**UCU Workload survey response – Education and Student Experience**

1. Revise, if not remove, added activities and asynchronous lectures from teaching requirements entirely, and ensure that all teaching move towards synchronous, timetabled lectures (unless requested by convenors).

Asynchronous teaching activities have the distinct advantage of being able to support teaching and learning no matter where students are in the world or how well they are connected to the Internet. Synchronous lectures are at considerable risk of failure due to technical and/or other issues that are often beyond the control of the teaching member of staff involved. Synchronous activities can therefore only be condoned at the institutional level provided that a real-time recording is made to ensure that the session is not lost for individual participants.

The University has provided significant numbers of training opportunities for staff in regards to ‘best practice’ design of asynchronous sessions. We recognise that the production of pre-recorded material for these sessions takes time. However, we also appreciate that the reuse of these recordings is likely to lessen future workloads when built into an appropriate blend of online and in-person education.

5. Commission a report to discern the impact of additional workload on workers in equalities communities, and then carry out the report’s recommendations.

The education and student support directorates have agreed to undertaken equality impact assessments on all policies and procedures from the beginning of the autumn term 2020 onwards. Whilst we acknowledged that the pressures around rapid changes due to changing lockdown conditions may have necessitated more rapid decision-making processes than we would have liked, the EIAs will form an important and significant aspect of our work moving forward.

6. Consult with junior members of staff directly—and without records of identifying information being kept—in order to determine suitable best practice for their teaching.

All staff, both junior and more experienced, have been encouraged to take part in our enormously successful digitally enhanced education webinars. Hints and tips are openly shared amongst a community of over 1000 participants and provide an important forum for good practice sharing both across the institution and more widely.

7. Signpost more clearly the IT equipment loan facilities and commission a use-case analysis in order to determine whether or not the equipment available is sufficient for the tasks required of it.

Information Services have been dealing with staff equipment loan requests from both academic and PSD sources since the beginning of the first lockdown in March 2020. There has been considerable redistribution of equivalent resources for unused/underused office spaces to enable working from home to be more tolerable. Moreover, from the academic perspective, campus return authorisations have been generated to enable the production of, for example, teaching materials to occur in settings that may be more conducive to high quality recordings. Requests for additional or replacement equipment are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

8. Ensure that the software used to facilitate online and blended learning is fit for use and has 100% uptime. a) Ensure staff have platforms that guarantee students cannot cheat during tests, whilst linking test questions to TurnItIn so plagiarism can be detected. b) Distribute easy-to-follow tips on how to maintain computers for optimal working efficiency/speed.

The University has invested heavily in online platforms (e.g., Office 365, Teams, Zoom, etc) to enable both synchronous and asynchronous teaching activities to occur. Moreover, IS has provided access to a range of more specialist software to facilitate video production storage. Whilst no system can ever be guaranteed to have 100% uptime, our experiences over the last 10 months have indicated that the systems and processes that we have in place are incredibly robust.

Online tests are, by their nature, more prone to potential academic misconduct than paper-based assessment methods. We have, however, learnt a number of lessons from the May/June 2020 examination period that influence our design of exams and assessments for the current academic session. These include reducing the time available for the completion of open-book examinations from 48 hours to 24 hours. In addition, and driven by pedagogic requests, we are also enabling timed exams to take place this year. All text-based examination answers are submitted via Moodle to TurnItIn for plagiarism detection and are marked using GradeMark.

The previously mentioned digitally enhanced education webinar series has included sessions on computer maintenance for education purposes.