A warm welcome to the Department of Geography, the University and the city of Sheffield. We very much hope that you enjoy your time here and are able to take full advantage of the fantastic opportunities that the University and city have to offer.

Arriving into a new city, meeting new people and getting to grips with university life can be a daunting prospect. It is important to remember that advice and support is always on hand to help you deal with whatever challenges you might encounter.

At the start of your time at University, there is a massive amount of information for you to take in about your studies and student life in general. This is why we have made this short guide. It will not tell you everything you need to know but it is a starting point and a useful guide to the range of support available to you. If in doubt, ask: we are all very happy to help you over the next few weeks and - indeed - your coming years in Sheffield.

Professor David Robinson
Head of Department
Studying Geography or Environmental Science at degree level is very different from being a school or college student. Alongside the greater freedom of university life, there is also more emphasis on you to take responsibility for your own work and to ask for help when you need it. You will experience a wide range of teaching styles and methods - from packed lecture theatres, personal tutorials and seminars, to laboratory work and field trips. There will be fewer compulsory classes scheduled in your timetable and greater onus on you to attend optional sessions and to study independently. Here are some tips to help you settle into undergraduate life and thrive in your studies:

1. **Attend all of your timetabled classes**
   Try to get into good study habits from the start of the academic year so that you keep on top of your work. Use your personal timetable so that you do not miss sessions for your modules. Plan your workload too; you will often need to do preparatory work in advance of a class; other sessions may have work for you to complete afterwards.

2. **Use Office Hours**
   All academic staff have office hours every week of the Semester. These times are dedicated to helping you with questions you may have about your studies. You do not need to make an appointment to see staff in their office hours and they are a really good way to help you develop your understanding of topics covered in modules, or to ask questions that emerge from your wider reading. Office Hours are posted in the GEO HUB on MOLE.

3. **Check your emails!**
   Email is the main form of communication between the University and students and so you will receive a large volume of emails. You should check your University email account frequently because we will communicate important information by email. When you email us, remember to provide the information we need to help you, such as your full name or a module code.

4. **Make the most of your time**
   Being a Geography or Environmental Science student offers you fantastic opportunities to expand your interests, meet new people and gain valuable experiences. There is lots going on beyond your timetable, such as:
   - Student-led seminars: seminars and workshops arranged by undergraduate students throughout the year that are designed to complement your studies.
   - Departmental Seminars: guest speakers from academia and industry regularly visit the department to speak about their research. These events are open to all staff and students.
   - TuesGeography: a regular series of events run by both staff and students in the department, from careers talks and film screenings, to invited speakers and debates.
   - SIDSshare: Sheffield's very own student run social enterprise that operates internationally as a NGO.
   - Departmental Staff-Student Committee: the committee comprises student representatives and key academic staff. It ensures the student voice is at the heart of departmental decisions about the running of your course.

   **Departmental Office**
   The Departmental Office is your main point of contact in the Department of Geography for any enquiries relating to departmental policies and procedures, assessments and welfare. The Departmental Office is located in room C15a on C-floor of the Geography and Planning Building and is normally staffed Monday to Friday 09:00–17:00.

   Enquiries to the Departmental Office should be addressed by email to geography@sheffield.ac.uk or by telephone to 0114 222 7900.

   **Director of Undergraduate Programmes**
   Dr Stephen Livingstone
   Email: s.j.livingstone@sheffield.ac.uk

   **Dean of Students (Undergraduate)**
   Professor Edward Rhodes
   Email: ed.rhodes@sheffield.ac.uk

   **Academic Staff**
   The ‘Our Staff’ webpage on the Department of Geography website provides a list of academic staff and their contact details: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/staff](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/staff)

   **GeogSoc**
   geogsoc@sheffield.ac.uk

   **BA Geography Programme Lead**
   Dr Megan Blake
   Email: m.blake@sheffield.ac.uk

   **BSc Geography Programme Lead**
   Dr Andrew Sole
   Email: a.sole@sheffield.ac.uk

   **Environmental Science Programme Lead**
   Professor Edward Rhodes
   Email: ed.rhodes@sheffield.ac.uk

   **GeogSoc**
   geogsoc@sheffield.ac.uk
Personal Tutors
Within the first few weeks of arriving at the University, you will be allocated a Personal Tutor. Your Tutor will meet you regularly in your first year. They will help you to settle in to your studies and provide academic advice and support. Your Personal Tutor can also point you in the right direction for specialist help or additional skills development that you may need.

Remember, your Personal Tutor is not just there to help resolve issues but to support you in reaching your full potential and making the most of your degree, so be proactive and make the most of your meetings. Further, because your Personal Tutor will get to know you well over your time as a student, and will likely be writing you a reference for your graduate job!

Module Choice and Add/Drop
At the start of each semester, it is possible to change your optional modules during the three week ‘Add/Drop’ period. Changes cannot be made after this period.

If you are undecided between two modules, it is best to attend both so that you do not fall behind in the one that you decide to take, or miss details of the module assessment.

Requests to change modules should be completed online via MUSE, which will then be sent to the relevant departments for approval.

Library Access and Resources
The University Library will be a valuable resource throughout your academic studies, and you are encouraged to visit at least one of the three libraries on campus within your first few weeks to familiarise yourself with the facilities.

As well as providing study spaces, computer access and printing services, the University Library is your main point of access for preparatory reading for seminars, lectures and assessments.

There is a helpful guide to help you get started on the University Library website: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/getstarted. If you have any difficulty using the library ask for help at one of the information desks or contact 0114 222 7200.

Timetables/iSheffield App
Your academic timetable is available to view through MUSE or the iSheffield app. The timetable is a live resource, and is therefore subject to change. You are recommended to regularly check your timetable and to not replicate the information in other calendars. We make every effort to ensure that modules taught within the Department of Geography do not ‘clash’, however this is not always possible and in such instances this may influence your module choice. If you see a clash on your timetable, email geography@sheffield.ac.uk.

MUSE, MOLE and the GEO HUB
The University of Sheffield website (www.sheffield.ac.uk) contains a range of information and is a useful gateway to further information in most instances. Logging into MUSE and accessing the ‘My Services’ tab enables you to remotely access a range of resources and manage your registration as a student. MUSE is the route to your University of Sheffield email account, student record, timetable, and MOLE.

Most of your online learning support is provided through MOLE. Once you have registered for a module, you will be given access to the module page on MOLE. If this has not happened within 48 hours then contact geography@sheffield.ac.uk at first instance.

Typically, module MOLE sites will provide electronic resources to supplement lectures and seminars, including reading lists and lecture recordings.

There is also an ‘organisation’ on MOLE called the GEO HUB. This contains key information for Geography students, such as staff office hours and learning resources.

Wellbeing and Welfare
We hope that your time at the University of Sheffield is enjoyable and rewarding. However, the transition to university can be difficult and we understand it can be challenging to balance your academic progression alongside difficult personal or medical circumstances.

If you are concerned about the effect that your medical or personal circumstances are having on your academic studies then you should contact geo-welfare@sheffield.ac.uk. We will be able to advise you on the options and services available and ensure that you are able to access the relevant support.
In addition to this guide, please take the time to familiarise yourself with the resources available below:

**Student Handbook**
www.sheffield.ac.uk/geography/students

**Student Services Information Desk (SSiD)**
www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid

http://student-transitions.group.shef.ac.uk/

**Student Access to Mental Health Services (SAMHS)**
https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/mental-wellbeing

**Programme Regulation Finder**
www.sheffield.ac.uk/programmeregulationsfinder/

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