

Notes of TUCO North East Regional Meeting 06.07.2020

This was the first virtual regional meeting for the NE Region.

The meeting was to discuss the challenges faced by TUCO members and how to get their teams through it all.

Points of interest from each member were as follows:

University of Sheffield: 18 sites out of 19 are closed. The convenience store is open. There are 300 students on campus as their home is overseas. 75 of the 78 strong catering team are furloughed. There will be a gradual re-introduction of the team leading up to opening outlets in September. Outlets will be open over a longer period of the day. Casual staff have been furloughed until the end of July but advised that there will be no work for them after that. There will be no hospitality or conferencing so staff from that area are being shuffled around and required to be flexible. The university is aiming for face to face teaching. Catering is looking at a loss this year of £750k. Looking at opening takeaway Pizza outlet.

Newcastle University: Working to social distance for the foreseeable future. Predicting 3hrs teaching a week for students. 6 of the 17 outlets will open to begin with. Investigating as much in house production as possible including sandwiches and noodle pots to utilise staff. Menus will be reduced. Following the same principles as the rest of the university so the same message is in place. One way system, with screens round the tills. Face masks /visors will be worn. Still waiting for information on student numbers.

University of Huddersfield: 8 outlets out of 16 will open. Hoping to re-open September with face to face teaching. All the catering team is furloughed. No hospitality will take place before the end of the year. Cashless and takeaway only. A 27 page risk assessment is to be adopted by each department. It is understood 120 students will be arriving from China in September but not confirmed.

University of Leeds: Catering plans changing day by day. Overseas students not expected until January. Unclear if any students will be back in September. International student numbers are down.

Leeds College of Music: Few large teaching spaces. Most catering staff are casuals made up mostly from the student population. There is a reluctance to send out a message that there will be no work. Student numbers not looking positive for September.

University of Derby: Small campus with 3 outlets. One way system will be straight forward.

General Discussion: Huddersfield, Sheffield & Derby Universities have been offering VS & VR. Newcastle University are trying to weather the storm.

I mentioned the Temporary Structure Framework but a couple of universities are looking at buying sheds for 'pop up' outlets. Richard from University of Derby gave us a virtual tour of the shed he has built during lock down, complete with outdoor kitchen, which lightened the mood.

Jane Eve
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