City, University of London
Joint Union Homeworking Survey

First Report on Findings

17th April 2020

Contents

The three unions (UCU, Unison and Unite) want to <u>thank every respondent</u>. Your response to this survey was magnificent, providing us with a detailed evidence base on which to better represent staff at City during this stressful period.

Even where they are not reflected in full in this initial report, we have read and will return to your more detailed responses to orient our negotiations and priorities.

Background

City, University of London moved to online teaching from the week of 16th March 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Over the subsequent week most staff moved to homeworking.

In response to this move the three campus trade unions (UCU, Unison and Unite) believed that it was urgent to find out more about how City staff were coping with these changed working conditions.

We asked City Senior Management if we could use internal email lists to distribute a survey to all members of staff. This request was refused. Instead we emailed a link to an online survey to our respective members and asked members to circulate the link among departmental colleagues in order to reach non-Union members.

Initial distribution occurred on 27th March and the survey remained open until 15th April. About 90% of responses were received within the first seven days and so the findings reported here largely reflect circumstances at this time.

This report summarises findings from the quantitative and qualitative contributions we received. Given the time constraints that all of us are under (including the authors of this report), this is not a final or definitive analysis, but we believe that it provides a useful snapshot of the working conditions of the over 500 staff at City who generously contributed their time to provide information.

Key issues from this report are listed in the Executive Summary.

We hope to replicate parts of the survey in mid-May if we continue to work from home so that we can explore any changes to the working conditions described here.

Response

There were 591 responses begun. Respondents were not required to answer any question and some chose to skip questions. The closed-response questions relating to home-working conditions, managerial expectations and emotional state were answered by between 442 and 521 staff. Responses for questions which asked about demographic and job characteristics were slightly lower, perhaps because some respondents wanted to maintain an additional layer of anonymity. Where questions asked for free-text elaborations staff provided at times voluminous commentary with several hundred replies to most of the questions asked. In this report we draw out key themes from within these replies.

Note: As well as the questions included for analysis here, we asked some questions aimed at staff who continue to perform on-site work (e.g. Security). Due to low responses from workers in these categories (N<10) issues relating to on-site work are not reported here but have been developed in negotiations with City University Management.

Executive Summary

The following summarises the findings elaborated in this report.

❖ **Homework conditions:** While 30% of staff have access to an office or study, almost half of all staff have no office equipment of any kind (neither chair nor desk). A small minority do not even have a table at which to work. These staff are sitting on the floor, bean-bags or on a bed. Much of the furniture used for homeworking is uncomfortable, especially over the long run and there are major concerns about health, especially musculoskeletal health. This is most severe for staff with pre-existing conditions. For many homeworking spaces are shared, which also produces problems for privacy.

❖ **IT:** Staff are reliant on often old and slow computer hardware. This is delaying work and increasing worries about completing work on time. Working on small laptop screens is also a major obstacle for colleagues used to a large, or multiple, screens. Intermittent or slow wifi also reduces productivity. Some staff are frustrated at having to use personal computer equipment for work demands where this is increasing the load and wear on less than robust technology and at the additional costs they are accruing in working at home.

❖ **Childcare:** Approximately 30% of staff have childcare responsibilities, most for young (Primary or pre-Primary age) children. Most of these staff have joint childcare responsibility, but a large minority of female carers (and a much smaller minority of other carers) have sole childcare responsibility. Joint care tends to involve partners sharing variably, rather than allowing carers specified days or times to work, which increases unpredictability about availability or deadlines. Most staff with child-care responsibility can currently manage a reduced workload (e.g. half days), some can only do 'light' or 'essential' tasks, while for others even this much is 'challenging'. Many of these staff are fitting work around childcare, working during naps or into the evening. These circumstances require changing managerial expectations and increased flexibility.

❖ **Elder/Adult-Care:** About a quarter of staff are involved in elder care either for someone they live with or someone living elsewhere. This may involve doing additional day-to-day tasks like shopping that need to be fit within the working day, but also involves significant worry. For this group a major concern is the anticipation that circumstances may suddenly worsen.

❖ **Communication:** Quantitative scores on communication are largely positive, although academics are less positive than professional service staff. Staff are unhappy about the tone of some communication, however.

❖ **Work Performance and Expectations:** Staff judged their manager's expectations on different aspects of their work as largely reasonable, although academic staff were more critical than professional service staff. In qualitative comments the positive overview was nuanced significantly. While lots of staff said their line-manager was 'supportive', this was not universal, with some criticising the lack of 'checking in'. For many there were big concerns about timelines and deadlines. Even though the survey question asked about line-managers, lots of respondents reframed this to focus on the expectations of Senior Managers who were seen as ultimately setting, and too often changing, priorities and deadlines. Where academic staff had been required to move to online teaching rapidly this was identified as creating a lot of stress. While the requirement to attend multiple 'online

meetings' was an emerging problem. Staff also highlighted the problems of isolation for mental health and for maintaining productivity.

❖ **Looking Ahead:** There was little expectation that staff constraints or capacity to work would change much over the next three months if the lockdown continued. But many staff commented on the ways that the experience of working from home would become more difficult as the goodwill required to transition wore thin and they started to 'burn out'. Mental health was widely seen as at risk. The longer-term implications of bad workstations for back-pain in particular was raised by many. A number of staff with childcare responsibility believed that the ability to continue juggling was not sustainable. Where staff were in insecure contracts the future was especially bleak.

❖ **Worries:** There was widespread worry about a range of Covid-19 related issues (own health; the health of a family member; financial worries; the state of the world; and generalised anxiety). Moreover, these worries are impacting work, with about sixty percent of staff stating that their concentration, and productivity, has been affected by their current emotional state.

❖ **Priorities:** Key staff priorities for the short and medium term future included: ensuring job security; pushing for managers to recognise that this is not 'business as usual' and developing and communicating expectations on this basis; developing support for homeworking; prioritising staff health and safety; the development of transparent, inclusive and effective future planning; and cancelling strike deductions.

❖ **City's Trade Unions**: Although not asked about directly, respondents expressed considerable support for the role that the trade unions play at City, including the support and information they provide to members.

Conditions of Homework

Only a minority (30%) of staff have a dedicated office or study. Perhaps more worryingly, only a quarter are sitting on a dedicated office chair. Indeed (in analysis not shown) we found that nearly half of staff have **no dedicated workspace** (not an office/study, nor a desk or work-table, nor an office chair). The majority have a table that can be used as a desk but normally has other purposes.
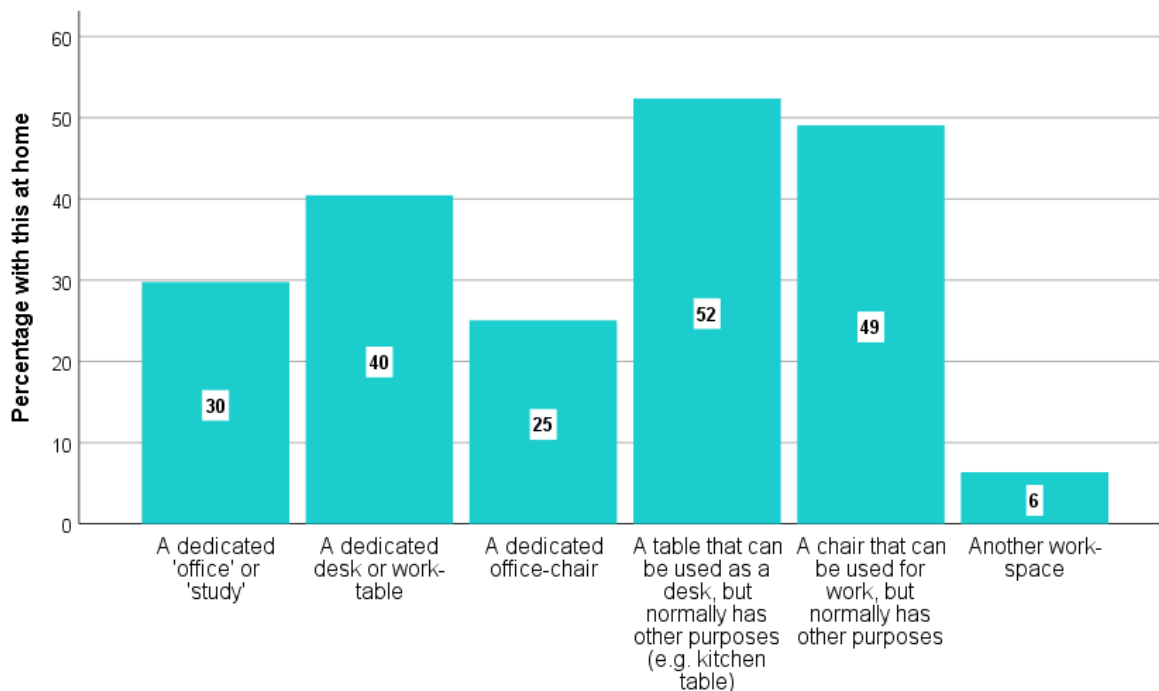
We identified seven percent of respondents who have neither any dedicated workspace nor even a table that they can use. These colleagues talk about working in a range of **unsuitable positions**.

> *Cross legged with the laptop on a pillow for short periods of time.*

> *I am sitting on the floor.*

> *I rest my laptop on my lap on my sofa*

> *My home pc attached to my TV screen, and use of my iPhone for some access*

> *I use my ironing board as my stand desk (the best use for an ironing board).*

> *I only have some crates stacked in the bedroom on which a laptop is placed*

> *sitting on my bed, stool or sofa*

Even where staff did have chairs and tables, these were sometimes **unsuitable or uncomfortable**.

> *Chair not appropriate for working on laptop*

> *Don't have a chair which is suitable for sitting on for the whole day. Can sit on my sofa but is not very suitable for posture etc for long periods of time sitting with a lap top*

> *I am expected to work long hours sitting on a dining room chair at a table that was previously a dining table. I have a University laptop, but no mouse or external keyboard. The screen is at the wrong height, as is the table. Nevertheless, I am expected to work today*

> *(Saturday!) and not only all day but over 10 hours and am put under pressure to finish a task today AT ALL COSTS.*

> *I don't have a desk or dining table. I have to sit on the sofa with my laptop. My partner is also working from home. When we take calls I go into the kitchen and put my laptop on the kitchen slab. I have to stand while these calls take place.*

> *I am working from my dinning table and chair - extremely uncomfortable*

> *from the furniture I have at home that is suitable for working on my laptop is only a bed and a chair. Sitting in both without a desk hurts my neck and lower back.*

> *Not having proper back support on my chair and having to look down at my laptop as its on a flat table.*

The **lack of private space** is also a common issue, with problems caused by multiple people working from home in a single common room. This produces issues with confidentiality, as well as reduced focus and difficulties in maintaining professionalism. For people working in housing with multiple occupancy, working and living in the same room may also produce implications for mental health.

