

## DRAFT Statement on remote learning & teaching May 2020

[updated 19 May 2020 after initial GUCU proposals in April. Still awaiting agreement]

Goldsmiths is committed to offering a transformative experience, generating knowledge and stimulating self-discovery through creative, radical and intellectually rigorous thinking and practice.

The Covid-19 pandemic represents a challenge that requires us to modify our established approach to practising our institutional values of radical and innovative thinking; achieving academic excellence; respecting the individual; promoting access and diversity; supporting our students and staff; and creating change, locally and globally.

As a community, we recognise the significance of the change in delivery of learning, teaching and assessment for both staff and students that has been required throughout the Higher Education sector across the world. The necessity of both providing and accessing learning, teaching, assessment and other forms of student support online has required urgent adaptations by all parts of the Goldsmiths community. This temporary, but substantial switch to online and remote teaching and student support raises challenges, as well as uncertainties and concern for both staff and students.

Switching to online delivery presents a host of challenges, not least around digital inclusion. Staff and students have many different circumstances: children at home, accommodation sharing, availability of facilities, uneven availability of technology and broadband, internet connection and so on. Some students will have the additional challenge of living in a different time zone.

The extent and impact of these challenges, including in relation to accessibility and equality for both staff and students, will be evaluated through our equality impact screening mechanism. This will enable us to log and calibrate impacts, identify necessary and appropriate mitigations and adjust our approaches where necessary.

Future guidance will remain cognisant of such issues. It is expected that our guidance will change as government and regulatory requirements change, and as the needs of students and staff change. This may also mean that the expectations or guidance set out by Goldsmiths for its staff differ from those set out at other HEIs. Goldsmiths' guidance will always maintain the importance of providing both quality and equality of provision for our students.

The expectations and guidance set out for current and future (Covid-19 related) delivery have been determined to reflect the varied circumstances of both students and staff at this time. Planning and decision-making recognises that the future is uncertain and that planning needs to be achieved well in advance, but also be responsive to unknown, but changing situations. The principles of planning and expectation of staff and students will be subject to the following key principles: (1) our plans will have resilience to be suitable for whatever phase of social distancing/lockdown we find ourselves in at any point in the future; this

resilience will enable us to adapt to last minute changes as quickly and effectively as possible. (2) our plans will place parity for students at their heart, meaning that whatever social distancing/lockdown situation a student finds themselves in they should be able to access our education in some form. From a student who is unable to travel to London from overseas due to border controls and lives in a different time zone, to a student who must self-isolate due to their own illness, vulnerability or because of such needs in a dependent, and so on, we will ensure that all students are provided with the capacities to engage in online learning. (3) our plans prioritise the quality and standards of the education that we provide and we recognise that online delivery is not a 'quick fix' to be implemented without sufficient resourcing and consultation.

At the current point, no face to face delivery is possible and all staff must deliver learning, teaching, assessment and student support online wherever that is possible (in agreement with the College). In the event that the campus opens but is subject to social distancing rules, it is anticipated that varying amounts of learning, teaching, assessment and student support will be delivered online. This can be expected until no social distancing is needed. While it is anticipated that these online measures will be in place in some form for many months, and into the 20/21 academic year, they should be seen as a temporary measure, whose implementation will be subject to regular review as the situation changes.

The remainder of this document serves to highlight existing relevant policies, statements and resources to highlight the responsibilities of both the College and its staff when delivering materials and teaching online. It should be noted that – while currently in the extreme – the College delivers learning, teaching and assessment in online forms as part of its normal business and thus in-house expertise, as well as significant connections to external expertise are part and parcel of Goldsmiths way of working.

#### Support available – TaLIC

Staff should seek support from the Teaching & Learning Innovation Centre (TaLIC) which supports innovation in pedagogy in many forms including via the VLE, as well as through its distance learning expertise. In addition, some Departments and staff are already delivering distance, online and blended learning successfully, as part of their regular roles, so there is a body of internal knowledge to draw.

TaLIC's support is provided to individuals and to departments in a variety of forms. Training and support are available in relation to pedagogical approaches and solutions as well as for platforms and software supported by the College. The support mechanisms available are accessible via TaLIC's staff support page, or by emailing [tel@gold.ac.uk](mailto:tel@gold.ac.uk). All staff, including part-time and fixed-term staff can access this support.

It is acknowledged that it is, or may not be possible to switch some activities and teaching fully online; certain types of placement, live performances or making practices for example. These forms of teaching and learning will need to focus on maintaining their communities and connections between students and staff. This will need a different form of support to ensure that these communities and expertise are not lost over the duration of the pandemic.

## Digital Recording

To respond to the constraints imposed by Covid-19, and to recognise and support the differing circumstances of both students and staff due to this, the College encourages staff to support asynchronous access to learning for students and therefore to provide recordings of content, including of lectures and seminars that may also be taught live. In doing so, staff should adhere to the existing Digital Recording of 'Live' Educational Activities Policy, as will the College. The College expects that all staff will opt to record sessions, wherever possible and appropriate, since for many students this will be the primary way that they can access their learning at this time, often due to time zone, caring commitments and/or illness.

## Support platforms

The College will continue to support existing platforms for remote teaching, notably learn.gold, learn.gold Recording (Panopto) and BigBlueButton. Microsoft Teams is being added to the suite of options available for online teaching. Using these platforms enables us to ensure that we meet our legal responsibilities concerning both data and accessibility.

Where the existing platforms are not easily adapted to a particular type of teaching staff should, in the first instance, liaise with TaLIC regarding the use of these platforms for their specified purpose and to identify solutions (see also Data protection below).

## Data protection

Goldsmiths is committed to promoting the highest standards of personal information handling practice. Flowing from this the development and delivery of online learning must only be carried out using systems that are approved, managed and supported by Goldsmiths. This ensures that Goldsmiths is able to meet its obligations as a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act by having adequate and appropriate organisational and technical controls in place to protect privacy. Any requirements that cannot be met by existing systems must be supported by a sound business case and an agreed Data Protection Impact Assessment. Under no circumstances should any online learning activity on behalf of Goldsmiths be carried out from personal accounts. Finally, data providers should adhere to the GDPR and there should be no capture of biometric data (such as gaze detection or facial identification) nor harvesting of personally identifiable information.

## Workload allocation/resourcing

At this unprecedented time, it is expected that most staff will need to prioritise learning, teaching, assessment and academic support activities and that these will take precedent over most other activities that might have been planned at this point (eg. research). Line managers are expected to be working with staff to ensure reprioritisation where this is needed and to ensure appropriate workloads for staff to guarantee a department delivers its necessary learning, teaching, assessment and student support activities within reasonable timeframes and within its available budget. As the budget holder and overseer of workloads within an academic department, staff should liaise with their Head of

Department. Part-time and fixed-term staff should be provided with access to training, equipment and sufficient time to learn new platforms.

### Remote working

College guidance on remote working is available. This has been updated in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. Updated guidance can be found via the relevant tabs on the Goldmine Covid-19 pages, and staff should complete the online learning modules that relate to this. Goldsmiths recognises its responsibility to provide necessary equipment so that staff can fulfil their teaching commitments as per the 'temporary changes to working conditions' policy.

### Relevant documents

The following documents are particularly relevant:

- Digital Recording of 'Live' Educational Activities
- Remote working advice and guidance
- Data protection

Please note the College's Covid-19 website is an up-to-date source of information including where necessary, temporary changes have been made to College policies. It should be referred to regularly and treated as a first port of call.

19 May 2020