

Professor Jane Harrington
Vice-Chancellor



Email: vice-chancellor@gre.ac.uk
Date: 13 September 2022

Private and Confidential

Ms Debbie Driscoll
Regional Support Officer
London Region
University and College Union (UCU)

Dear Ms Driscoll,

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 9 September 2022 regarding the workload allocation model.

As you are aware, over the last two years we have written to you on a number of occasions responding to your statement that the academic workload planning tool is a matter of negotiation (letters dated 22 May 2020, 3 November 2020 and 29 October 2021 refer).

The University answered your queries in full and **on all occasions never received a timely** response. I am disappointed that UCU deem it appropriate to continue to raise a matter that we have responded to in full without any immediate reply and substantiation on your part.

It is not appropriate or helpful to employees of the University for UCU to deal with matters in this way. I would respectfully request that UCU consider how they approach such matters going forward, particularly with a view to developing better relationships within our approved committees.

I am disappointed to note that you allege there has been “no acknowledgment or proper response to UCU representations on detriments to staff arising from the proposed new WAM”. This is factually not correct. Firstly, we refute that the new workload allocation tool is detrimental for staff workload. In addition, as referenced in previous correspondence, a number of meetings have been scheduled with UCU representatives to discuss points of clarification regarding the new system during the trial phase. It is unfortunate that UCU did not attend the meeting scheduled for 10 August 2022 at which the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Jane Roscoe, Head of Planning and Statistics, Dr Simon Lewis and Gail Brindley, Director of HR were present to continue the dialogue on the new tool. To accommodate this lack of attendance from UCU representatives, a further meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday 14 September and we hope that representatives will attend.

For absolute clarity, please be assured that the university continues to be open to discuss all elements of the workload model, but this will not be possible if representatives do not attend meetings with us.

As previously confirmed the workload planning tool was discussed at JNC as early as 28 June 2021, when it was confirmed that a steering group had been established to oversee the design of the new workload tool with UCU as active participants. As already communicated within the University, 2022/23 is a transition year for the new tool to allow us to ensure its effective operation and there will be further discussion both at the steering group and also JNC in due course.

Greenwich Campus

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Park Row,
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For clarity, these discussions will take place during this academic year. We have also committed to ensuring that during this year, no member of staff is detrimentally affected by the new workload allocation. We are therefore unable to support the view that a formal dispute is relevant or appropriate.

I note from your statement that you intend to consider industrial action as mandated by branch members. We remain unclear as to the basis of any such proposed industrial action. For a matter of clarity, the workload time allocation at the University of Greenwich is based on contractual working hours of 35 hours per week, the stated desire of UCU for all universities to move to. The workload allocation tool is the system that enables academic colleagues to allocate activities in an equitable and transparent manner. We have fully consulted with UCU on the new model and will continue to engage in dialogue both with local representatives and members of staff to address any points of concern during this transition year.

I would urge you to ensure that local representatives engage fully and appropriately in these discussions moving forwards.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Harrington", written in a cursive style.

Professor Jane Harrington

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