> *I am in one room, with no options to move. Leaving limited room to get in the work headspace*

> *The 'office' is actually a bedroom and I share it with my husband, who is now also working from home all the time due to covid 19. It is not easy for both of us to work in the office at the same time, and impossible when we have online meetings.*

> *Space is very limited in my flat, so months of lockdown might have a tangible negative effect my productivity and mental health*

> *there is no quiet space in which to work. Our flat is small and with two working parents and a child who needs to do home school, it's very hard to find space where to work. I don't have a proper desk where to set up my work.*

> *The only place I can work is at the kitchen table, but this is a shared area with a boisterous 7-year old. It is not possible to move the table to a quieter space as there is not enough room in the flat.*

> *Our landlord is replacing the roof and there's a near-constant and very loud banging that shakes the entire house. He's also planning on replacing our windows at some point next week, and boarding them up for an unspecified amount of time, so we'll have very little natural light.*

> *It's a tight cramped bedroom, not really for long term working from home, comfortable if it was only once a week or so, but working 5 days a week from the confines of my bedroom doesn't really work. It's a typical single bed bedroom in London.*

The biggest issue that was developing even in the first weeks of the lockdown was a major concern over **musculoskeletal health**, both short and long-term. Backache was by far the most commonly raised concern in the free comments.

> *Dining room chair isn't comfortable for long hours. Desk it too high for height of chair causing shoulder, back and hip pain.*

I am concerned that I will have back problems from using dining chair and table for work.

My chair isn't very comfortable and I am already getting back pain

Mainly ergonomic ones. My bum and my wrists hurt form sitting in a chair not meant for long hours and the table is not a rounded desk, so there's friction between my wrists and the edge of the table when I type. I have had to order a PC monitor with my own money that will take ten days to arrive.

My chair isn't very comfortable and I am already getting back pain

My concerns more relate to not having an office chair - I am already getting back pain/tension from working from dining chairs.

bad chair, small laptop instead of 2 large screens, no printer - danger of back problems and eyesight issues

Office chair (barely height adjustable) is not designed for long periods of use & could result in back/neck pain

Sitting on wooden kitchen chair for long periods gives me back pain

For people with **pre-existing conditions** (predominantly musculoskeletal, but also other issues such as eyesight) respondents' health concerns are often especially serious. In these cases, staff noted that they no longer had the reasonable adjustments that had been provided within the workplace. [note that specific conditions have been edited in the below to protect respondent anonymity].

I [have a musculoskeletal condition], and my set up is completely unsuitable …would NOT pass a DSE and is causing me pain. My line manager has instructed me to take as many breaks as needed for as long as needed, but I still have to get my work done, so that's not really a solution.

My back is really sore from using the kitchen table and chair. It is OK for occasional use, but I have been spending up to 8 hours hunched over my laptop. I have a pre-existing back condition and the past week has exacerbated this.

I don't have a proper desk or desk chair and I'm concerned that it will worsen my [musculoskeletal condition].

I have [a musculoskeletal condition] and I am finding it hard to work at home as my chair is not comfortable.

I have chronic [musculoskeletal condition] that [is] made worst by not being able to have a proper set up (desk/chair/ screen)

working with small laptop screen causes eye strain.

From these responses the key concern is that inadequate spaces and inappropriate furniture may cause or exacerbate physical health issues. Some of these responses also address the issues of mood, which are discussed further below.

Given that many of these concerns involve a lack of space and the presence of others they may not be easily resolved and will produce ongoing constraints for those attempting to work from home. Other concerns, around inadequate furniture for example, may be resolvable, but will require the University's intervention.

We asked respondents about their **IT set-up**, both hardware and software. Most respondents had computers, a large majority of these were personally owned and in 8 percent of cases were shared with other household members (and so not private nor necessarily always available). One of these respondents comment reflects this, '*not much access to shared laptop as my husbands job is full on'*.

IT set-up		Percent
What IT equipment do you have access to at home?	*A City provided laptop or computer*	36
	An individual personal laptop or computer	55
	A shared (e.g. household) laptop or computer	8
	No laptop or computer	1
Do you have access to all the software you typically need to do your job	*Yes*	85
	No	15
Do you have wifi access at home?	*Yes - good enough*	88
	Yes - but not good	11
	No	1

In terms of hardware respondents noted that their current **computers were not adequate** for all of the demands now being made and a lot of staff are already worried that this might worsen. Notably slowness is a recurrent theme here, reminding us that a reliance on home-technology will reduce the pace of work for many, and thereby reduce productivity.

My home technology is suitable only for personal use. I am not equipped to do what I am now expected to do -eg my laptop is inadequate and I do not have a printer.

My laptop isn't as fast as my work computer, and I'm worried about overworking it

I am worried what happens if my computer breaks down.

I am worried if it breaks there will be long delays

I am using my personal laptop which is a little slow at times.

my laptop is very old and doesn't get some software updated, i.e. Google Chrome does not longer provide update to my Microsoft Vista operating system. The laptop is slow and although I have an office provided mouse and keyboard, one of the USB ports in the laptop doesn't work so I cannot connect the keyboard.

I'm worried about the space and speed of my laptop and wifi. My laptop is quite old and so I'm not 100% certain it will last this period, requiring use every working day for work. I really don't have the money to replace it right now

My laptop is very old (~8 years) and has limited memory, so if I need to install new software this is likely to stop it from working properly/I will not be able to install the software.

my laptop is old, spent hours with IT over the phone and I'm slower than usual due to small screen and loosing remote access 2/3 times daily so need to log in again and start everything all over.

Lots of respondents mentioned **the (small) screen on their laptop** as a problem. This was especially acute for those who are used to working across two screens to do their work.

I usually use 2 large monitors. I am now having to use one small laptop screen which is limiting productivity. The Remote desktop crashes about once a day.

Generally need a second monitor to do my work

I requested an additional monitor due to my Laptop screen being very small, it was refused!

I miss the 2 x large screens in my office, but I do not have a dedicated space to set them up at home, so just have to make written notes more often at home.

I think the university could have done more to help set us up. My husband's company sent everyone home on the last day in a taxi with their full gear eg, multiple screens, mouse, keyboard. I'm finding my job hard on one small screen.

Some respondents who were using their own equipment, resented the **merging of their work into their personal digital spaces**. Several respondents expressed concern that doing work on home equipment may be detrimental to the longevity of the device for home-use. A couple of respondents also raised GDPR/data privacy issues.

My personal laptop is something I rely on for my relaxation and additional out of work time duties and responsibilities, making it hard to separate work and non-work time as they are all now spent on the same device.

I would prefer to be using a City laptop rather than my own.

I have an old computer which sometime struggles and I'm worried that the system load of the software will prematurely wear out my machine.

I am worried that the current heavy use of my laptop will cause irreparable wear and tear on it and cause it to break down sooner than anticipated.

I had to borrow equipment from my family, and while better than the equipment normally supplied by the university it is personal and has student data on it

While most respondents reported that they had the **software needed to do their work** a significant minority (15 percent) did not. There was no one software to which respondents lacked access, but the most frequently cited were (in order) Adobe, VPN, MS Teams and the shared drive. Hardware, rather than a lack of software, is the issue in many of these cases. Many report using workarounds, such as open access word processing software instead of MS Office or multiple step processes that with the correct software would usually be a single step.

Microsoft Office licence expired - so no access to Word, Powerpoint, Excel etc. on my personal laptop. Have logged a request for support with City IT with no response. Currently using Google Docs instead, but not ideal as doesn't work offline.

I currently use my phone to work as I do not currently have access to a laptop. No equipment was provided by City

adobe has been provided, but it's something i need to download my computer, not enough hard drive space.

Microsoft Teams does not allow me to add colleagues from outside City

Cannot access the vpn, using a work ipad which doesn't support all the things I need it for

Although the large majority of respondents (88 percent) said that they had 'good enough' wifi, **problems with wifi connection** came up repeatedly in comments.

> *Not sure internet connection will be consistent enough for some of the planned online activities*

> *Sometimes slow due to daughter studying at home for A-Levels this 'summer' also needing to use our broadband.*

> *Wifi is a bit patchy here sometimes but it is ok.*

> *Wifi is not great. Keeps going off.*

> *WiFi speed variability and occasional drop outs*

> *wifi/internet intermittenly cuts out*

> *with limited wifi (mobile data) it's beyond a struggle. Never had wifi as I spent too much time at work.*

Quite a few staff comment – sometimes with frustration - on the **additional costs** they have accrued in providing the technology to work from home. Some of these relate to difficulties in getting adequate IT equipment from City quickly enough to do work tasks during a period in which there was a lot of pressure to get up and running and urgent deadlines.

> *City is relying on me to use my own home computer, telephone, laptop etc etc and does not pay for, or supply any equipment*

> *I feel my WiFi costs should be subsidised!*

> *I had to buy an ergonomic mouse and did this myself, because I needed it quickly. I don't trust that I can get equipment quickly via City even if I can eventually.*

> *I have purchased a monitor, keyboard and mouse that make working from home much easier. I imagine that many staff do not have the resources available to do this and City should consider what can be provided.*

> *I know I can request things but the response from IT is slow (I do understand they are also under a lot of pressure) and, in addition, even Amazon has run out of things.*

> *I have already asked for some stuff, Mouse/ laptop stand and was told no.*

> *I had to have extra memory (so as to be able to add new software) installed in my (7 year old) home laptop at £300 which i paid for myself. Also laptop work worsens RSI and back pain due to the tiny, low screen and cramped keyboard*

Other people were more confident that City would provide equipment. For instance, 'I know City are able to provide what we all need'.

