

Dear all,

With the start of the next academic year quickly approaching we wanted to keep you all updated on our current plans. As you are hopefully aware we intend to return to the campus for much of our teaching on our three BPS accredited courses (BSc Applied Psychology; BSc Psychology; BSc Psychology & Counselling) in the 2021/22 academic year as we know the value of being able to engage with you all face-to-face on-campus. However, as we remain faced with the ongoing uncertainty of COVID-19 we have had to continue to take steps to ensure the safety of our staff and students alike. In particular, those of you who remember what on-campus university life was like before Covid-19 will recall gathering outside of lecture rooms to go into the next session as another group left; of staff moving between one cohort and another to give lectures and seminars; and one to three-hour sessions throughout the day, spread over several days. For obvious reasons that model cannot be used, at least for the next academic year whilst Covid measures remain in place.

Therefore we have taken time to reflect and learn from the delivery of the last year and previously, and have put together a model of on-campus teaching to support use of online resources in a way that we feel will potentially offer a student experience that will improve upon anything that we have done before, and we are excited to share these broad plans with you. With that in mind, please find below our current plans for taught academic sessions next year:

On-Campus Teaching: This year we are taking a smarter approach to the times we bring you back onto campus, so that we can maximise your learning and wider student experience without having to come on and off campus on multiple occasions for often short periods of time. This year we have made the decision to group module content together on specific days, so you come onto campus for the day and, rather than jump from one module session to another, you will remain in one module group and have consolidated interactive teaching contact (see the example in the box below). Importantly, this new approach will INCREASE your contact time with academic staff and in a more meaningful way than previously. Crucially, this approach allows us to change the ways that we do sessions on-campus, to incorporate more of the things that you tell us are important to you: more discussion, opportunity to ask questions and clarify things you don't understand, more demonstration, group work, and practical work. It also enables us to give you more opportunities to develop your wider learning and experience during your on-campus time with us through some additional plans we have to expand your learning community – more information on this to follow....

Example

Student A, on a Wednesday in Semester One, comes onto campus for the day, and has a full day of Social Psychology. The following week Student A comes in again on Wednesday for a full day, but this time has Developmental Psychology. The following week they attend the Cognitive Psychology day on the Wednesday. In week four is another Social Psychology day on the Wednesday, and so it rotates throughout the semester. Student A also views weekly topic recordings and online tasks for each of the subjects (Social, Developmental, and Cognitive) via Moodle, but are able to do this when convenient to them during the week. In addition to these on-campus days and online tasks, Student A also comes onto campus to complete research studies at a specific time of the semester, and voluntarily attends the additional monthly Friday sessions that we are setting up as part of our 'learning community' approach.

In Semester Two, this continues but with different modules.

Online Resources: Our plan is for weekly recordings to be released online at least a week in advance of each taught session. We have listened to feedback from students last year and we will no longer release all recordings on the same day, and you will therefore have more time to view these as and when is suitable for you. These will be further supported by additional online learning materials such as you experienced last year.

Our timetable:

We are currently in the process of timetabling these sessions and will be in touch as soon as we have more specific details relating to times and dates – as we hope you can appreciate, the logistics of returning to campus are very complex and we have to make sure that we get them right to ensure everyone's safety and ability to learn. The university timetable, available via your Hwb app, is due to be made available on 6th September 2021.

Any questions?:

If you do have any queries relating to the next academic year please contact your Programme Manager in the first instance. The Academic Director ceri.phelps@uwtsd.ac.uk and Assistant Director paul.hutchings@uwtsd.ac.uk can also be contacted via email. However, please be aware that we may not be able to immediately address your queries as the planning is ongoing and fluid.