 91%.
- Leicester is the only top 20 university that meets its government indicators for inclusivity – proof that you can compete with the best whilst opening up the competition for everyone.
- Research at Leicester is thriving. 87% of our research was deemed to be of international significance by the Research Assessment Exercise.



For more information Family Programme members can contact:

Development and Alumni Relations Office

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Website: www.le.ac.uk/alumni

