

## Resolution of Dispute Procedure (September 2020)

Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) and the University and College Union (UCU) have met regularly over the period 10 September 2020 to 24 September 2020 as a Special Joint Consultative and Negotiating Group (JCNG)\* under Stages 1 and 2 of the Disputes Procedure. Both parties understand that in order to resolve the dispute of 8 September 2020 the following agreed actions are to be implemented:

\*Special JCNG Stage 2 membership:

### Management

Vice Chancellor  
Chief Operating Officer (Chair)  
Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation)  
PVC/Dean for the Faculty of Science and Engineering  
HR Director  
Head of HR Business Partnering  
Deputy Director of Finance  
Head of Compliance and Risk (guest)

### University and College Union

Regional Official  
ARU Branch Chair  
ARU Branch JCNG Representatives (3)  
  
NB Unison representatives in attendance

- 1) The University will hold twice daily Return to Campus on-line surgeries to allow all staff to raise and resolve urgent health and safety and operational concerns in relation to COVID-19 that have arisen. A member of the Vice Chancellor's Group (VCG) will be present at least once daily. These surgeries will be reviewed after 2 weeks of implementation. Where a member of staff is confident that an agreed safety measure is not in place for a teaching session then they should, following reasonable steps to remedy the situation, in liaison with management cancel the session.
- 2) The University will hold regular Education Rapid Response Team meetings to discuss immediate teaching concerns. UCU will be invited to these meetings. These meetings will be reviewed after 2 weeks of implementation.
- 3) Principles around attendance thresholds for individual courses which may be able to move online are attached at Appendix 1.
- 4) The University values greatly all its staff, and their health, safety and wellbeing. In addition, line managers have a key role to play in setting the right, supportive working environment for staff. The University will ensure that all staff are able to have constructive discussions around work, the working environment and return to campus arrangements. No member of staff will be penalised for indicating that they feel it is not safe for them to return to campus if they are being asked to do so. The University will contact any such staff member to reassure them and discuss any additional mitigations to allay their concerns. Where local procedures have been exhausted and the staff member still has concerns then they are able to escalate these matters through their Dean or Director, or if this remains unresolved to a

panel of senior staff, to discuss any additional measures that could be put in place to provide further reassurance and ensure their personal circumstances have been fully considered. Staff may have a trade union representative present in any meetings to discuss these concerns should they so wish. The University will not take punitive action against any member of staff if they are unable to return to campus following escalation. UCU will be provided links to all relevant guidance.

- 5) The University recognises that Covid-19 may be with us for some time to come and, working in partnership with our trades unions, is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive educational experience, so that all students are able to thrive and work towards achieving their aspirations. This will be kept under review for the need to comply with government regulations and to manage risk.


For unified active learning, the University expects this to involve four hours of face to face engagement with innovative, up to date content per week. In exceptional circumstances, where a variation to this approach is requested, the DVC (Education) will meet with the relevant Course Team, Deputy Dean (Education) and Course Rep or SU Vice President as soon as possible to address this matter. The University is willing to consider changes in face to face hours where that is deemed appropriate as a result of these meetings.

In seeking to meet the challenges of delivering education in the context of Covid-19, the University recognises that additional pressures have been placed upon existing staff and is committed to urgently reviewing staffing levels and to taking immediate action to increase capacity where necessary.

- 6) The University will provide the ARU Covid-19 Outbreak Plan to UCU. [provided]
- 7) The JCNG will issue a communication to staff to inform them of the outcome of the dispute and the additional measures agreed here.

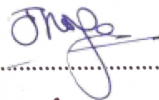
Agreed 24 September 2020

Signed: Professor Roderick Watkins  
Vice Chancellor



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James Rolfe  
Chief Operating Officer



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Dr John Hogan  
ARU Branch Chair, University and College Union .....



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## Principles around attendance thresholds

ARU firmly believes that course delivery should be socially distanced, blended face-to-face where possible, because of the additional benefits this brings to students including interaction with peers, collaboration opportunities, improved continuation rates, and access to key facilities. The University has put in place a raft of measures to ensure a Covid-safe environment and a large proportion of students (85%) chose a blended face-to-face mode of delivery as their preference for Trimester 1.

However, the case for face-to-face delivery would be weakened if only a small proportion of students actually attended a course. Where the benefits of face-to-face teaching cannot be realised, the following process will apply in approving a shift to online delivery<sup>1</sup>.

A provisional process is as follows:

- i) Face-to-face teaching will initially be delivered as planned. Students will be reminded of the need to attend their face-to-face 4 hr blocks during the first week. Attendance will be monitored from this point on to provide early sight of emerging issues. Non-attendance in later weeks will be followed up by PDTs who will be alerted to non-attendance by module/course leaders.
- ii) ARU will routinely monitor student change of preference data (face-to-face vs. online) at the agreed change points (Sept 20<sup>th</sup> and October 4<sup>th</sup>). Any large movement in students requesting to change to online delivery would precipitate consideration by the University to move delivery online. Monitoring of rolling weekly trends throughout Tri 1 will allow the University to keep the position under review.
- iii) In addition, if face-to-face attendance for a 4 hour block in week 2 is low (less than or equal to 30% of enrolled students), the course leader will write to all students making clear our attendance expectations.
- iv) If attendance for a 4 hour block remains low (less than or equal to 30% of enrolled students) during week 3, the course leader can request that the Deputy Dean (Education), relevant module leaders, and Course Rep or SU Vice President reviews the case for face-to-face delivery. This review must take into account any students who have opted for f2f delivery, but who may be scheduled to arrive late (e.g., international students who opt for f2f but can only join the delivery later in the trimester, and those in self-isolation/quarantine).
- v) If there is agreement at the review that delivery should move online, the case needs to be put to the DVC (Education), who will give final approval for changes from f2f to online delivery. Decisions will be made within 5 working days.
- vi) DVC (Education) will provide a report on any decisions taken under v) to JCNG membership, including a written response in the case of any decision not to approve a request to move a course online.
- vii) Appropriate communications to all students affected will need to be sent out explaining the decision, the implications for remaining students attending face-to-face teaching sessions, and the consultation process that has been followed.

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<sup>1</sup> There is considerable complexity involved in assessing student enrolment numbers during the early weeks of any academic year given late arriving and late registering students.

- viii) Once final agreement has been obtained, the PVC Dean then notifies Timetabling, Academic Registry and Secretary and Clerk's office of changes including any potential CMA implications.
- ix) All enrolled students on the course will be notified of the change – and the reasons for the switch - which will remain in place for the remainder of Trimester 1.

**Agreed 24 September 2020**