Child-Care Responsibilities

Approximately 30% of staff have childcare responsibilities. These responsibilities are held by staff of all genders. However, those identifying as female are more likely to have care responsibilities that take up more of their time. For instance, 24 female respondents said they were either the only or main carer (with limited gaps). That means that there is a significant proportion of mostly female (but some male and non-binary/other) staff who are effectively attempting to do their job alongside full time care-work. This is a major burden.
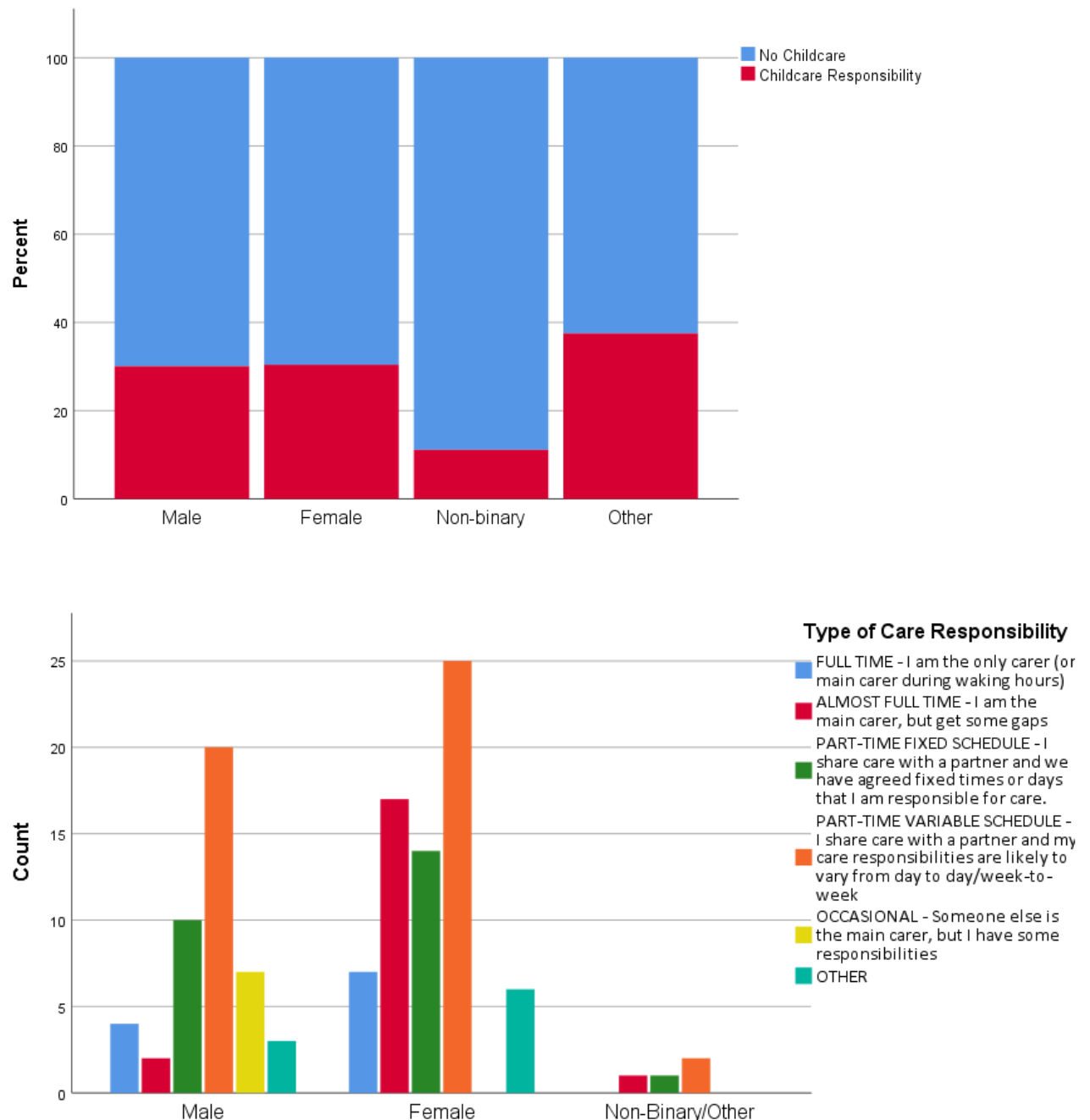
The most common type of care arrangements staff reported were part-time. It was, however, only a minority of these that involve a fixed schedule. Instead, most involve a variable schedule (with care shared with a partner, but responsibilities likely to vary from day-to-day or week-to-week). This

points to **a high degree of unpredictability** in staff availability that is likely to persist while other care-providers (schools/nurseries) remain closed. Seven male respondents (and no respondents of other genders) reported that their childcare responsibilities were 'occasional - someone else as the main carer'. For all others (and most of the one third of staff with child-care responsibilities) child-care is a significant responsibility – and as the qualitative comments below show – a significant emotional and time strain.

If we look at the **age of youngest child** we see that the children for whom care is being provided are overwhelmingly of Primary or pre-Primary age, with the largest number under the age of one. Therefore, in large part, children cannot be left by themselves with schoolwork or play while colleagues get on with work. Rather, care is demanding of homeworking staff.

What is the age of your youngest child?
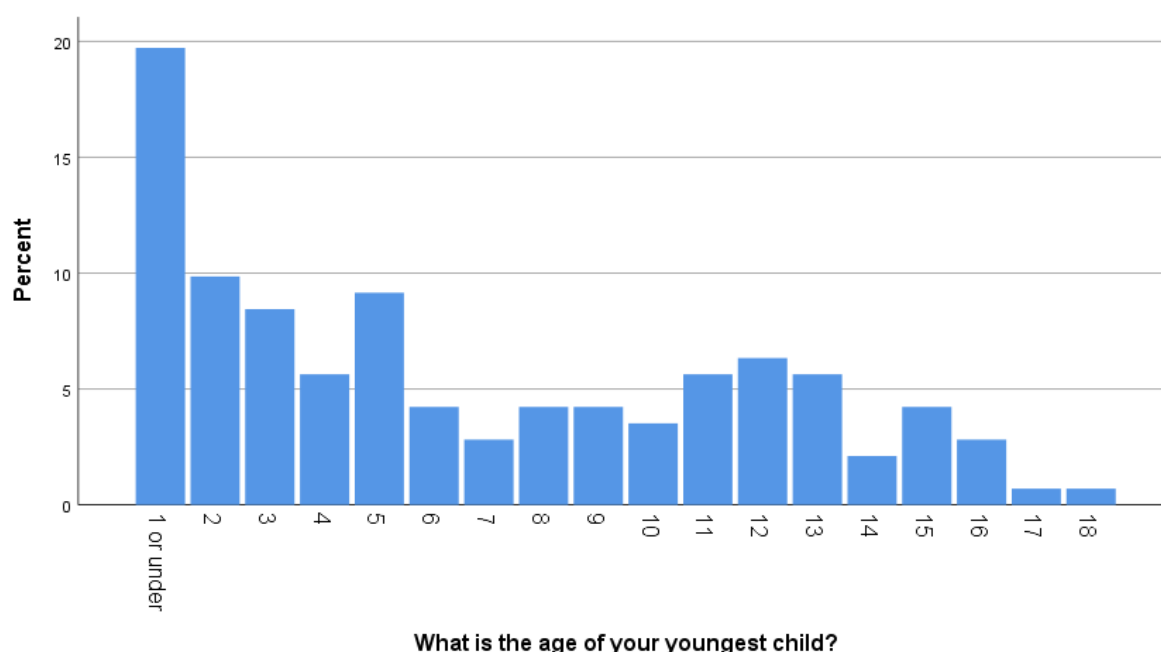
We asked respondents what they thought it was reasonable for them to do while doing childcare. A small number say they are unable to do any work. A similar small number say they are able to do all their usual work. Over half speak of only being able to manage considerably reduced workload and/or hours, with quite a few of these saying they can do 'half a day'; a quarter say they can only do 'basic'/'light'/'essential' tasks. For some, even these are described as 'challenging'. Many of these want 'asynchronous' or pre-determined (rather than last-minute) tasks or state that they try to do their normal work but will be 'slower'.

A number of respondents mention **finding it difficult to concentrate on higher-level tasks**. Across these the common theme is the need for **flexible hours and deadlines** given increasingly opportunistic and unpredictable use of time (e.g. the reliance on gaps or nap times to work).

> *am trying to keep up but realistically can only attend to the most urgent things*

> *A half day of work is managable. This needs a degree of flexibility to account for the variables of family life and additional complications caused due to current circumstances eg anxious children requiring more support at odd times.*

> *I can do my role from home, the difficulty is finding the time and headspace to do this with young children as I am the main carer and it is only possible to really complete any work if it*

is done at the weekends or in the evenings after 8pm. I do feel anxious I cannot complete my work to the best of my ability and worried this will have an impact in the future.

I am able to keep things moving during nap time and any other downtime. It's hard for me to seek out information and give much thought to things

I can continue working from home but without fixed times. My work has to fit around the daily routine of my child and husband

I can provide a bare bones skeleton version of my original role, answering emails in the rare gaps from childcare.

Basic teaching (and related activities, e.g. class preparation, material preparation, marking). Nothing else and even basic teaching is a real challenge.

All I can manage while the child is napping through the day, and some online meetings if colleagues don't mind occasional interuptions from my child

I am able to keep things moving during nap time and any other downtime. It's hard for me to seek out information and give much thought to things

Lots of respondents describe the **difficulty of balancing childcare/home schooling with work**, and fitting in work around child/children, including extending the working day in order to work when children have gone to bed or when their partner was looking after the children.

I work where I can, my main responsibility is my children… so am trying to fit my hours in around my kids

I can continue working from home but without fixed times. My work has to fit around the daily routine of my child and husband, who is also working from home now.

Happy to do what i can but have to be able to help kids with school work

Now that we are home schooling it's hard… I get about three hours of undistracted screen time working from home. Been going to bed quite late as I can only work in a focused way once the kids are asleep.

My husband and I are taking it in turns and working in the evenings.

Respondents who refer to a partner, comment on how much harder it would be to manage childcare/work balance without them (although elsewhere those sharing spaces with partners also note that this can be disruptive).

I can do my role but only when my husband is home with me.

Staff with younger children describe more difficulties in being able to work alongside childcare. Those with teenagers seem to find it more manageable but still challenging. Respondents with disabled children highlighted the amount of time required of them to care for their child.

Its difficult to plan and do concentrated work with the infant to look after

My son has SEN and requires close supervision which for the majority of the time I provide.

Given that my children are not that young, they only need a bit of reminding to do school work. So, I can do most work, although it is not uninterrupted and not with my full continuous attention.

For some respondents, ordinary daily tasks like shopping produce **additional stress**. While others focus on sharing same space or computer with children or about how difficulties might increase if current arrangements continue longer term.

> *Obtaining food necessities is hard enough, I can't think of working to the capacity I was expected to around exam board time at the university under these conditions*

> *meal preparation (shopping etc) and general family life takes time, difficult to work*

> *Attempts to work in the evening are possible but query how sustainable this will be over months.*

Overall the responses demonstrate the variety and individual nature of childcare demands on staff. It is clear 'business as usual' is not possible in almost all cases. That means managers need to have a flexible and understanding approach alongside (in some cases, considerably) reduced expectations.

We also note that a few respondents expressed concerns about those with children being pitted against those without and that if there is preferential treatment of those with families it will create hostility in teams.

> *As indicated by the university, for those with childcare or other caring responsibilities, full working capacity is unrealistic. It is crucial that this expectation is not changed, that no 'shaming' will result form this in any form, that no salary or other benefits are cut because of it.*

> *There is a 'them and us' issue regarding people who have children and those who do not. I am worried if I get what is seem as preferential treatment my colleagues will be even more hostile.*

This needs to be considered in any workload planning to ensure that those with care are supported, without that producing large workload increases for those without the same care responsibilities. This may mean that in some departments or groups, where there are larger numbers of people with care responsibilities, that this requires hiring additional staff or radically reducing the collective workload.

Elder/Adult Care Responsibilities

Of our respondents, eight percent (N=40) had responsibility for elder/adult care for someone they live with. Another 20 percent (N=102) had elder/adult care responsibilities for someone they do not currently live with.

