



## Running up that hill Timeline of Events

#### February 2020

UCU announces 14 days of strike action, beginning Thursday 20th February.

#### April 2020

'No-detriment' or 'safety net' policies introduced at many universities across the country.

#### May 2020

10th: Plans to ease the first lockdown are announced.

25th: George Floyd is murdered by police in the USA, prompting Black Lives Matter protests across the world.

#### July 2020

4th: Face coverings are made mandatory on public transport whilst pubs, bars and cinemas reopen. Two households can meet in any setting.

#### March 2020

18th – 23rd: The first restrictions announced in England, with 'lockdown' commencing on 23rd.

Students told to remain where they are.

Some accommodation providers begin to release students from contracts.

Healthcare students drafted in to support the NHS.

#### June 2020

Universities begin to make announcements about the 2020/21 academic year. Approaches vary – some announce face—to—face teaching only, others a 'blended' approach, and some online—only.

#### August 2020

Student Minds launch Student Space.

13th August: A level results day. 40% of teachers' A level grades are downgraded by an algorithm which tends to favour privately educated students in advantaged areas.

17th: The Government u-turns on exam results and accepts centre-assessed grades as final.

#### September 2020

Cases of Covid–19 rise. The 7–day average increases from 2,180 to 11,158.

14th: Gatherings of more than 6 made illegal amidst rising case numbers.

22nd: 10pm curfew announced for pubs, bars and restaurants.

#### Students return to university campuses.

In the second half of September, universities begin to introduce student lockdowns as outbreaks are reported on campuses.

#### December 2020

2nd: England returns to the three—tier system following the national lockdown. The first vaccine is approved for use in the UK.

19th: The Prime Minister announces changes to Christmas plans. London and South East England are placed in Tier 4 amidst concerns about a new strain.

3rd: The student travel window opens, enabling students to get home for Christmas.

31st: Only students on health, social or education courses will be allowed to return to university. Others will face staggered returns from Jan 25th at the earliest.

#### October 2020

14th: The three-tiered system is introduced in the England.

31st: The second lockdown in England is announced, to commence on November 5th.

Data from UniCovid shows that 100 UK universities have reported Covid–19 outbreaks by early October.

#### November 2020

5th: Second lockdown in England comes into effect.

7th: The UK Covid-19 death toll exceeds 50,000.

Students are told to remain where they are until winter break.

11th: The government announces the plan for students to return home over the Christmas period.

#### Key:



Month/ Year



Student-specific

### Running up that hill

University Mental Health: Life in a Pandemic

#### January 2021

4th: A third national lockdown is announced.

22nd: The UK Covid-19 death toll exceeds 100,000.

Students on courses training for health, social care or education roles can return to campus despite the national lockdown. All other students are told to remain where they are.

#### **April 2021**

12th: Stage two of lockdown restrictions easing – outdoor hospitality and non– essential retail reopens.

#### February 2021

21st: The PM announces the 'roadmap' out of lockdown

2nd: The Government announces an additional £50m of hardship funding for students in England

#### March 2021

9th–13th: Campaigns and protests across the country following the murder of Sarah Everard.

29th: The 'Rule of Six' returns for outdoor gatherings.

8th: Students on 'practical' courses are allowed to return to university for inperson teaching.

#### May 2021

17th: Stage three of lockdown restrictions easing – indoor hospitality and social distancing guidance relaxed.

10th: The Prime Minister confirms that all remaining university students can return to on–campus study from the 17th May.

University Mental
Health: Life in a
Pandemic. Student
Minds Report, 2021,
pp.9-10. Nicola Frampton
and Dom Smithies with
contributions from Myles
Smith—Thompson and
Chloe Maughan.
Designed by Krishna Lad.

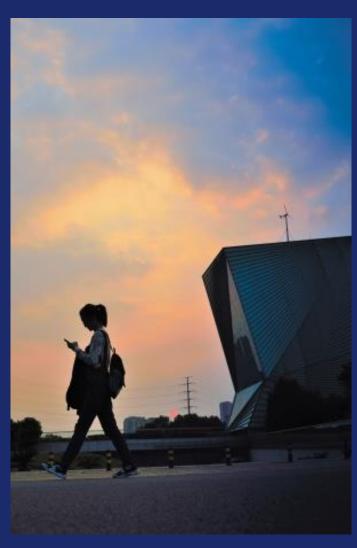
<u>Life in a pandemic -</u> Student Minds





# Acceptance of an impending uphill and its unknown consequences ahead

- constant changes, accompanying a pandemic in progress, will make it more challenging to establish a community using our in-person, points of references.
- Adapting our established routines is inevitable.



