



## EDUCATION & STUDENT COMMITTEE

### MEETING 1: 10 September 2020

Name of Member	Mtg 1 10.09 2020												
Professor David Bolton (Chair, DB)	√												
Saqlain Riaz (SR)	√												
Professor Paolo Volpin (PV)	√												
Professor Miguel Mera	√												
Professor Juliet John	√												
Professor Debra Salmon (DS)	A												
Professor Susannah Quinsee (SQ)	√												
Professor Rajkumar Roy (RR)	√												
Professor Andrew Stockley (AS)	√												
Susannah Marsden (SM)	√												
James Birkett (JB)	√												
Sian Thurgood (ST)	√												
Vanessa Freeman (VF)	A												
Claire Priestley (CP)	A												
Louise Doolan (LD)	√												
Philip Gilks (PG)	A												
Eleanor Cornfield (EC)	√												
Hannah Evans (HE)	√												
Mark Hertlein (MH)	√												
Pam Parker (PP)	√												
Yewande Akindele (YA)	A												
Shima Dallali (SD)	√												
Ruqaiyah Javaid (RJ)	√												

√ indicates attendance

A indicates apologies have been provided

--- indicates a period when the member is on extended leave/when the person was not a member

#### **In attendance**

- Madalina Glavan (Minutes, MG)
- Pam Bell-Ashe (Strategic Evaluation & Impact Project Manager (S&AS), PBA)
- Stephen Cottrell (Assistant Vice-President (Doctoral College), SC)
- Chris Hull (Associate Dean, SHS, standing in for Debra Salmon CH)
- Hannah Roberts (Deputy Chief Executive, SU, standing in for Philip Gilks HR)
- Kristin Goodrich (Director of Business IT, standing in for Claire Priestly KG)



## **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

## **Approval of previous minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

## **1. Chair's Business**

### **1.1. Chair to update on Readiness meetings with Schools, Return to Campus work and ET updates**

It was noted that readiness checks had taken place in SHS and SASS ahead of the start of term. Areas of concern have been discussed and additional support put in place. Readiness will be taking place with the other Schools shortly.

The Chair updated on the work of the Return to Campus group, including work being carried out to clarify position on students in teaching rooms without face coverings, and expectations of academic staff when teaching. Guidance on this has been shared on 10<sup>th</sup> September to be reviewed by the Schools.

It was noted that before the Return to Campus Working Group was formed, a meeting with the Deans took place where the issues of return to campus related to education and students were identified. Those issues are being dealt with by the Return to Campus Working Group.

It was further noted that the government guidance on reopening of university campuses was published on 10<sup>th</sup> September. The Return to Campus Working Group will be considering the guidance.

The chair noted thanks to colleagues for all their ongoing work and in particular for getting the timetables published for 2020-21.

### **1.2. Oversight of implementation of 20-21**

It was noted that from September the university will be going through the implementation phase. As a result, the focus of the Education Student Committee will partially be finding an appropriate way of monitoring the implementation. It was noted that the key principles of monitoring would be to reduce the burden of reporting, find an appropriate level of monitoring and link the Schools' work with that done at the institutional and SU level. Discussions will be held with Schools on how this work will unfold and what level of support is needed. The committee will also refocus on strategic matters including the delivery of our Access and Participation Plan.

## **2. City University of London - We are City – Covid-19 Community agreement**

### **2.1. To discuss and approve We are City – Covid-19 Community agreement**

Paper

The committee discussed the “We are City – Covid-19 Community agreement” draft paper. This sets out the expectations from both the student community and the University and the Students’ Union in the context of the global Covid-19 pandemic. It was noted that having this statement is a requirement under the newly released government guidance.

It was noted that due to timing, the statement had not been linked to student registration. A separate communication and campaign will be taking place to ensure student awareness and engagement with the statement. Students have had to agree to these principles as part of their Terms & Conditions.

There was a discussion regarding the tone of the language used in the University part of the statement and whether this could be rewritten to be more welcoming.

The Committee members discussed ways to improve the student communication plan in relation to the statement. It was suggested that to support the plan, a slot should be introduced in the induction programme to speak to students about the importance of the statement. It was noted that the purpose of the statement should be framed positively. It should be clearly communicated to students that its purpose is to support student safety and improve the student experience.

**Action: To discuss communications plan with the Communication Team. (ST)**

There was a discussion on introducing a statement on the use of Track & Trace by different services. It was noted that this will need to be a generic statement due to the Track & Trace requirements differing between services.

**Action: To add reference to Track & Trace to the agreement (ST)**

It was noted that the paper was endorsed by the Committee members subject to the actions noted above.

**3. Student Engagement and Attendance (CMI)**

**3.1. Update on Student Engagement and Attendance (CMI) work including discussion and approval of suggested university position in regards to on-campus attendance at scheduled teaching and learning.**

Paper

The Committee was asked to note the update on work to align student attendance and engagement reporting with Student Support models and Count Me In and the associated policies and process.