We asked what **constraints on doing their work** was produced by their elder care. Shopping, delivering food and medicines (mentioned by a third) and providing contact (mentioned by a quarter) are the most common time demands in relation to elder/adult care. Organising or liaising with care workers is also frequently mentioned. The amount of time these take varies but in general respondents report their working days being disrupted or limited.

> *Checking in on a daily basis, organising shopping and passing on information, keeping others in the loop and checking all takes time and headspace to figure out how to do these things*

> *Elderly Mother 150 miles away. Frequent need to be in contact. Organising neighbours support for her. Exchanges with social services. General worry and stress*

> *have to go out to buy food and get their medical prescriptions. Working from home is also constrained by interruptions*

> *taking time out of my day, shopping, walking the dog, housework*

> *Sometimes having to field telephone calls from my elderly father during my working hours, as well as liaising with my siblings and the managers of the place my father lives.*

> *Time, concentration and energy are all affected*

Additional **stress or worry** caused by additional caring responsibilities, working from home and/or fear for elder/adult in their care during the coronavirus pandemic is cited by many.

> *Increased stress levels, work being interrupted by their needs*

> *Generally very stressed by knowing I am the carer but also could infect them due to having to go out to see to their necessities*

> *Not many constraints but a source of uncertainty and stress*

Just under a third of respondents, report that their elder/adult care responsibilities place no or few constraints on their work. However, many of these **anticipate that circumstances might change** and that there could be a far greater impact if their dependent becomes ill or as the current situation persists.

> *Currently none but if their health was to decline it could be significant*

> *given the duration of the lockdown there will be a moment when we have to take home care responsibilities*

> *Potentially having to take leave unexpectedly to assist with crisis*

A small number of respondents comment on the additional strain they are under as a carer without the respite of leaving the house for work. Other respondents comment on the strain of being separated from the elder/adult they care for.
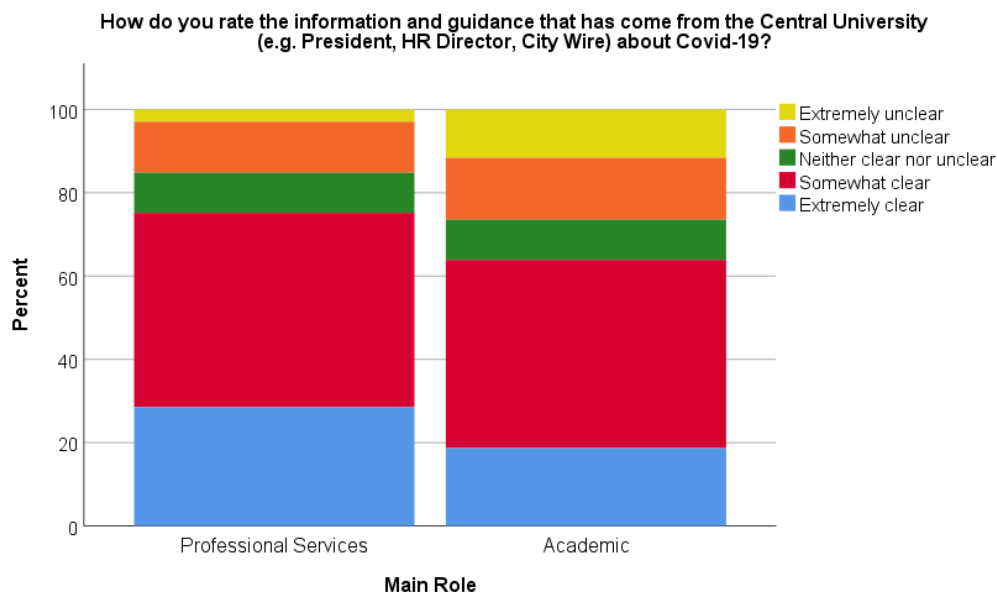
my caring responsibilities have increased due to being physically present in the house. The mental break that I used to have through being physically at work and not present at home has been taken away and it is hard to mentally relax.

WE live in a tiny flat in close proximity. There is no mental or physical space. This engenders emotional problems and lack of tranquility for working.
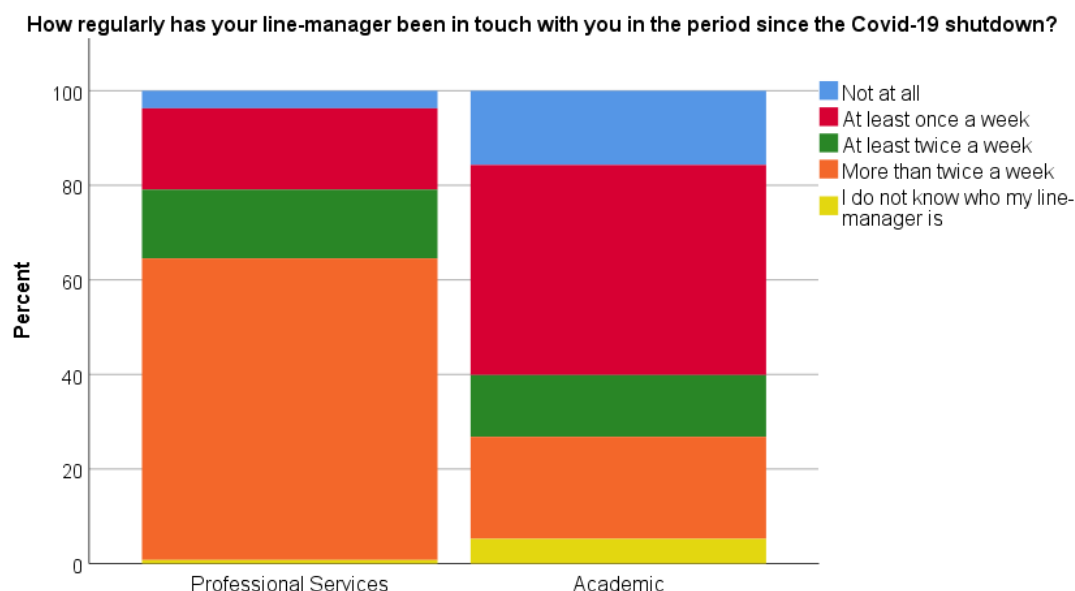
None, sadly they are too far away so cant visit

The responses demonstrate a need for flexibility in working hours and reduced expectations of what is possible to be done while caring for elders/adults, regardless of whether cohabiting or caring remotely. The added worry and stress around the health of dependents needs to be recognised with compassion, as does the potential additional strain of not having any respite from acting as carer. Unpredictable increases in the demands experienced by carers should also be taken in to account when planning.

Communication

How do you rate the information and guidance that has come from the Central University (e.g. President, HR Director, City Wire) about Covid-19?

Early communication from the University was seen by the plurality of respondents as 'somewhat clear' with a significant minority thinking it was 'extremely clear'. Academics were more critical of this than Professional Service staff, with 30% saying that communications were extremely or somewhat unclear. We note that these responses came in the period prior to the University's multiple emails outlining new assessment processes, which have been the subject of much recent criticism. The greater lack of clarity reported by academics is likely due to the requirement to move teaching online, and the greater need for support and information as part of this.

How regularly has your line-manager been in touch with you in the period since the Covid-19 shutdown?

Given that this was near the start of the shutdown/transition to homeworking we would expect regular communication from line managers. Yet, it was clear that there were big differences with academic staff having much less frequent communication from their line-managers. This may be because many academics sometimes work from home anyway. Nevertheless, it is concerning

because education-related academic staff were under the most pressure to deliver the change to online teaching and communicate with worried students.

We did not ask any qualitative questions about communication, but this came up in response to other questions which specified the types of communication they want – and the types they do not find helpful. For instance:

> *you asked about the line manager keeping in touch. There is a qualitative difference between friendly caring check in emails (of which i've had one) and the insane number of hounding demanding emails we have received especially also during weekends and evenings (roughly 30-40 in the past two weeks).*

> *it would be nice to hear from management that they will pull out all the stops to support their very dedicated staff!*

Communication is an issue that recurs in latter parts of this report, especially with respect to the communication of expectations.

Work Performance and Expectations

We asked respondents to judge manager's expectations with respect to three different aspects of their work: What they are able to do from home; deadlines while working from home and availability while working from home.

Results on these are presented below by role because there seems to be some difference between these.

It is good to see that in a lot of areas staff believe that what is being asked of them is totally reasonable. This is a sign that at least in the first weeks of the transition to homeworking line-managers were setting reasonable expectations. Notably, there seem to be more concerns around deadlines than what is do-able or availability.

Academic staff are less likely to say that expectations are totally reasonable and more likely to say that they are unreasonable or that they do not know what managers expect. This is especially the case with Education-focused academics. This likely reflects the greater pressure placed on those involved in delivering education to move teaching online during the first weeks of the transition to homeworking. Among Professional Service colleagues, Research and Enterprise are more negative about whether managerial expectations are reasonable.

