

Dear Student,

February can often feel rather cold and grey more than anything else. Winter is starting to become annoyingly persistent, overall if you are used to a warmer weather. But this also makes February the perfect opportunity to make sure you are taking care of yourselves after all the exams and deadlines from January.

You might like to hide under a blanket to enjoy some films or a show you've been meaning to watch; or perhaps trying out a new recipe that someone recommended you or that reminds you of home; or maybe you'd like to join evening socials from societies to make evenings feel warmer.

And you can look forward to plenty of social events at the university this month, from the <u>Spring</u> <u>Festival campus celebrations</u>, to <u>Intercultural Cafe</u>, or <u>Give It A Go activities</u> from the Students' Guild. We look forward to seeing you there!

All the best,

Sue O'Hara, Sophie Meadows, and Jimena Rubio Juncal Student Support Officer: Transition and Integration

Have your say! International Student Experience

Can you help us to improve the Uni experience for all our students and make sure we're a welcoming and inclusive place for everyone?

Please come along to one of our events, and tell us about your experience as part of our global community. We'd love to hear your thoughts on how we can improve and provide the services and support that you need to thrive.



- Complete our **short online survey** and maybe win £100.
- Come to our drop-ins to have your say:
 Streatham Campus: Tuesday 6 February, 11:00 15:00 at The Forum, Building:One or Xfi's

Global Lounge.

St Luke's Campus: Wednesday 7 Feb, 11:00 – 15:00 at Cross Keys.

Be part of a <u>discussion group</u> on Wednesday 7 February.
 £20 shopping voucher for each session attended. Maximum 2 workshops per student.

For more information see our website

Celebrate the Spring Festival on campus: Tuesday 13 February

Spring Festival is the most celebrated and longest of all Asian festivals and is observed by millions of people around the world. Different countries in East Asia hold their own new year celebrations at this time and we are pleased to be able to showcase those different traditions in our festival on campus.



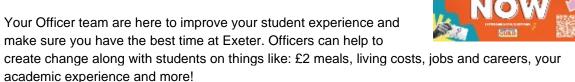
We will be celebrating in the Forum on Tuesday 13 February from 12-3pm. We encourage everyone to wear something red and come find us in the Forum, where you can collect a red packet with a little gift inside, try some food and enjoy some traditional crafts and activities.

Then join us at 6.45pm at the rear of XFI for a spectacular firework display. Wrap up warm and come and watch the sky light up! There will be a free coach service available for students to travel back to St Lukes campus after the fireworks display. The coach will depart from Harrisons Building at 19:10pm. You cannot book - this will be a first come first served basis.

Click here to see the full programme

Vote in the Students' Guild Elections 29 January - 1 February

It's vote week: time to vote in our Student Elections! Your votes will elect the Student Officers who will represent you in 2024-25.



Look out for some <u>free events</u> and refreshments taking place this week too in and around the Forum, and at St Luke's.

Voting is quick and easy – you can find out who the candidates are and vote at www.exeterguild.com/elections

Intercultural Café

Intercultural Cafe has been growing the past months, becoming a great opportunity to meet new people, to learn about different cultures, and to get to know a bit better some of the services offered



by the university through the activities organised. All without needing to book and while enjoying a free drink and a pastry every time!

There are 3 cafes a week:

• St Lukes: Crosskeys, Wednesday 11-12 noon

Streatham: ISCA Eats, Cornwall House, Wednesday 3-4pm

Streatham: ISCA Eats, Cornwall House, Friday 10.30-11.30 (first 100 students only)

We will be there to book you in 30 minutes before the session starts and will stop giving out tickets 30 minutes before the end of the session or when we read 100 people, whichever comes first!

The different activities scheduled for each session are listed in our website.

Still time to request a Global Chums mentor

Did you join us as a new student in January?

We know that settling into a new environment doesn't just happen during Arrivals Week, which is why new international students are more than welcome to request a Global Chums Mentor! These mentors are returning Exeter students who are keen to meet you and answer your questions for the next six weeks.



Applications are open now until 31 January so don't delay.

There will also be some social events for you to attend. You can follow @globalchumsexeter on Instagram to find out about those.

Refugee Support Devon appeal

With the spotlight on refugees and asylum seekers over the last few years, charities like Refugee Action are needed now more than ever. As well as supporting individuals, Refugee Action provides support and training to local charities such as Exeter's very own Refugee Support Devon. It would be awesome if you could make a donation, no matter how small, to this great charity through Suzanne Aburagheb's JustGiving page. Once you donate, they'll send your money directly to Refugee Action, so it's the most efficient way to give - saving time and cutting costs for the charity.



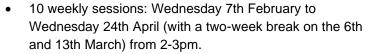
Come to Globe Cafe

Globe Café is a weekly event for international students where we have fun, build friendships and share between our different cultures. This term, we have lots of fun activities, including a celebration of Lunar New Year on Monday 5 February, and a chance to join in a traditional English 'Barn Dance' on Monday 26 February. This event is run by Friends International, which is a Christian charity. However, Globe Café is not a religious event and all international students are welcome. We meet every Monday from 7.30-9.15pm at Belmont Chapel on Western Way. For more information, search @1globecafeexeter on social media or contact Helen Morrissey - Helen.morrissey@friendsinternational.uk



Try Nordic Walking

Come and try Nordic Walking from our St Lukes sport centre (EX1 2LU).





