

Principal's View – 17 March 2021

Q&A chat transcription

How is the University responding to Lothian Buses announcement or removing services in the evening? This has an effect on some staff and, given the recent tragedy in London with Sarah Everard, it's important staff feel safe leaving and arriving to work.

Paddy Bennett: So far we believe this is a one night removal of service, however if this is impacting anyone, I encourage people to raise this with their line manager so as potential alternatives can be discussed.

What is a postgraduate PhD recruitment strategy? Why postgraduate PhD entry requirement has minimum IELTS 6.5 in Napier but most of the universities' requirements are 6.0, such as [University of Manchester](#).

Nikolaos Antonopoulos: We are in the process of reviewing our full approach to PhD recruitment as indeed we aspire to grow our PGR student numbers significantly. There is already work being undertaken to review admissions, web visibility, processes and funding for studentships. We will be sharing with the schools shortly the recommendations and actions needed to move forward.

When looking at flexible working and ways of working, does will this entail changes to contracts and T&Cs?

Paddy Bennett: We are still in early stages of thinking around what our model will look like in the future, however we will be engaging and consulting with staff throughout the process.

When planning for 'flexible working' will you be consulting staff on how many hours a week they work?

Paddy Bennett: When we get clearer sight of what the future model could look like we will ensure that staff are consulted on what works for them. The engagement survey has already given us great insight.

As school children and teachers are being Covid tested, will students returning to campus and staff (both who are currently working on campus and those returning to campus) start to be tested too?

David Cloy: Yes, the asymptomatic testing facility at the University of Edinburgh is available for ongoing testing of our students who are moving address/regularly attending campus and, from the end of this month, for staff who require to work regularly on campus. PCR tests are also available for students to use before they return to a term time address.

For students living out with the European boundary of 112, email advice is an option. Email advice is not counselling, nor an ongoing therapeutic intervention; it aims to enquire about the need for support and use of existing support pathways within the University community. Unfortunately, this means that International students paying full fees do not get the full student wellbeing support service provisions. Does the University have future plans to support our International students?

Alan McLachlan: We are always keen to explore how we enhance our services to our students not studying on-campus. The Student Services plan commits to exploring how we can enhance our services for International Students, whilst our English for Academic Purposes team are working with our International Programmes and Global Online teams to ensure that their services are available to students studying overseas also. We also work closely with our partners overseas. Lots to build on.

Will staff be advised that they can be routinely tested for Covid?

David Cloy: Yes, we will communicate to staff once we have confirmation of the arrangements.