DEADLINES while working from home

AVAILABILITY while working from home
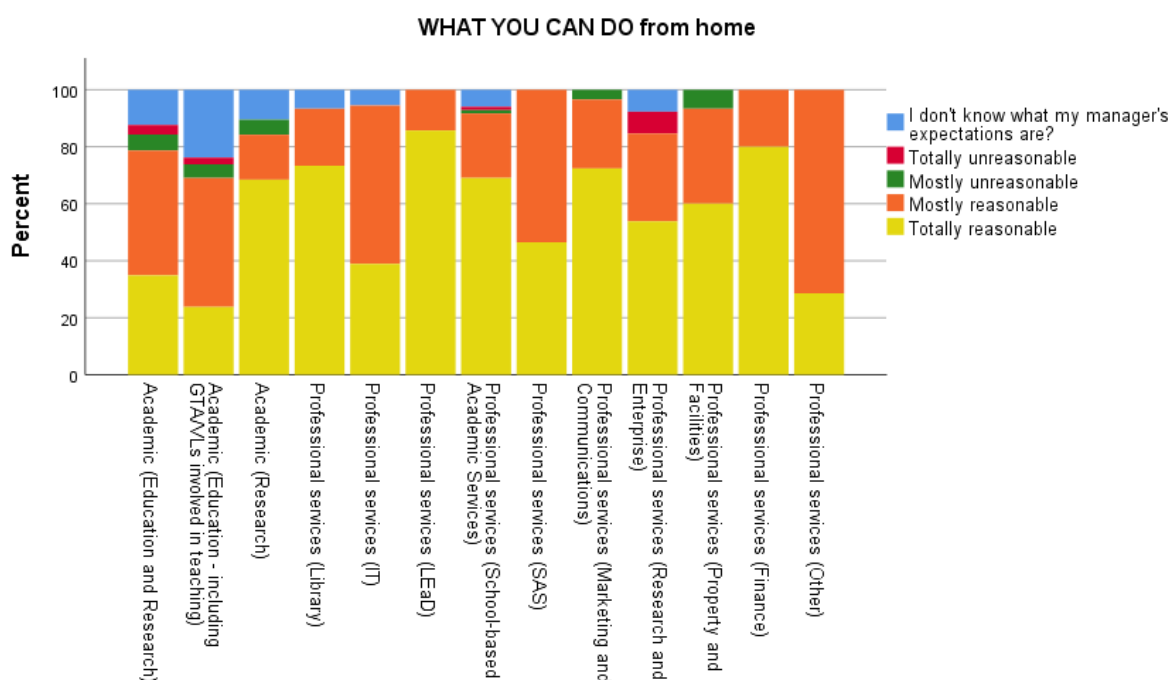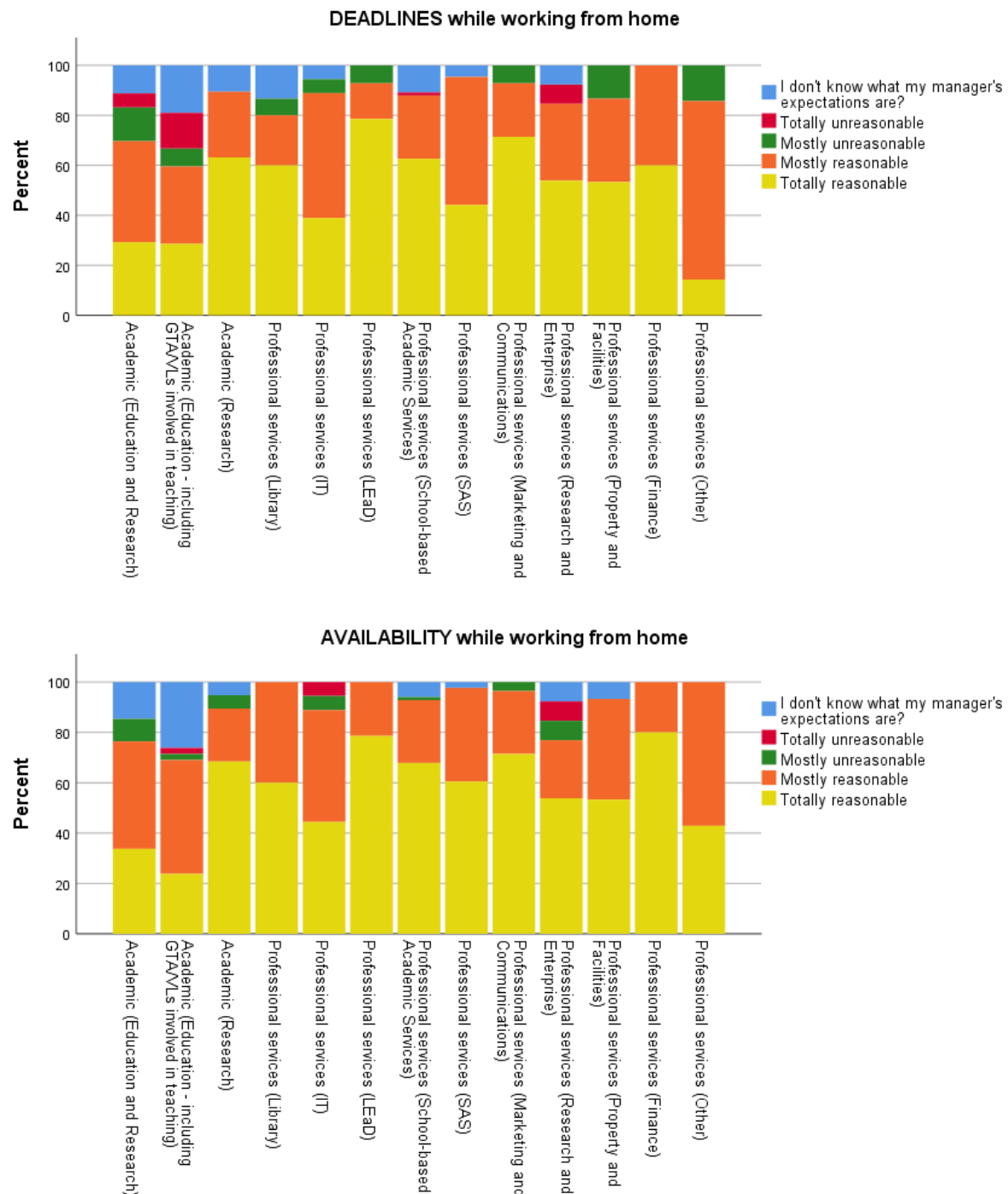
We asked respondents what concerns they had about their manager's expectations about their work (current or future).

Reflecting many of the **positive responses** in the quantitative data, lots of staff said that their immediate line-manager was being 'supportive' or 'understanding' and a minority (approximately 20 percent) said that they had 'no' concerns.

> *My current line manager has been very supportive and makes herself available to the team, both in a professional capacity and in encouraging colleagues to remember their wellbeing.*

I've found her to be supportive and communicates well

My line manager is fantastic, but there are others in the University who can make demands of my time and they are not always so considerate

This was not universal, however, and some felt there had been a serious lack of 'checking in'.

There is no management. It is a shambles. I have had no support whatsoever.

My main concern is that there has been no clear discussion of expectations at all despite regular contact from my manager. I am also concerned that the discussions there have been involve creating additional work rather than managing existing workloads. There has also been insufficient 'checking in and caring' for staff.

There has been virtually no personal communication, everything comes in blizzards of often conflicting emails. There is panic and no reality check that staff are working as hard as they can with limited time and support. We have pressure from students and pressure from management; nobody is caring for staff, nor recognising the limitations (but overinflated expectations). No empathy and understanding.

These are unrealistic and take no account of the difficulties staff have. The only concern is to maintain the fiction of 'business as usual' for students.

Not all respondents expressed their critique in such strongly worded ways, but **most respondents expressed some concerns about workload expectations**. Unsurprisingly, given the quantitative data, some of these related to **timelines and deadlines** with several respondents pointing out that meeting deadlines had meant working beyond contracted hours and that this has been done on the basis of goodwill, but is extremely stressful.

in process - deadlines cannot be met. volume of my work can no longer be easily shared by other team members. lack of mgt and IT support

allowance needs to be made for the circumstances at home, shopping issues, preparing meals, getting some exercise during the day all these take extra time over a normal situation

Expectations to attend meetings/deliver teaching at set times are undermined by some of the realities of home working when living Delays with others

He seems to have forgotten that some members of the team work part-time…. He has forgotten that we are working under very difficult circumstances. He acts like we should be working to our contract when clearly everyone has competing demands on their time. We have all worked over and above our contractual hours thus far and more is to come...

I woke up in the early hours of this morning (as I have for the past 2 weeks) dreading having to sit at my kitchen table (with my family constantly interrupting me) to work. In the past week I have received emails at 10.30pm asking for things to be turned around within 24 hours. I have received emails at 7am in the morning demanding similar.

It has been stressful, trying to meet a number of deadlines from a position where I have a very limited number of working hours. I have had to work over the last two weekends to get everything done in time

I am a 0.4 WTE, but currently am doing more than this so that I can do priorities. I am hoping this will reduce when my module finishes and that i'll be able to take time back. I recognise it

is 'all hands on deck', but I am only being paid part time. …My manager has not put any pressure on me to do extra, but the amount of work requires it.

I would appreciate it, if line managers were reminded that we are living through very difficult times. People are stressed and concerned for elderly relatives who, in my case, live on another continent. Shopping etc., takes a lot longer at the moment. …it would be nice to remind staff that they should be particularly considerate and kind and urge line managers to ease up on work demands and expect a little less.

It feels to me as if circumstances are not taken into consideration, eg lack of normal work set up and conditions, reduced hours worked due to childcare, slower pace of work/completion of tasks due to technology at home, increased time spent on reading guidance/emails from various parties due to the current situation etc.

A few respondents also noted **specific activities that they had been unable to complete**, given the time-pressure.

I was asked one morning to prepare some materials that day for a session. I told them I couldn't and there was no come back on that.

I am struggling to keep up with the basics of teaching. I have missed certain deadlines eg ethics forms already. I am anxious that expectations will be too high or that the university will pay us less if we are not able to do what we did before C-19. Contact hours with students are already very high and seem a bit unsustainable at the moment

In addition, a large number of respondents reframed their answer to focus, not on their line-manager's expectations (about which, as we saw in the quantitative data, they were relatively sanguine), but on how these were being shaped, communicated and changed by more **senior managers**.

Guidance has been really unclear from those higher up than my line manager, so we have no solid deadlines to work towards while decisions are still being made. It feels uncertain while things are still pending and its resulted in a general sense of unease.

I don't have concerns about my manager, i have concerns about the management level above that have consistently demonstrated a lack of planning for future events and a blame culture when the inevitable cracks form into actual mistakes

I think my immediate line manager is very reasonable. I'm not completely sure that the university's higher management is being reasonable.

My manager has been very understanding and is not putting much pressure on us, but she is under pressure from upper management.

My manager's expectations are likely to be very reasonable, but I am concerned about expectations from higher up the chain for myself and members of my team. It is too early to say how this will play out.

Lack of information/decisions from the top mean the team is concerned of having short notice for significant activities.

not my manager but a bit from other people - unrealistic deadlines etc

Related to this, several respondents identified **competing and changing priorities** as adding to workload

> *Communication is dreadful at the minute. Each day is a new set of challenges and shifting goalposts, Some School staff have been completely excluded from contingency arrangements*

> *There continue to be too many things demanded with little prioritisation - or prioritisation left to me. This is exacerbated by the slowness of the Centre to determine processes and the requirement to re-jig things each time new decisions are made. Little recognition that for those of us returning from strike this has required a monumental effort.*

> *The things required are achievable from home. I have several different managers who each have different responsibilities and require them all to be prioritised. That is not possible.*

The specific **frustrations of academic staff over the move to online teaching** was clearly detailed over-and again.

> *Initial expectations included lecture capture of all term's lectures in a period of 2-3 weeks which was completely unreasonable. I have very low confidence of the understanding senior management has of what online teaching involves in terms of effort and resources. In view of contradictory messages we receive I do not believe there is any clear plan about future work patterns.*

> *Lack of clarity and unrealistic deadlines in respect of course development. And the expectation that I should perform a range of other tasks in the same period as I am expected to create content for a new course, namely teach and assess online, and be available to provide pastoral support for two personal tutor groups (24 students)*

> *We were put under considerable pressure to get our teaching online by 13 March. Since this involved re-designing sessions and mastering the tech to record and upload them, this was an unreasonable deadline. …There has been no discussion with the team about how to proceed: we have simply been given edicts about what we have to do.*

Several people also expressed concern about the **amount of time taken up with online meetings** and new expectations about having to check-in via MS Teams and other technologies.