- £15 fee for the course, you will have access to ALL 10 sessions which include two
 weeks worth of technique tuition followed by instructor-led walks using different routes
 starting at finishing at campus.
- Dress for the weather conditions on the day of the sessions, as well as suitable footwear i.e. trainers or walking shoes/boots. A rucksack is also recommended for personal belongings.
- Walking poles will be provided for you.

Sign up now to avoid missing out!

Have 'Fun A Day' for February

Are you up for a challenge? Could you create something every day for a month? Consider joining Fun A Day Exeter.

There are no entry fees and no prizes, no age limit, and no exclusions. Just a creative spark to light the gloom of February. Registration is required to participate then (1) pick a project, (2) do it daily during February 2024, (3) document it, (4) show your work during our group show 23-24 March 2024, and (5) have fun with it. More info here.

Fill out the National Student Survey and enter the prize draw!

Every year, all final year undergraduate students studying in the UK are invited to complete the National Student Survey (NSS). It's really important that we hear the opinions of all our students including those from overseas and we encourage you to fill it out.



The survey is anonymous and is run by an independent UK research agency, called Ipsos. It's an opportunity to give your honest views about your time with us. This

valuable feedback helps to shape our University in the future, just as responses from students in previous years has helped to shape your experience.

You can also choose to enter a prize draw with a top prize of £500 and 10x £50 prizes, plus £1 will go to charity for every completed survey.

The survey is open until 30 April. You can complete the survey here.

Celebrate International Mother Language Day

Celebrate International Mother Language with us on 21 February by sharing your mother language. On the day, stop by our stall in the Forum Street to add a word or expression of your liking from your mother language to our Languages Board. We look forward to learning from as many languages as possible!



Also, the Languages Cafe, which happens every Wednesday at 2pm in Forum Seminar rooms 3, 4 and 6, will be having one of its regular sessions on the 21 February. This is an informal conversation group for language learners or enthusiasts of all levels.

Spring into action for Student Volunteer Week (5 – 9 Feb)

There are loads of volunteering activities for you to get involved this Student Volunteer week. Working on community projects like these are a great addition on your CV and helping others boosts your mental health. <u>Visit our Community page</u> to see what options are available to you.

Free security mark service on campus

Talk to the <u>Community Engagement team</u> about how to keep you and your belongings safe and get your valuables marked/registered to deter theft. This is a great way to ensure that your items can be tracked and found more easily, should they ever be stolen.



This service is suitable for small valuables (e.g., mobile phones, laptops) and bicycles. We're next in the Forum on Tuesday 6 February (10am-3.30pm).

Beware: financial scams are increasing

Unfortunately, some criminals try to get money from students, particularly our international students. Some of these scams will seem very convincing and persuasive and it can be frightening.

If you are in any doubt about a call, text or email you have received read our advice page. Any fraud should be reported to the Police on 101 or online.



The Police advice is to 'take 5' minutes:

Stop - take 5 minutes to stop and think. Talk it through with someone you respect to sense-check

the situation.

Challenge - it's ok to reject, refuse or ignore requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you. **Protect**- if you think you have been a victim, contact your bank immediately, change passwords etc. Report the incident to the Police. Contact SID or International Student Support Officefor support.

English Language Skills Development

English Language Skills Development: Our programme is here to help with all your English language goals and concerns. Whether you want to boost your oral communication skills, improve your listening, or enhance your academic writing, we have a class or course that will suit you. Our range of provision includes subject specific courses as



well as general provision. It is free to attend and easy to book by <u>visiting the timetable pages on</u> our website.

Don't think you have time? Then make use of our digital resources or join our <u>Viva Engage</u> <u>community</u>.

English Language Skills Development appointments: Come and chat in confidence to one of our language experts about your aims and concerns. Find out about the opportunities available to maximise your English skills and develop your cultural competence at your new university. **Book here.**

Harmony Concert for Wellbeing

- 7pm, Friday 23 February 2024
- Mary Harris Memorial Chapel, opposite the Old Library, Streatham Campus

A peaceful and atmospheric wellbeing concert for people of all faiths and none.

This candlelit concert lasts around 1 hour and includes a choir, string quartet and poetry

The atmosphere is really relaxed, and so you are welcome to pop in and out, or move around during the concert, if you wish



Speak Out

Our campuses are inclusive spaces, where everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. We don't tolerate any forms of harassment, bullying, intimidation or discrimination.

If you have witnessed or been affected by any of these in our campuses or within our University communities, you can report it through our <u>Speak Out platform</u>, where you can make it anonymous, if you want.

Tell us out about university catering

The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO) who provides catering to universities all over the UK want to know the views and experiences of International students currently studying at university in the UK.

Your feedback will help better understand the opinions and experiences about catering for international students at universities in the UK to inform and improve the current catering offer. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete depending on your answers and you could win £50 cash!

Survey closes Sunday 25 February.