

Complaint letter

Dear Sirs,

This letter was signed by current student of the University of London, studying in the Computing and Information System program. I feel that my concerns and complaints have not been taken seriously by the University, regarding the situation described below:

On the **7th of September 2020**, Kart Luik, the programme manager at Goldsmiths, University of London posted a message to the students, promising to offer students “maximum flexibility” as the university finalises its plans for 2020-2021.

On the **18th of November 2020**, previous year results were officially released. The deadline for continuing registration was extended to 1st of December to allow students sufficient time to process their results and plan their next course of steps.

On the **23rd of December 2020**, right before the University's Christmas closure, Kart Luik posted a message to the students indicating that in spite of the delayed publication of coursework and reduced preparation period, the university will not be changing the submission deadline. Instead, “examiners will be expecting less detail, proportionate to the reduction in time available, not partially-completed submissions”. Most of Level 4 and 5 coursework were available, albeit delayed, while Level 6 coursework was promised to be posted in the New Year. The explicit marking scheme for this new reduced type of courseworks was not provided, which opens the door to misinterpretation and could affect students' grades.

Level 4 and 5 courseworks are to be given to students 2 months before deadline, roughly 9 weeks. The real time frames were 1.5 - 3 times more restrictive:

- CO2209 - Database systems coursework 1 - was released with 3 weeks to complete;
- CO2226 - Software engineering, algorithm design and analysis coursework 1 - with 5 weeks to complete;
- CO2220 - Graphical Object-Oriented and Internet programming in Java coursework 1 - with 6 weeks to complete.

There was no any allowable margin of flexibility or variation provided. As of today (29th of January), level 5 second coursework assignments were published later than expected (although the delay was smaller). Therefore students are once again expected to complete assignments in less time. Most of Level 6 courseworks were published between the following dates of **8th - 10th Jan 2021**.

The unchanged deadlines have caused unprecedented stress on all students especially those taking six Level 6 modules and the Final Year Project. As a result of the deadlines, the time frame for these students are as such:

- 10 Jan 2021 to 15 Feb 2021 (one-month duration): complete six coursework 1
- 15 Feb 2021 to 8 Apr 2021 (two-month duration): complete six coursework 2
- 8 Apr 2021 to 15 May 2021 (one-month duration): complete project application development, Final Project Report (FPR) and study for seven examinations

Comparing with usual practices where students have 2-3 months to complete coursework 1 and coursework 2 each, I strongly feel that the current time frame is completely unfair and unreasonable for the current batch.

From the responses by Maggie Copper, the programme director, in the Student Cafe discussion forum, I understand that the university has decided not to delay our coursework 1 deadline in order not to delay coursework 2 deadlines, exams and ultimately graduation. This goal hasn't been achieved, though. The current time frames are taking a toll on students' mental, emotional and physical health as they work around the clock to meet the deadlines without compromising on their grades.

Students have not been given an opportunity to express their opinions. Neither were they consulted before such decisions were made to their academic time frame. Additionally, despite students' attempts to request for a change in deadline on the Student Cafe discussion forum, the university is firm on not having any changes. In one of the responses in the forum, Dr Copper mentioned that "The bottom line is that we want students to do well, and will do our best to help, for example on these discussion boards." However, we do not feel that the university has made any attempt to help us. On the contrary, the university's decision has been the sole contributor to our stress.

We demand that our voices be heard and for a change in deadlines and exam dates to be implemented.

Best Regards,
<Student name>, SRN <Student number>