> *Due to the technology of Teams meetings are slower. WE also need blocks of time for completing tasks rather than wall to wall meetings*

> *I find the amount of 'meetings' that I have been asked to attend is ridiculous. I am trying to look after 2 kids as well. Most of those meetings are totally irrelevant to me.*

> *Now that we are all working from home there is now an increased sense of productivity and connectedness where I feel there is an unspoken expectation to respond immediately to emails, messages on MS Teams, texts, phone calls, video calls, much more so than if I was actually in the office*

Finally, several staff expressed concerns that there had not been sufficient recognition of the **effects of isolation** and associated anxiety. For some this directly impacted their ability to carry on 'as normal' and therefore **productivity**:

> *Due to the nature of isolation it creates other personal issues that could mean productivity drops.*

Working from home especially under current lockdown condition is extremely hard and productivity is low

In general there's been the expectation that we can continue doing the same but online. This is not the case. We need a reality check that not only staff but students have different circumstances at home each.

That he is not thinking about the impact of the situation on our mental health/wellbeing - we are being expected to carry on and try to get everything online and no acknowledgement that we all needed a period of adjustment.

She expects work as usual, all day every day, with no regard as to the mental health impact of being alone 24/7, or the fact I find trying to pretend all is OK and we're just having a little jolly completely f*cking barmy, and I'd much rather they were realistic about the huge stresses and pressures. I don't know if/when I'll see my loved ones again, …people are probably going to die, and there seems to be total blindness to this fact. Everything is assumed to be OK, that you will carry on, people with kids can look after their kids, but to be honest there seems to be very little consideration of people alone in this

The worries expressed here will be examined in more detail in the next section.

We started by noting that the quantitative responses to questions about managerial expectations are relatively positive. But, when these are seen alongside the qualitative comments, there are a lot of qualifiers. Whereas immediate line-managers are mostly (albeit not universally) seen as supportive, staff comment on an ongoing lack of clarity and direction from Senior management, and in some cases an expectation of 'business as usual', which exacerbate pressures felt by staff.

Looking Ahead

We asked respondents how they thought their capacity to work would change over the medium term if the current situation lasted at least three months. The plurality (over forty percent) believed that it was unlikely to change, but equal numbers believed that it was likely that their situation would worsen as believed that it would get easier. This suggests that the contexts and constraints described in the above section are unlikely to be radically eased.

Assuming that the current situation lasts at least three months, how do you expect your circumstances and capacity to work from home to evolve?
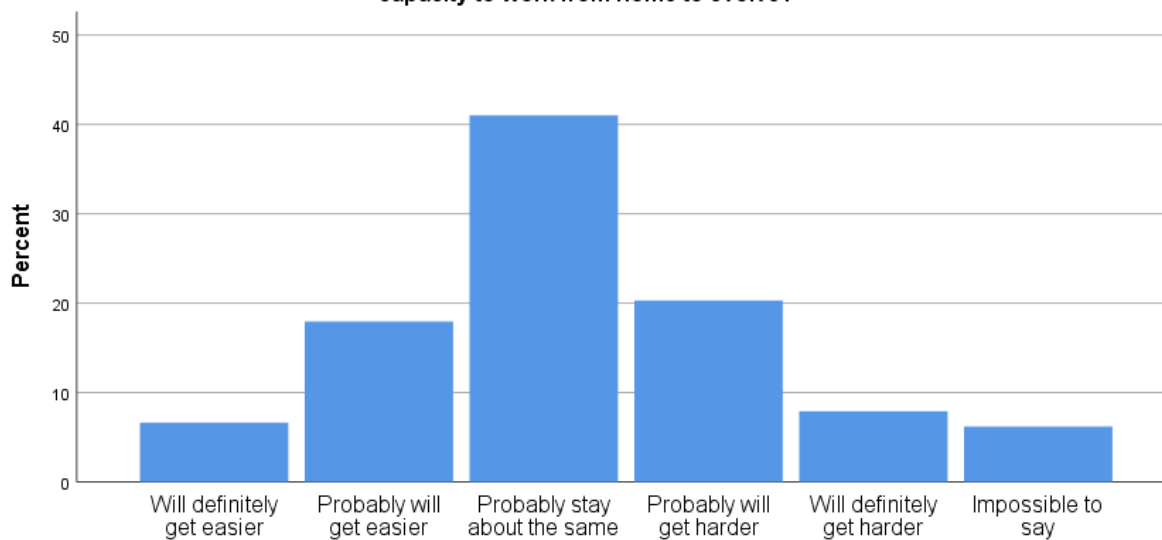
In qualitative comments staff expressed widespread concern about the sustainability of their current situation. In many of these responses it was implied that staff were currently working on **goodwill** – 'going the extra mile' to carry on working to their best ability in difficult circumstances – but will become '**worn down**', 'burn out' or develop 'cabin fever' should these circumstances continue much longer.

> I think that as time goes on, the cracks will start to show. Managers can react one of two ways; either they accept that this is natural, or they become more frustrated and take it out on us.

The **impact on mental health** (own and colleagues') was highlighted by dozens of respondents. For some this was related to the behaviour of the university and/or manager, for others this was more to do with isolation and general worry caused by the pandemic. Ten specifically said they felt their motivation would reduce the longer the current situation continued.

> mental health and general capacity as people will start getting sick and dying around us requiring our care and attention

> The lack of work/home life division. I feel on call 7- 8 hours a day. Which is the usual working day, but I am stuck in a small space, not getting any change of scene

> There is isolation that comes with working from home with little colleague interaction, therefore the loss of human contact will become harder as time goes on. There is also a question how to stay motivated with no variety in the daily work pattern.

> *long term isolation and requirements to work from home will be to the detriment of my personal and mental resilience and well being.*

> *I think the mental pressures of self isolation and lack of human contact (outside my house) will impact on my drive and productivity.*

> *Main concern is lack of seeing my team in person plus motivation to keep going. I live alone so this compounds it.*

Many staff foresaw **increased strain** from having to juggle childcare or elder care with work across a longer period.

> *Managing both City's teaching demands and childcare is already exhausting me. I cannot imagine how tired I will be after a few further weeks of this :-(*

> *Childcare during an extended lockdown period will be more demanding as social distancing and isolation will take a psychological toll on my child and perhaps me*

> *I cannot continue to work into the evenings in the longer term. Last week's attempts to make up work time lost to childcare left me exhausted.*

> *I am worried about the situation if my child's special school remains closed and I'm expected to keep caring for them and do my work e.g. run my modules, etc.*

> *I am concerned that it will get increasingly more difficult due to being a carer and not being able to leave the house to get my breaks from caring.*

> *Having two children at home and especially a 3 year old if this is for 3 months or more would be very difficult as we move to more higher demand work times such as assessment boards, and results release*

> *As I am juggling work and childcare I worry people will forget to involve me in decisions. In my team most people do not have childcare responsibility. A lot of the right things are said but in reality people aren't organised/thoughtful enough*

Lots of respondents also reiterated that their set up would cause **increasing physical problems** in the longer term. For many this was about developing or worsening back pain. Others specifically pointed to the requirement for a better chair, workstation or desk.

> *I have a disability which means I need an ergonomic office chair. I do not have this at home so sitting on a dining room chair is going to cause issues the longer the situation goes on.*

> *My back cannot take working at home in poor chair/ inadequate chair for such a long time*

> *Longer term, I may get neck, shoulder problems from working at a wrong angle.*

> *I cannot work at this desk for three months. I literally won't be able to handle it as my pregnancy progresses and expect to have to take sick time.*

> *Suitbility of work station this is cobbled together from furniture in the home and not designed as a work space. This is likely to lead to discomfort if not more serious health issues*

> *If I continue to feel the pressure from the manager then I may have to stop working completely as the added stress makes me less productive and is not good for my wellbeing.*

Working from home is going to take a toll on my physical health: I do not have the workspace/ergonomic chair to sit at a desk for 7-8 hours a day. I am already experiencing significant physical discomfort.

Lack of space, cramped conditions, working/living/sleeping/eating in one small room with limited access to kitchen.

I am concerned about neck and back pains due to now having a proper set up and using my laptop rather than an PC and 2 screens

worry about health and safety at home, getting enough exercise and movement in such a small space as well as using nonpurpose equipment (dining table and chair)

Insufficient IT hardware for the longer term was mentioned by many others.

Hardware failures: my computer has intermittent problems; if it breaks down, it seems City cannot help

Connection to my work pc is very fragile, and I often have to contact IT to reconnect me. I'm working much longer hours as a result.

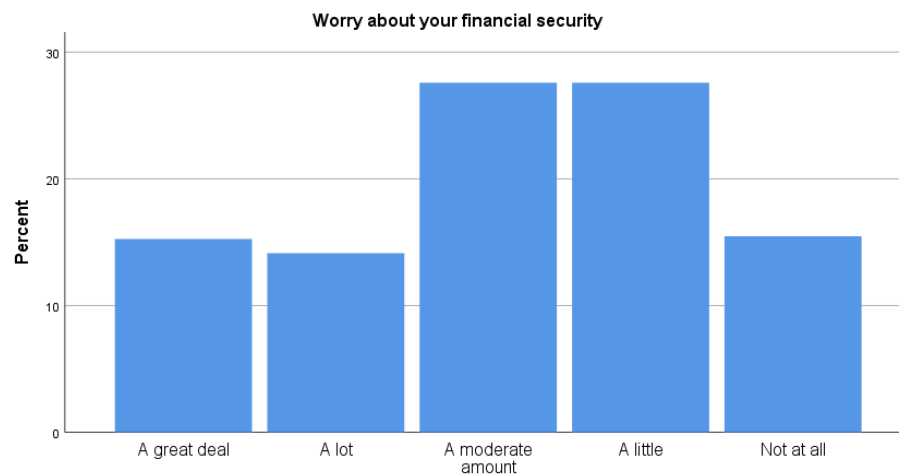The increased cost of utility bills raised by several respondents.

I think that I am spending more on utilities such as electricity and it will be difficult to quantify the costs and recover them from the employer

Finally, four staff on fixed term contracts raised concerns about their contracts ending during the crisis. Three respondents mentioned especially acute fears around job security.

I am on a fixed term contract coming to an end in September - I believe it will be difficult to secure a job during these times

Worries

We asked respondents to what extent five different Covid-related worries were impacting their emotional state. These were their own health, the health of a family member; financial worries; the state of the world; and generalised anxiety. Responses are shown below.

