To all new students,

Welcome to the MSc Palaeobiology programme (2021-22 session). I am writing to give you some information about starting the course.

You will receive information from the University and Science Faculty concerning registration and Welcome Week, which will take place from Monday 20th September to Friday 24th September. During Welcome Week you will register with the School of Earth Sciences, take part in induction activities within the School and meet staff and students from the School and the Palaeobiology Research Group.

Please make every effort to attend the appropriate registration sessions and all of the induction events as a great deal of important and useful information will be provided; please see the Welcome Week timetable for details. However, I appreciate that some people, particularly those arriving from overseas, may have difficulty attending due to problems caused by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, such as delays to travel or needing to quarantine. If you anticipate that you will not be able to attend sessions in the University at the beginning of term, please get in touch with me so that we can work with you to make a plan that will allow you to begin your studies online and then transition to in person studies as soon as possible. Formal teaching will begin on Monday 27th September.

The programme includes some optional units. Please complete the optional unit selection form and return it by email by 20th September. This is to encourage you to look at the unit descriptions before you arrive and to give us an early indication of the units you would like to take. You will be able to discuss the options during Welcome Week and if you wish to change any of your choices afterwards you may do so up to 8th October.

The University’s Disability Service http://www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/ offers a wide range of services to ensure that students receive appropriate and accessible support, including adjustments to teaching and assessments. Please contact them if you feel you have issues that may impact your studies. In addition to this central support the School has a Disability Co-ordinator, Dr Mary Benton (mary.benton@bristol.ac.uk), who acts as a channel for information about disability matters. It is essential that you also inform Dr Benton of any issues that may affect your studies.

Please note that tuition fees are due by 24th October 2021. It is possible to pay the tuition fees in instalments, but this must be arranged in advance. More details about tuition fee payments can be found here: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/fees-funding/tuition-fees/payment/. Bench fees of £500 are also payable as stated in your offer letter; these are used to fund the research projects, such as the costs of software licences or laboratory equipment. Invoices will be raised during October and are payable within one month of the invoice date.

I look forward to meeting you soon. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me using the email address above.