

**Subject:** SLT briefing

**Date:** Friday, 12 June 2020 at 15:25:25 British Summer Time

**From:** Sarah Young

**To:** Mailing List - Everybody

## **Sent on behalf of the Senior Leadership Team**

Dear colleague

This is one of our regular SLT briefing notes for all staff.

We hope that you and your families are well and we would like to pass on our condolences and sympathies to all of you who have lost family or friends during the coronavirus pandemic. Losing a loved one is difficult at any time, but must be even more difficult during these challenging times of social distance. We continue to be mindful of the support needed by our colleagues who have been impacted by coronavirus and we have put a number of support mechanisms in place, including access to our Employee Assistance Programme which you can contact at Abbey Advice Line 03332342189 quoting Policy number 1075626. There is also information on the portal about on-line mental health support available to all staff and in the next couple of weeks we will be sending out links to videos on wellbeing topics such as building resilience, positive psychology and understanding stress amongst others.

At this time, when we know that many of the communities we serve and many of our students and staff want to have their voices heard for positive change following both the appalling death of George Floyd in the US and the high impact that the Coronavirus pandemic has had on our BAME colleagues and communities, we wanted you and our students to know that we are fully supportive of, and committed to, the Black Lives Matter campaign. To eradicate the inequalities raised by the campaign will take concerted efforts from many people and organisations across the country and beyond, and UCG wants to take an active part in this, helping to embed long lasting, positive change for the future. Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion is one of our key strategic themes, and we want to not only improve our work on this across UCG, but also to be advocates for other organisations to improve their approach to EDI as well. We already have many strong examples of our EDI activities across UCG and we have made more progress this year, but we need to continue to make further progress moving forwards. We have appointed one of our Governors (Angela Drisdale-Gordon) as a lead Governor for EDI, developed a clear action plan and refreshed our EDI policy which is going to our governors for approval next month. We are looking for colleagues and students to help us with their thoughts and ideas about how we further improve our approach to EDI and particularly those issues raised by the Black Lives Matter campaign. If you would like to be involved to help shape our approach to this critically important issue, please let us know.

This week also saw us complete this term's series of staff voice sessions, with colleagues from all of our campuses. It has been great to have discussions with many of our colleagues about their experiences of continuing to provide a great education to our students during lockdown - including what has gone well and what could be improved. It has also been great to hear about the many innovative solutions that people have put in place to help support our students. Our continuing thanks go to everybody who has put in a huge amount of work to support the move to remote learning, the delivery of that learning to a high standard and ensuring that all our students remain engaged with their learning. We had a meeting of our Governors' Teaching, Learning & Skills Committee earlier this week and they were hugely impressed by the work that you have all undertaken and asked for their thanks to be passed on as well. A write up of the questions and answers from all of the staff voice sessions is being compiled and will be put on our microsite in the near future.

Finally this week we continue to pull together our plans for the 'bite the biscuit' sessions and will

be writing to you next week with an update on our plans.

We hope that you and your families all continue to stay safe and well and thank you all again for your huge efforts to support our students in the best way we can.

The Senior Leadership Team