It was noted that Schools were in the process of finalising their student engagement monitoring plans for Term 1. This is expected to be ready by 11<sup>th</sup> September and an update will be provided at the next ESC meeting based on the School plans.

The expectations for in-person attendance were outlined as prioritising on-campus teaching and learning activities that require the use of specialist space and equipment (e.g. laboratory, practical simulation, professional settings) and that enable small group teaching to be delivered that complements other sessions that will be delivered on-line. Where possible teaching and learning activities will be available online or able to move online.

It is the University’s expectation that students will attend teaching & learning sessions on campus unless they are:

- currently located in another country (this is currently approximately 30% of our international students)
- unwell and are following City guidance to stay off campus

- have a diagnosis of Covid-19 and should self-isolate for the number of days set out by the UK Government

In each of these cases, the student should inform their Programme Office and discuss when their plans to return to campus.

For students in the vulnerable category or in a family or social bubble setting in which one or more people are in a vulnerable category, the University's position is that they are advised to discuss their circumstances with their programme office to discuss the health and safety measures that are in place on campus and the extent to which on-campus engagement would be feasible.

For students in the clinically vulnerable, extremely clinically vulnerable or with a long-term underlying health condition category, the advice is to discuss their circumstances with the Student Health Centre to ensure that they are supported and advised to update their programme office accordingly.

The Committee agreed that the University's position was clear for students. However, there is a need for this messaging to align for both the staff and student communities.

**Action: To share the student expectations for in-person attendance as set out by the paper in the ESC email briefing and with the Return to Campus Working Group so this is aligned with messaging to staff. (ST)**

There was a discussion regarding students who will not wish to come to campus for a number of reasons and what approach is taken for those students. It was noted that the approach will be a dialogue with each individual student to understand and support their circumstances.

The Committee discussed whether the position outlined for in-person attendance is for Term 1 only or for the whole academic year. It was agreed that the communications will make it clear that this is the University's starting position for Term 1.

There was a discussion about clarifying that the university will provide online provision for students who cannot come into campus in person for the whole academic year. This particular point would exclude programmes where there are PSRB requirements for in-person attendance. It was noted that student communications have been framed to clarify that not all programmes can have complete online provision due to PSRB requirements.

The Committee discussed the need for clinically vulnerable students to contact both the Programme Office and the Student Health Centre. It was noted that the purpose of it is to provide students with the best support plan suited to their individual needs.

**Action: To clarify in the statement that clinically vulnerable students are expected to contact the Student Health Centre so they can be provided with a supportive health and wellbeing plan. (ST)**

It was noted that fewer students should be expected to come on campus in Term 1 due to the University position of advising students not to access the campus if they are unwell.

The Committee members endorsed the initial position on in person attendance for Term 1 subject to changes on the phrasing of student contact with the Student Health Centre.

#### **4. Feasibility of generation of Teams events for Online Teaching Activities**

##### **4.1. To discuss and endorse proposed option for generation of Teams events for Online Teaching Activities**

## Paper

The Committee was provided with an update in relation to work being undertaken to support the auto-generation of Team events for timetabled online synchronous activities and how these strands of work could be joined up within MAfS Projects in future.

It was noted that the Team Sites for Modules will be going live the week of 14<sup>th</sup> September. Based on this, IT, Timetabling and MAfS have been reviewing the Teams Event Generation work being undertaken in the context of the Personalised Timetables and SEAM projects to ensure a joined-up approach of the different projects. The Committee was asked to endorse the recommended joint approach, while noting the number of constraints and dependencies of the project.

There was a discussion on what the impact on teaching staff and how this may be perceived by them. It was noted that the aim of the project is to relieve some of the administrative pressure from staff. The aim is to automatically generate calendar invites for timetabled online activities. This would relieve the burden of creating new calendar invites manually.

It was noted that the project is fully in the development phase and it only applies to programmes that are part of the Personalised Timetable and SEAM projects.

The Committee endorsed the recommended approach noting that there are a series of fall-back options.

## **5. Verbal updates**

### **5.1. Verbal update on Student Accommodation and management of Covid-19 2020-21**

There was an update on Student Accommodation and how the University is coordinating their approach with providers in the context of Covid-19 for 2020-21 academic year.

It was noted that City's approach to accommodation is likely to look different than other universities due to a high percentage of our student body commuting. The University's preparations, with the accommodation providers on Health & Safety measures is going well. There is work currently undertaken on looking at how to segment groups of students per household in the event of suspected or confirmed Covid-19 cases.

The University has been working with international students who have had to self-isolate for 14 days. A number of students have already moved in and are doing there two weeks of self-isolation where they need to.

Student communications were focused on good adherence to Covid-19 security and minimisation of potential for transmission given our high proportion of commuting students too.

It was noted that the Health Centre is preparing an awareness and communication campaign for flu jabs in a few weeks' time.

