

**NOTES OF THE EMERGENCY JOINT NEGOTIATING COUNCIL WITH UCU**

**HELD ON MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2019 (v 1.0)**

Present: Prof Stephen Shute (chair) [SS]; Jayne Aldridge [JA]; Prof Saul Becker [SB]; Prof Philip Harris [PH]; Prof Kelly Coate [KC]; Sheila Gupta [SG]; John Hallam [JH]; Dr Charlotte Skeet [CS]; Prof Chris Chatwin [CC].

1. Notes of the EJNC of 18 July 2019

The notes of the EJNC of 18 July were circulated. These were agreed subject to the following amendment:

3 viii) “Proposals on the way forward had been discussed in Senate and Council – *see the minutes for further details.*”

1. Data on the Impact of the Timetabling Changes

JA circulated data on the impact of the changes, which was discussed. CS said one of the main concerns for staff was double teaching sessions on the same day (i.e. a session starting at 9.00 a.m. plus a later session the same day ending at 20.00 – potentially an 11 hour day. This was the reason for the request to avoid early teaching commitments on days on which evening teaching was timetabled.

It was noted there were 173 staff timetabled to teach beyond 18.00 in the first semester. Of these, 25 would finish at 19.00. 17 were timetabled to finish beyond 19.00 and then also teach at 9.00 a.m. the following day. This was a small proportion.

JA explained that there had been a two week window in which academics were able to request reviews of the published timetable. There was an informal and formal review process of timetabling allocations along with reviews of space allocations. After this, the request for any flexibility was via the Head of School. Managing the timetable for 18,000 students and around 1,000 academic staff was a hugely complex issue.

CC said an early start and late finish would be objectionable to some people – but possibly not to others. He accepted this was existing operational practice in some areas. In other areas, the potential impact on NSS and the student experience was more of the concern rather than any impact on staff – particularly Mathematics.

KC and JA said that the aim was to keep undergraduate teaching between 9.00 and 18.00 as much as possible.

1. Timetabling, Operational Issues and General Teaching Space

JA said the intention was to achieve publication of an annual timetable by May 2020. This would enable forward planning.

Timetabling were often receiving modules with no staff or multiple staff allocated to teach. Work was on-going to improve this. There was also over-booking of teaching space. These issues contributed to additional space pressure and were connected to reasons for the need for evening teaching space. It was agreed that teaching space needed to be used efficiently and that the University needed to avoid the need to build additional, highly expensive teaching space, unless is it was really necessary. A number of suggestions were made for consideration by the Timetabling Working Group (TTWG):

* Developing the roles of module and course convenors to improve timetabling (although timetabling decisions would still rest with Heads of School);
* Cleaning and verifying data entered into the timetabling system
* Enabling improved reporting from the timetabling system
* Regular room audits
* A technological solution – automated attendance recording (not monitoring)
* Reviewing use of ‘protected’ spaces within Schools for use as General Teaching Space (GTS)
* Consider reviewing / converting some research space back to teaching space
* Continuing work towards a single ‘gatekeeper’ for timetabling matters.

1. The Way Forward

There was agreement that the time for a joint statement had now passed and that this was no longer useful. UCU recognised there was an imperative to publish the timetable. It was agreed that:

* SB would ask Heads of School to write to each of the 173 staff impacted by evening teaching asking them for feedback on how the process has gone
* TTWG to consider requests for School / research to re-convert space to GTS
* There would be on-going discussions with Timetabling about issues arising from the extension of teaching between 18.00 and 20.00
* If appropriate, a special meeting of the JNC would be organised to discuss timetabling further
* Student reaction would be kept under review
* It was accepted that responsibility for resolving any operational issues lie with Heads of School

1. Other Closing Comments

CS said she did not wish this discussion to be taken as acquiescence of UCU to working beyond 18.00 being normalised. JA and KC confirmed that the intention was that most undergraduate teaching would remain as being taught between 9.00 and 18.00. CS said it was important that, as appropriate, any disability issues were also considered in timetabling allocations.

CS said it would be helpful to have more data about existing practices e.g. people who had previously worked evening sessions and a following morning during 18/19.

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