Worry about your own health

Worry about the health of a family member

Worry about your financial security

Worry about the state of the world

Generalised anxiety
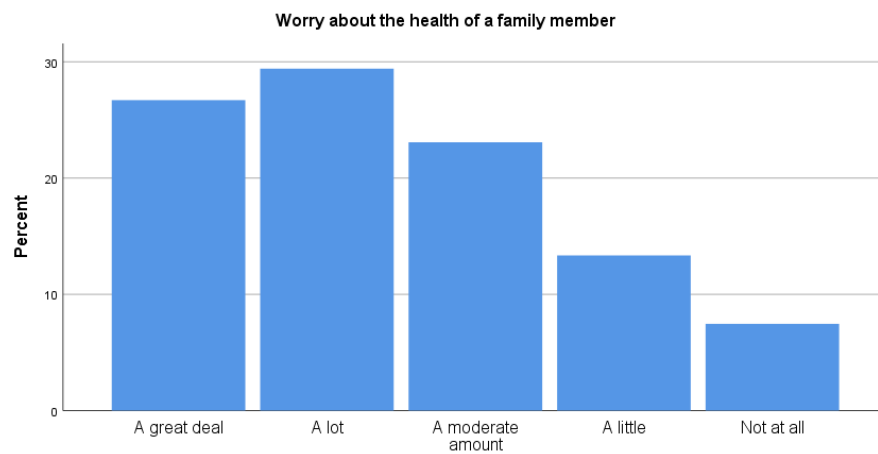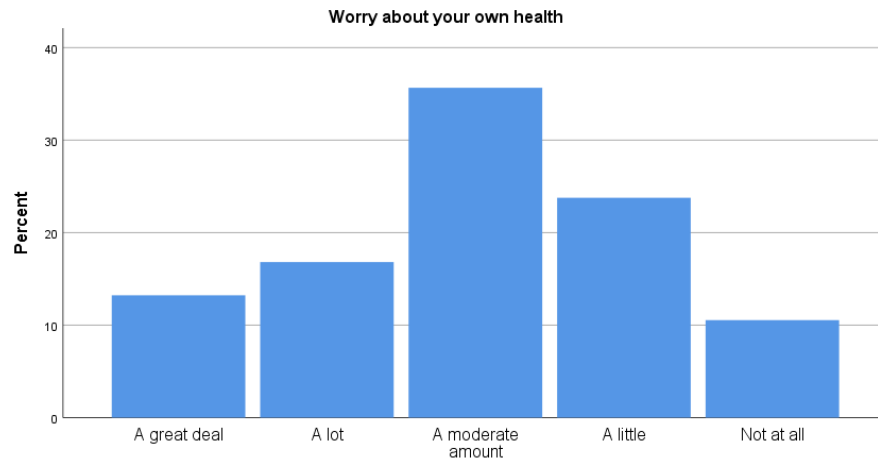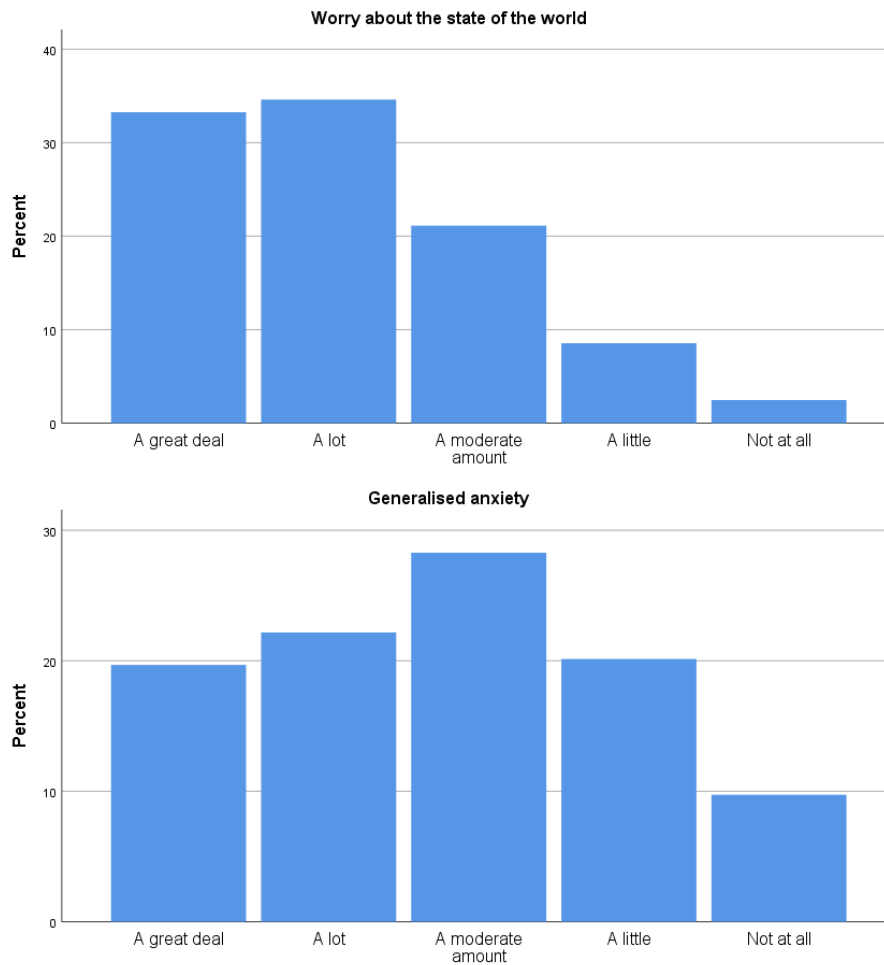
These charts show that respondents have a wide range of worries and concerns. About 30 percent of staff have a great deal or a lot of worry about their own health. This increases to fifty percent with at least 'a lot' or 'great deal' of worry about a family member's health. Financial worries are pressing for about 30 percent, with over half of respondents having at least moderate financial worries. Wider worries (about the state of the world) are widespread, with about two thirds of respondents reporting they have, at least, a lot of worry about this. These worries produce a high sense of 'generalised anxiety' for at least 40 percent of respondents.

When asked, about 20 percent of respondents believed that these worries impacted their ability to focus on work 'a lot' (see chart below), with another forty percent believing that they were having 'a little' impact on work focus. Overall that means that about sixty percent of staff feel that their concentration, and productivity, has been affected by their current emotional state.

Are the above concerns impacting your ability to focus on your work?
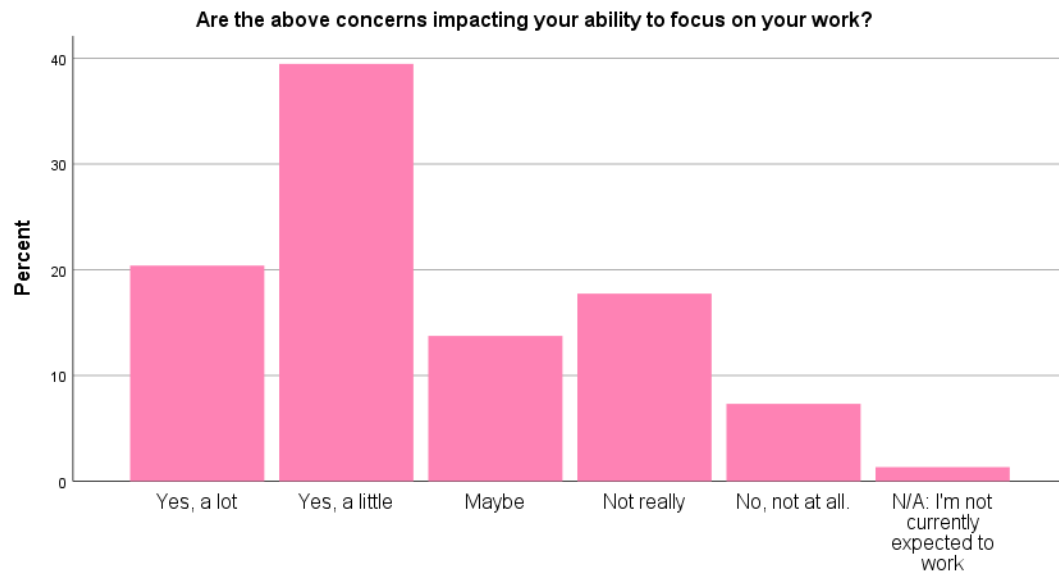
Priorities – Short and Medium Term

We asked staff what should be the three trade unions' shorter and medium term priorities. The main themes that emerge from across these questions provide a good guide to some of the issues about which staff were most concerned.

Job Security: Even though this survey occurred during the first weeks of the shutdown, a large proportion of responses focused on job security and the prevention of job losses with the phrase 'job security' appearing dozens of times. Many staff also highlighted the more immediate financial needs of vulnerable or precarious workers or those whose job would be more difficult while working from home.

> *Future job losses*

> *possible redundancies*

> *job security, esp for contract people. RAs are a concern since strike+crisis have blocked grant proposals*

> *Job security and Pay and Pensions*

> *Job security for all staff including cleaning and catering staff*

> *Getting everyone who works at City in house.*

> *Making sure those who can't work from home are still paid*

> *protecting casualised staff and GTAs from financial destitution.*

> *Pay for staff who are furloughed, especially cleaning staff or other agency staff, if possible.*

> *ensuring that all workers at City have been paid whilst the universitiy has been shut.*

> *Ensuring no loss of pay for staff who were expecting to be delivering courses over the Summer Term, who may now have no students recruited for courses, and so will have work cancelled.*

> *Clarifying and strengthening position on job security for members in these uncertain times. Communications from the VC in recent days have made me worry about the future of City and the future of my job*

Not 'business as usual': A large proportion of respondents wanted trade unions to challenge what they saw as a Senior Management that continued to communicate expectations for work that were unrealistic and did not adequately reflect the new context within which work and personal lives were occurring.

> *Expectations of home working cannot be the same as working on site. people and their circumstances are different. There needs to be a recognition of this by managers*

> *To ensure that City does not have unrealistic/unreasonable expectations of what we can do from home, and that when we are back on site we can catch up quickly.*

> *Work load. Reasonable expectation of senior managers*

Making clear that this is not business as usual and that we cannot simply and seamlessly move online. Also make management aware that we are dealing with a colossal amount of student anxiety about the future, but do not feel well cared for ourselves.

Expectations from management of workers working from home: what is realistic? Expectations before the current crisis cannot be the same now.

Explain that the expectation that things will go on as normal is nonsense.

Getting management to understand that it's not possible for academic staff to seamlessly transition to online learning and get the same results/grades, student approval ratings, etc - that they need to give up on pretending it's business as usual.

The President needs to realise that City business cannot continue as usual, only online, and that some of the performance management methods that he has adopted cannot remain in place unchanged during the current UK crisis. Those of us on an education and research role profile will continue to perform our research tasks to the best of our ability. However, the disruption caused by Covid-19 needs to acknowledged as far as research expectations are concerned.

Ensuring that the expectations from workloads and performance are adjusted to the fact that we are working from home, at strange hours, while caring for our children. Ensuring that the exceptional effort and hard work we pulled off to save the academic year does not become the new norm.

Fight back against the notion that we can return to 'business as usual' once this is over. The crisis is exposing many issues that were already there, such as: staff dissatisfaction, excessive managerialism, despicable treatment of staff on zero hour contracts and other forms of casualised employment, gender inequalities, high level of mental health issues among both staff and students...

The leadership of the University has been poor - reactive rather than proactive and totally unimaginative. It is not business as usual.