### **5.2. Verbal update on work to comply with Home Office guidance for students on Tier 4 visas**

It was noted that the University is sponsoring all students with a Tier 4 visa irrespective of their coming into the UK during Term 1. The Tier 4 Visas Team have been offering 1:1 support via Teams with communications on travel, arrival and self-quarantine, and on visa application processes. A number of visa advice and online welcome events had taken place, and were due to continue for each School.

Separate communications have been sent to EU and non-EEA students on via and immigration issues they need to be aware of. Communication to students have also been clear in what students are expected to do if they choose to arrive in the UK. There were important deadlines for EU students and non-EEA students respectively, in terms of the EU settlement scheme and Graduate Route Entry scheme that students needed to understand fully.

There was a discussion on the data obtained by S&AS through the student survey. It was noted that data is available on how many international students per programme have opted to study from their home country during Term 1.

**Action: To share the international student data with Schools. (JB)**

There was a discussion on the flexibility on student registration. It was noted that India's Supreme Court has made decision that students will need to take exams before they can graduate. This will mainly affect postgraduate offer holders in SMCSE.

**Action: To discuss the situation with the registration of offer holders in SMCSE affected by India's Supreme Court ruling. (JB/ RR)**

**5.3. Verbal update on inclusivity in context of Covid-19**

Information on "What you will need for your online studies" has been published on the Student Hub. It was noted that a Qualtrics Survey is running to find out where students need financial support for equipment or internet. There will be a lighter touch financial assessment for IT equipment by assessing household finances through Student Finance England. A complex process will be in place for students where they are above the threshold but they can demonstrate a specific need for having their equipment provided.

It was noted that 250 laptops have been purchased to be distributed to students. These are at the higher performance end and there will be a need to identify those students who most need them in relation to their programme of study. It was noted that this is firstly being targeted at UK UG students, but international students will eventually have to be considered.

There was an update on ongoing work to provide study space on campus. By 28th September 50 PCs in central IT labs would be available to use on a first come first serve basis. NSQ library would be open 8.30 to 21.00 from 28th September and have 80 bookable study spaces and 40 PCs. BHR Library was opening on 14th September with 18 bookable study spaces and 12 PCs available. A click and collect service at Gray's Inn place would also be available. Study space use would be monitored and kept under review and increased based on demand. Any increase in provision would of course prioritise the safety of students and staff in line with government and University guidance.

**5.4. Guidance for providing links to external learning materials on VLE for international students**

LeAD will provide guidance to academic staff on providing links to external learning materials on VLE for international students. LeAD have also been working with IT to make sure links to external materials are supported. It was noted that links are being checked to ensure they are accessible from China.

**5.5. Verbal update on Academic Year structure 2020-21**

It was noted that the academic year structure for 2020-21 has been agreed. It was decided that there will be three weeks break at Christmas, rather than four weeks. This will allow the return to the normal academic year structure from January. The proposal will go to the President for approval on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September.

## 6. Doctoral College

### 6.1. Doctoral College Update 20-21

#### Paper

The Committee received an updated from the Doctoral College on the summary of actions taken to date to ensure the continued delivery of postgraduate research degrees as a result of COVID-19 disruption, an update of the timeline for the review, approval and communication of changes to programme design and delivery for 2020-21, and a summary of Senate Regulation and Policy changes to mitigate the ongoing impact of COVID-19 during 2020-21.

Two recommendations were made to the Education Student Committee for endorsement.

1. A permanent policy amendment is made to allow videoconferencing by any participant. Exceptional approval by the Doctoral College would no longer be required but it would be approved by the Doctoral College Board of Studies as part of the Nomination of Examiners process (RaP/PhD Manager). It was noted that the University would retain a strong preference in the policy for a viva examination to be held at City with all participants present, but where all parties consent to an online participant this would have the further benefit of facilitating a wider pool of examiners (i.e. non-UK/EU/EEA) for whom travel time and/or visa restrictions is prohibitive.
2. A permanent policy amendment is made to no longer require submission of a physical copy of the thesis for examination.

It was noted that both of these recommendations will be debated to Board of Studies next week. Following that, they will be taken to Senate for final approval. The Committee endorsed both recommendations.

## 7. AOB

- The committee were informed that an update on Academic Regulations and Policy work would be communicated next Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> September.
- IT gave an update on Kaltura. Kalutra is a leading supplier for medias services nationally and internationally. In August, they undertook a migration to improve their capacity in response to increased demand globally for their services. Following the migration, Kaltura experienced service outages in the first week of September due to technical issues which impacted City.  
This week (w/c 7 September) there have been intermittent disruptions to the uploading facility however the service is available and over 800 videos have been uploaded this week. Students are not impacted and are able to view and play content. The timing is unfortunate as we prepare for Term 1 however this is rare as our uptime for Kalutra is 99.7% for the last six months.  
It was noted that IT will make changes to their communications to reassure users that the service is working but that performance is not 100%.
- It was noted that there are problems with new ID cards not working for students/ staff in SHS. The committee was updated that new students will be able to get working ID cards from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September.