

CITYLIT

INSPIRING PASSIONS · REALISING AMBITIONS

Meeting of the Student Panel (via Zoom)
Date Tuesday 4 May 2021 17.30 – 19.00
Attendees City Lit: Karin Kalfus (KK), Wendy McKaig (WM), Dragana Ramsden (DR)
Student Panel Members: 12 panel members

Apologies

Notes Melanie Headley (MH)

Summary of discussions

1.0	Welcome - KK	Introductions, (Zoom meeting) ground rules and group contract
2.0	Exec update – WM	<p>College reopening: The college has re-opened gradually with a limited number of onsite courses. As in term 1, the focus is on courses that need to be delivered in the building in order to work well e.g. visual and performing arts, courses for students with learning disabilities, accredited massage therapy and psychology and counselling.</p> <p>The college is currently operating approximately 25% of the courses that would normally run in the building at this point in the academic year. Covid protective measures are still in place. Class capacity is currently at a maximum of 50%. Feedback from staff and students has been positive regarding the return to face-to-face teaching.</p> <p>Term 1, September 2021: There will a limit on the number of face-to-face courses, with a slow re-introduction of more curriculum areas. There is still uncertainty regarding Covid restrictions, possible lock downs; the least disruptive approach is to continue to have a limited provision</p>

operating from the college. The majority of courses will remain online. The situation will be closely monitored.

Construction works: Aside from Covid restrictions, another factor influencing the delivery of onsite courses is the extensive redevelopment of Aviation House, which is located opposite the main building on Keeley Street. Scaffolding is complete and the disruptive/noisy work is scheduled for September/October 2021. To ensure minimal disruption for tutors and students, provision from within the building is being limited, particularly on the side of the building directly opposite the construction site. It is hoped that by the end of November, the majority of noisy work will be completed.

The future of City Lit online: One of the key areas that the executive team and other managers are investigating is the post pandemic appetite is for the continuation of online courses.

London Business School: City Lit is working with 2 groups of Masters students from the London Business School (LBS) who will be assessing the appetite for online learning post pandemic, assisting with solutions to "real life" problems and providing anecdotal and statistical information. They will be delivering their findings at the end of June.

The Mayor and the GLA are in the process of formulating the **London Recovery Plan**. City Lit has been closely involved with a view to ensuring that adult education is part of a the plan.

Financial health: The FE Commissioner will be returning for a follow up visit in June. Their visit in April was triggered by the financial position of the college (financial health score) as the ability to generate fees was impacted by the pandemic. They wished to understand the recovery plan and they had no concerns regarding City Lit's ability to manage the financial position of the college.

Capital improvements: The Department for Education released funds for capital improvements. City Lit submitted the first stage bid in April. Currently awaiting confirmation as to whether the application can move through to second stage assessment. Projects include renovation of the student centre, building a new ceramics studio and the replacement of the goods lift.

The future: Capital improvements feed into the balance and development of online and in person curriculum. Analysis of/prioritisation of space within the building for courses that can only operate from within the building will be undertaken in conjunction with the governing body and managers across the college.

		<p>Action: KK to email the panel regarding participation in the LBS project around the continuation of online learning post pandemic. Participants will be asked to complete a survey or be interviewed.</p>
3.0	Update; past topics – DR/KK	<p>Study support (DR): In November, the panel was introduced to Orlane Russell, Head of Access Inclusion and Study Support (AISS) department which supports students who have declared a learning difficulty/barrier which impacts their learning experience. Discussions were around what would make a students journey/learning easier should they declare a barrier.</p> <p>The student system has now been changed to make it easier for tutors to see who has declared a learning difficulty. Conversations with tutors are ongoing regarding how best they can be supported to support students in class.</p> <p>Resources are being developed for students detailing the support available and providing reassurance around declaring a barrier to leaning. A (draft) animation has been created which was show to the panel.</p> <p>Panel feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can an alternative phrase be used to “Are you disabled”? DR: Experts in the field state that if an individual has a disability, it is a socially imposed barrier; the problem lies with wider society rather than the (disabled) individual. • The music is too loud and could prove problematic for those with hearing loss • The animation should be shown to students who are currently supported by AISS. They can provide valuable feedback around the terminology used/social model of disability. • The term “differently abled” could be an alternative. <p>Online learning agreement and conduct (KK): In February, the panel discussed encouraging students to have their cameras on during Zoom classes, which improves the class dynamic and allows tutors to assess progression, as well as valid reasons for cameras being off.</p> <p>Step by step guidance has been added to the Help Centre on how to set up a virtual background in Zoom. This information has also be added to the netiquette as written guidance and a video https://youtu.be/gq-7Vwn7R6o</p> <p>Leaning/progression (DR): Panel member comments were used as the starting point for tutor resources including suggestions around how they can engage with students and assess their progress. Tutors have access to online resources as well as training sessions.</p>

		<p>Tutor training: DR will be seeking panel participation in one to one or group interviews regarding training sessions for tutors. The training aims to support tutors in making their classes be as inclusive as possible, creating a safe space for students, listening skills and opening discussions around what helps students learn/flourish. The training session will start with a student sharing their experience either relating to their disability, race or mental health and how it shapes their presence/experience in class.</p> <p>Panel questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is neuro diversity? DR - A term used to describe the different ways in which people process information and the way learn e.g. dyslexia • Suggestion: provide examples of neuro diversity • Suggestion: autism should be one of the conditions highlighted in the video • Where people are not familiar with hidden disabilities, the sunflower lanyard (scheme) may help
4.0	Emailing students with key City Lit information KK	<p>With City Lit's growing online presence, we rely on emails to deliver the information that students may need before, during and after their course. The timing and volume of these communications is critical; too early and it could be forgotten, too close to the class starting, it can cause students anxiety.</p> <p>What were the key stumbling points on the journey from enrolment to course participation?</p> <p>Panel feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication has worked, but was receiving too many as moved closer to the course date (your course is about to start emails); it was like spam • The change to 365 was a difficult transition • Technological changes should be made clear • Website/Zoom navigation can be difficult • Too much time is spent in class discussing technical issues • Navigating within a Zoom class is difficult (switching between systems) • Dealing with a named person regarding IT issues is helpful • Mac users appear to experience more system issues. • Troubleshooting/help sessions before the class would be useful • Google classroom links should be sent earlier and encourage students to log in immediately. This will allow time to identify and resolve any technical issues ahead of the class

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help sessions for students accessing courses via other devices (mobile phones, tablets) • IT issues interrupt the flow of classes <p>KK/DR – Zoom/Google Classroom induction sessions are available for students enrolling for the first time, however the sessions may prove useful for existing students.</p>
5.0	Breakout exercise	<p>Organise the content elements into columns. Add any other information you would like to receive.</p> <p>Back in the group: quickly look at them to see what has emerged. Any comments?</p> <p>Student feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why can't students use the same Zoom link throughout a course? • KK - For security reasons (can't be hacked or passed on), if a student withdraws from a class, it allows control over who can access. WM – This is something that will be looked at as part of the future of City Lit online.
	Questions KK	<p>Further comments/questions, contact KK</p> <p>Attendance credits will be processed in the coming week</p>