

1770 UEA – Time to sort out Organisation and Management passed 29 October 15

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Union Notes

1. That when UEA resolved to create “hubs”, the Union expressed significant concern that the organisation and management of courses would suffer
2. In this year’s NSS the UEA scores for Organisation and Management have declined.
3. Following a fall in 2014, UEA’s score has not improved in 2015 and its rank position has fallen as other institutions move ahead.
4. UEA’s lowest scoring question on this theme since 2011 has consistently been regarding any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively.
5. During the past year, the University experienced problems with exam scheduling which resulted in two timetables being released, students being scheduled for examinations at short-notice and, in several instances, before their dissertations were due.
6. This year there are 900 more first year students on campus than there were last year
7. NUS has published a benchmarking tool on University organisation and management

Union Believes

1. Since the creation of hubs there have been problems with the Hubs themselves, including severe delays with coursework, provision of incorrect information, and students feeling unable to speak with staff who understand their course.
2. There has also been an increase in confusion about key policies, because schools are not always aware of Hub policy, and on occasions provide their own interpretation.
3. Many students complained that amended exam timetables, issued with short notice, had suddenly reduced the time they had planned for revision and created logistical and practical problems.
4. A consistent theme in teaching observation from last year was unsuitable teaching space
5. This year there have been big issues with timetabling, including:
 - Timetables issued late which harms participation by those that need to take part time work or those with caring responsibilities
 - Several classes cancelled due to lack of suitable space
 - Several classes with too many students for the timetabled rooms, resulting in students sitting on the floor
 - Students being timetabled on a Wednesday afternoon
 - Events being timetabled in unsuitable spaces for that teaching event
6. That if the problems in organisation and management aren’t tackled soon the student experience will suffer further

Union Resolves

1. To lobby the University to work with student reps to use the NUS benchmarking tool on University organisation and management to assess itself
2. To lobby the University, both at an institutional level and a school-by-school level, on all of the issues raised above
3. To identify and publish actions the University should take to improve, setting out a timeline for improvement
4. To continue to push the University, in any appropriate forum or setting, to think about the impact of increased student numbers before recruitment, not after recruitment, so any impact on the student experience is minimised