Programme change consultation response

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<th>Programme(s)</th>
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<td>BA/Politics, BA/International Relations, BA/Politics with International Relations</td>
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**Summary of Response**

Our consultation on Plans for Teaching and Assessment 2020-21 ran from 15th-22nd July. Myself, our Head of Department, and a range of colleagues at Faculty- and University-levels have now reviewed all submissions to the consultation from students on Politics programmes. Thank you for the constructive and clear submissions.

Following on from the ‘Response, Consultation on Plans for Teaching (2020-21) (Politics)’ email sent to you in early August, this text provides additional information and clarification:

- **Volume of face-to-face teaching.** The constraints faced by the Department and University mean that it is not possible to plan-in a higher volume of face-to-face teaching. Depending on the nature of social distancing requirements, the University will be operating with around 40% of its ordinary teaching space capacity. Our plans, as communicated through the consultation document, fully utilise our available appropriate teaching space.

- **Feedback and Guidance Hours.** Owing to limited access to departmental offices, it currently appears that most or all Feedback and Guidance Hours may need to be online. We will implement clear systems for booking appointments, and for sharing information about timings of Feedback and Guidance Hours.

- **Asynchronous engagement.** The wording of the consultation document shared with incoming First Year students suggested that Discussion Boards or similar tools would be incorporated into online seminar sessions. In error, the document shared with current students implied that the tool would be incorporated into online and classroom-based sessions. While we plan for Discussion Boards and similar tools to provide a valuable component of online sessions, we do not wish to unnecessarily make changes to classroom-based teaching. To clarify: Discussion Boards and similar will ordinarily be planned-in to online sessions; where module convenors judge that such tools will support classroom-based sessions they may, at the convenor’s discretion, be incorporated into such sessions.

- **Flexibility.** We are aware that social distancing requirements may be relaxed or enhanced prior to or during academic year 2020-21. Should further changes become necessary or possible, we will of course ensure meaningful inclusion of
student voices. The University’s guiding principle when planning 2020-21 has been, and continues to be, ‘In person where possible, online where necessary’.

Work is ongoing within the Department and at the Faculty and University levels to ensure that plans for 2020-21 lay the foundation for an effective and enjoyable academic year. I look forward to welcoming you back to the Department and to the start of the new academic year at our Induction Sessions in Week One.

Liam Clegg
3rd September 2020