### We experience

- A sense of fragmentation due to the physical distance but also while using online avenues that were unfamiliar and impersonal.
- A reality incompatible with our established routines. Virtual platforms become the main route to create a new approach to engage and support our staff and students.



## Choosing to make it work. Reclaiming agency

- Supporting students in ways which set them up to succeed.
- Recognising students will have different needs and preferences when engaging with their learning.
- Demonstrating flexibility and sensitivity to individual circumstances.



- Live Chat alongside in person enquiries within our library buildings.
- Upgraded study space booking system to ensure robust management of spaces and capacity.
- Click & Collect and extended eligibility to everyone for copy/scan direct, Free postal loans & returns.



## Focusing our energy where it makes an impact and reflects our institution's values

Our inability to plan far ahead gave way to consulting metrics, applying micro plans that can be easily adjusted by witnessing the impact our services have to the student experience each step of the way.



#### **Our values**



We set the highest standards for ourselves and our work and support each other to achieve them



**Fairness** Our decisions and actions are consistent. impartial and ethical



#### Inclusivity

We are a community where everyone can contribute and be appreciated for who they are



#### **Openness**

We adopt a straightforward and transparent way of communicating with each other and with the world, championing the free exchange of ideas



## Respect

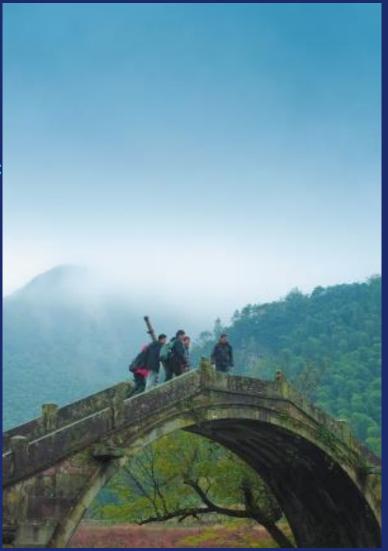
We have regard for each other's rights and feelings, and demonstrate this in our behaviour. treating each other with kindness

- Creating H&S Roles & Responsibilities encouraging shared responsibility in reviewing and updating our master risk assessments routinely.
- Use of Microsoft O365 for easy access to documentation and enhancing collaborations. Smooth transition: Working from home and on campus.
- Preserve Lean approach to projects for continuous improvement.



Reclaiming our sense of purpose assessing how our contributions help sustain its relevance despite the farreaching impact of a pandemic

□ Despite everything feeling unstable, we are aiming for constancy that acts as a 'bridge' between the new reality of 'not business as usual' and an essential diachronic purpose.



What's the purpose of University?

"To gain decent employment, to achieve personal growth, and to contribute to improvement in society... Promoting democratic and critical engagement, while also furthering collective, rather than solely individual, ends."

London School of Economics Blog, 'What's the purpose of University?' published, Gupta, Achala, January 21, 2021.



Visible Leadership, observing and actively taking notice while encouraging solidarity & rid top collaborations.

- Leadership that acts as a connecting thread to keep a community together amidst the uneven ground of overlapping change.
- Ongoing real time dialogue provide the narrative so negativity and assumptions don't creep in to fill the void instead.



- Talking to people that will not appear in your diary.
- Communicating expectations openly discuss feedback and maintain dialogue via our engagement plans.
- Its ok to allow ourselves to be a work in progress.
- Libraries Wellbeing activities involve colleagues in initiatives taking place in the day light. On-demand exercises and activities available to access any time/anywhere. Building positive associations to our professional roles ultimately channels through to customers.



Restricting our respiration should not stop us from reinventing and multiplying our ways of inspiring individuals to develop their own learning strategies and working routines.

☐ There is no one way or method that fits all.



- Planning for multiple inductions that are tailored made for specific types/modes of study throughout the year.
- Physical spaces to be redesigned to accommodate virtual collaborations even within campus.
- Introduce short rather than long 'themed' online webinars to respond to key moments in the year.



- □ Acceptance of an impending uphill and its unknown consequences ahead.
- ☐ Choosing to make it work and reclaiming agency.
- ☐ Focusing: our energy where it makes an impact.
- □ Reclaiming our sense of purpose assessing how our contributions help sustain its relevance despite the far-reaching impact of a pandemic.
- □ Visible Leadership, observing and actively taking notice while encouraging collaborations.
- □ Restricting our respiration should not stop us from reinventing and multiplying our ways of inspiring individuals to develop their own learning strategy and working routines. There is no one way or method that fits all.