Ensuring that there is …clear messages from the senior managers and President of the University.

Ensuring consistency by giving very clear guidance for students and staff alike as we all adapt to this new way of working.

Support and understanding in working from home: A lot of people returned to the concerns that had been raised earlier around appropriate support for them to work more effectively from home. Staff also wanted assurance that their constraints in working from home would be recognised in terms of expectations and would not result in future disadvantage (e.g. in promotion).

Ensuring that staff are suitable supported, both in terms of working from home conditions (tech, training etc.) but also in terms of a coordinated and clear strategy for mitigation of this crisis, so staff aren't just left fumbling.

Make sure people are comfortable working from home and have everything they need to do their jobs

Developing the remote facilities for staff in their homes

Ensure all staff who work from home permanently get furniture.

Ensure better technology support (experts at hand, hardware and software supply) are readily available to staff.

Access to hardware (laptops) for people currently struggling to work from home.

Ensuring all staff working from home can be provided with suitable equipment (laptops, orthopaedic chairs) if required, to make working from home as effective as possible and safe.

Ensuring those with childcare or other responsibilities are reassured that their working hours could be significantly impacted

There is a risk that those with children are left behind again on promotion as those with extra time to publish will do so, and those of us having to do childcare will be even more disadvantaged than usual.

ensuring work demands are resonable and scaled down given many of us are dealing with unprecedented demands coming from elsewhere (caring responsibiities).

Scaling back all workloads and expectations of staff in these circumstances

Making sure staff members well-being is being considered - especially those who have young children etc and ensuring that all staff members have all the necessary means to work from home safely and effectively.

Supporting staff and students from every position in the university to pursue wellbeing and connectedness during this time. Chiefly, I would like reassurance and evidence from senior management that we as staff and students are valued.

Health and Safety: A large number of respondents specified 'health and safety' as the primary short-term (and in some cases medium-term) focus for trade unions. In several cases this was simply stated as 'health and safety' but in others it was elaborated.

Health and safety

H&S at work and home. People using non-DSE setup equipment, etc. Plus ensuring now regulation has gone and Uni Exec have a more free rein that we have means of checking their processes and activities

Health and safety issues, financial security, improving remote working conditions

Health and safety of everyone well being.

Wellbeing of staff as working from home is difficult

Protection for staff still on site like access to drive to work and adequate PPE

taking into account health concerns including mental health

Safety of staff in response to COVID 19 situation

People's physical and mental health in a time of crazy and impossible demands

Recognition of stress this has put on workforce.

I think more people will experience some degree of mental health issues in the coming months and possibly for quite a long time after this situation settles down as there are a lot of different associated stresses.

Future planning: There were a variety of comments that addressed the need for better and more inclusive planning for the future. Some of these involve consideration of how City or HE more broadly might be changed by the pandemic and how those changes will be planned and implemented.

A strategy needs to be defined in order to manage students and staff expectations for the next academic year. Provision might have to be online and we may have to reduce the number of us going into campus even if measures are lifted before that. We will all have to change our behaviour significantly if we don't want this to come back, in similar or different form, so we must plan for that.

Back up plans in case this happens again.

action plan for next steps as matters continue

Unions should be part of any decision-making about future reorganisations of the university - and ensuring there is staff voice in this.

Ensuring Management are communicating timescales as soon as they have information. At the moment Management have not communicated what their business continuity plan is.

Budget/ Planning no smoke on mirrors on how this will impact all staff at City.

Ensure that there is complete transparency from the top in regards to the Universities financial situation so that all may be well equipped to ask suitable questions and plan our futures accordingly

Open, honest, accurate information   - Realistic.

Business contingency system that works. Addressing the politics at senior level that has delayed decision making.

encouraging management to ensure feasibility of revised procedures (eg around assessment) and taking into account the impact of these on both academic and professional staff. Consult with professional staff on changes and communicate changes that will significantly impact them to them before informing students.

…that F2F teaching will be re-instated and that realistic deadlines will be set (by agreement, not imposition) for tasks for the next several months. This may include delaying the start of the Autumn Term - the sky will not fall in if we delay by 4-6 weeks. People may recover (or not get the virus at all) but mental health will be affected for a long time.

Ensuring that online teaching does not herald a more widespread adoption of working from home practices in a way which undermines work/life balance.

Ensuring that the movement is slow because slow is steady and steady is going to want to win the race. Panic pushing of decisions and rushing things through that in this time are non essential adds to stress.

> *Locally our staff are working like crazy to ensure decisions are made and actions implemented to support staff and students. I can't help but feel that had the University as a whole been quicker to react to the pandemic, senior staff on a local level would not have been under so much pressure. The institution as a whole really needs to invest in technological solutions and look at the way we do things as a University, I hope this pandemic highlights that.*

No strike deductions: UCU members returning from strike were required do large amounts of work outside of normal hours to transition to homeworking. Other Universities have suspended deductions as a sign of goodwill. Given this, it was unsurprising that quite a few respondents suggested that City should act likewise and there was frustration that pay is being deducted at a time when goodwill is stretched thin.

> *Demand that the University cancel the deductions for the strike, especially at a time when we are working even harder from home.*

> *Not deducting pay for days on strike. The universities are (rightly) expecting a great deal of goodwill from their staff - they need to show some goodwill towards their staff for once*

> *Cancel strike pay deductions!*

> *Get management to confirm that no strike pay deductions will be made as I believe other universities have said.*

> *It would also be good if the University could persuaded not to make deductions from pay for recent strike action. This would help me in respect of kit I will now need to buy, to work at home (desk top, chair, printer and scanner for references etc). It would also go some way towards restoring goodwill which they are going to need a lot of.*

> *waive punitive deductions for the strike if you can.*

Many other issues were raised, including among others annual leave carry-over, pay, equity issues, and the importance of working collaboratively in an uncertain future.

The priorities above highlight increasing staff anxiety over job security, something which it is likely has been exacerbated by the President's 9th April communication, in which 'redundancies' was mentioned. The priorities also show staff concern extends to all types of workers, including most particularly those on precarious contracts (fixed-term, VL, GTA or out-sourced). They also demonstrate widespread scepticism that the University has yet taken seriously the health and safety and workload consequences of the current crisis. Staff are stressed about the expectations and what they see as a 'Business as usual' model. There is also a strong demand for more transparent planning that includes staff and their representatives.

City's Trade Unions

City's three trade unions are run by academic and professional service staff at City. The work we do is done alongside our day jobs. Our aim is that by working collectively with you, our members, the lives of staff at City, University of London are improved.

At various points respondents talked about how important the trade unions have been during this period. Most notably many respondents re-purposed the final question which asked for 'final thoughts or comments that might be relevant' to explicitly thank City's three trade unions. These responses demonstrate the important role that trade unions play both in representation, but also providing support and information. A small sample of these are below.

> *I feel supported by my union and can see that the unions are working hard to hold management to account and fight for rights. Thank you.*

> *Thank you for prioritising staff wellbeing more promptly than the president did.*

> *Thank you for your support - it really means a lot!*

> *Thank you to the trade union for helping provide me with a sense of belonging and wellbeing at City. I greatly value the work you do on behalf of our staff.*

> *Thank you for representing us in these hard times.*

> *Thank you for organising this survey. I hope it will give good perspective on working conditions.*

> *Thank you for all you do. You are brave for all of us.*

> *Thank you for asking these questions, they do not seem to have been addressed yet by the University*

> *Thank you so much to the union and City UCU at this time. Where the university management has been terrible, you have been brilliant. Your work in fighting to support the staff is keeping a lot of us going mentally right now. thank you.*

> *Just to express gratitude to the Unions for being so proactive at this critical time for workers.*

> *Thank you so much for your support, UCU at City have been really supportive in this situation.*

> *Thanks for the updates and support during these troubling times. It's much appreciated. Stay safe.*

Who are the Survey Respondents?

As the Table below shows, the majority of respondents were trade union members, but 42% of respondents were not trade union members, suggesting that the data described here are representative of the University more widely.

Women comprised the majority of respondents, with respondents widely distributed by age. Eight percent of respondents identified as disabled.

Respondents were relatively evenly drawn from across the various academic schools, with a minimum of 45 respondents from any SHS and a high of 66 respondents from SASS. The plurality of respondents (36%, N=155) were from Central Services. Respondents worked across all the different Professional Service departments but were clustered in Grades 5-7. Since these are the most common grades at City, this is quite representative. Academic respondents were at all levels, from Lecturer through to Professor, including a limited representation of those in research roles.

The survey respondents are not, however, very representative of those in more precarious employment, and most notably there are few responses from hourly-paid or contracted staff. This is perhaps because they are the most difficult to reach and least engaged with the University. It is important to note therefore that the findings reported above do not adequately reflect this group of staff, who may be experiencing additional stressors, beyond those identified here.

Characteristic		Percentage	N
Trade Union Membership	*Member*	58	243
	Not a member	42	179
Gender	*Male*	39	153
	Female	57	227
	Non-Binary	2	9
	Other	2	8
Disability	*Yes*	8	33
	No	92	378
Age	*24 or under*	2	8
	25 - 34	23	86
	35 - 44	32	122
	45 - 54	26	97
	55 - 64	14	53
	65 - 74	4	14
School	*SASS*	15	66
	SMCSE	13	54
	Cass	13	55
	Law	13	55
	SHS	11	45
	Central Services	36	155
Contract type	*Ongoing / permanent*	86	388
	Fixed-term	8	37
	Hourly paid	4	18
	Employed via an External Contractor	0	2
	Other	1	4

Primary Role	Academic (Education and Research)	22	92
	Academic (Education - including GTA/VLs involved in teaching)	10	44
	Academic (Research)	4	19
	Professional services (Library)	4	16
	Professional services (IT)	4	18
	Professional services (LEaD)	3	14
	Professional services (School-based Academic Services)	20	86
	Professional services (SAS)	10	43
	Professional services (Marketing and Communications)	7	29
	Professional services (Research and Enterprise)	3	13
	Professional services (Property and Facilities)	6	26
	Professional services (Finance)	5	20
	Professional services (Other)	2	7
Academic Role (Title)	Lecturer	23	34
	Senior Lecturer	30	45
	Reader	7	10
	Professor	17	25
	Research Fellow	5	7
	Senior Research Fellow	2	3
	Graduate Teaching Assistant	6	9
	Visiting Lecturer	7	11
	Other	5	7
Professional Role (Grade)	1-3	3	7
	4	9	25
	5	39	105
	6	28	75
	7	19	50
	8	3	7

Notes: Percentages given are for those who answered the question. Questions listed here that were asked of all respondents have Ns ranging between 380 and 449. That means that, given responses of up to 521 for other questions, some of these questions were not answered by as many as 140 respondents. As noted above, this may be due to nervousness about being identified in any way. The final two questions were each answered by only one of those in Academic (N=151) or Professional roles (N=269). In all cases percentages have been rounded and may not add to 100%.