



Annual Campus Report (no. 14)

For Reporting Year 2020-21

Contents

- 1. Executive Summary**

- 2. Outputs**
 - 2.1 Student Outputs
 - 2.2 Job/Staffing FTE Staff Outputs

- 3. General Campus Update**
 - 3.1 University of Kent
 - 3.2 University of Greenwich
 - 3.3 Canterbury Christ Church University
 - 3.4 Drill Hall Library
 - 3.5 Medway Chaplaincy
 - 3.6 GK Unions

1. Executive Summary

The Universities at Medway comprises the University of Greenwich, the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University, all located on the conjoint campus at Chatham Maritime.

During 2020/21, the Covid-19 pandemic continued to have an impact on the Medway campus and on the delivery of academic teaching and related activities, with blended learning being in place for much of the provision. The Medway Covid Task & Finish Group continued to oversee the campus response, with membership from all three Institutions and key support services. Testing sites for both PCR and Lateral Flow tests were established on campus. As per government guidance, the end of the autumn term saw the universities support those students on campus to leave during the student travel window in early December. Some face-to-face teaching resumed for the more practical subjects in March 2020, and the Drill Hall Library was open for students to help support their study and the Pembroke café provided a catering facility for those students and staff on campus to buy refreshments. The Task & Finish Group continued to meet on a regular basis ahead of the physical return to campus for the start of the 2021/22 academic year.

Understandably, the pandemic also had an impact on the engagement with student societies and sporting events. Although the lockdowns in 2020/21 prevented physical events and gatherings from taking place, GK Unions established a Discord channel to facilitate online get-togethers for students and societies, while other student groups utilised MS Teams and other innovative way to stay in touch. The end of the year saw the oversight of GK Unions transfer from Kent Union to Greenwich Student Union. A programme of transfer and integration took place over the summer ready for the start of the 2021/22 academic year. More information on the work and activities of GK Unions is contained on pages 13 to 18 below.

The campus has continued to benefit from the Chaplaincy, with much of the important social and support facilities moving online during the pandemic, with weekly reflection sessions being held on YouTube and the autumn term Photo Competition providing some light-hearted fun during the challenging times. More details on the work of the Chaplaincy can be found on pages 12 to 12.

The Drill Hall Library remained open throughout the academic year, albeit on restricted hours, and provided a vital study space for students during 2020/21. In addition, work on upgrading the Training Rooms and installing new furniture, bookshelves and PC's in the Library went ahead in anticipation of the return to campus. More information on the work and activity of the Drill Hall Library can be found on pages 9 and 10.

The Universities continue to work with our local partners, Chatham Maritime Trust, the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust and Medway Council, and with local public health authorities in regards the Covid-19 response. The Universities look forward to welcoming students and staff back on campus in 2021/22 and re-engaging with our local partners.

Joint Chairs of the Campus Management Board:

Professor Martin Snowden
Pro Vice Chancellor
University of Greenwich

Jane Higham
Chief Financial Officer
University of Kent

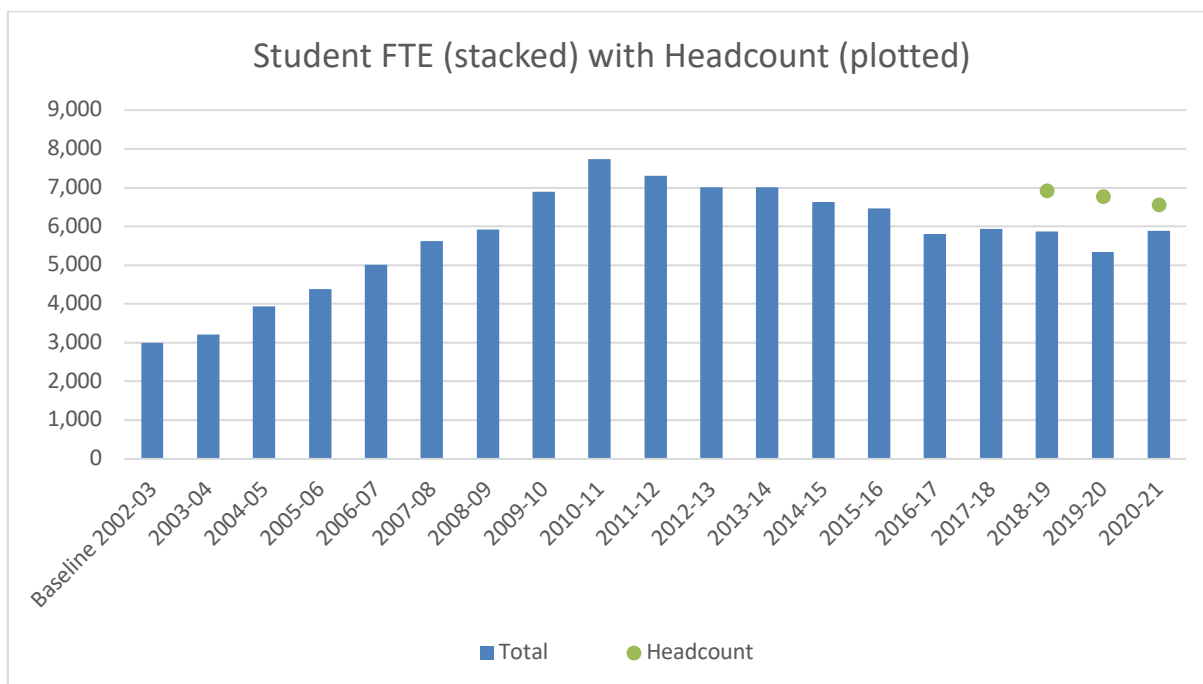
2. Outputs in relation to the project

2.1 Student Outputs

Reporting Period: Academic Year 2020-21

The figures stated below are the combined total Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students from all three Universities at Medway from the baseline year (2002-03) to latest reporting year (2020-21). For 2018-19 onwards, student Headcount is also be presented.

	Baseline 2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Total	2997	3206	3942	4380	5016	5626	5923	6894	7743
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Total	7313	7088 *	7010	6623	6472	5810	5932	5871 FTE 6912 Headcount	5334 FTE 6765 Headcount
	2020-21								
Total	5892 FTE 6555 Headcount								



*MKC student numbers not included from 2012-13 onwards.

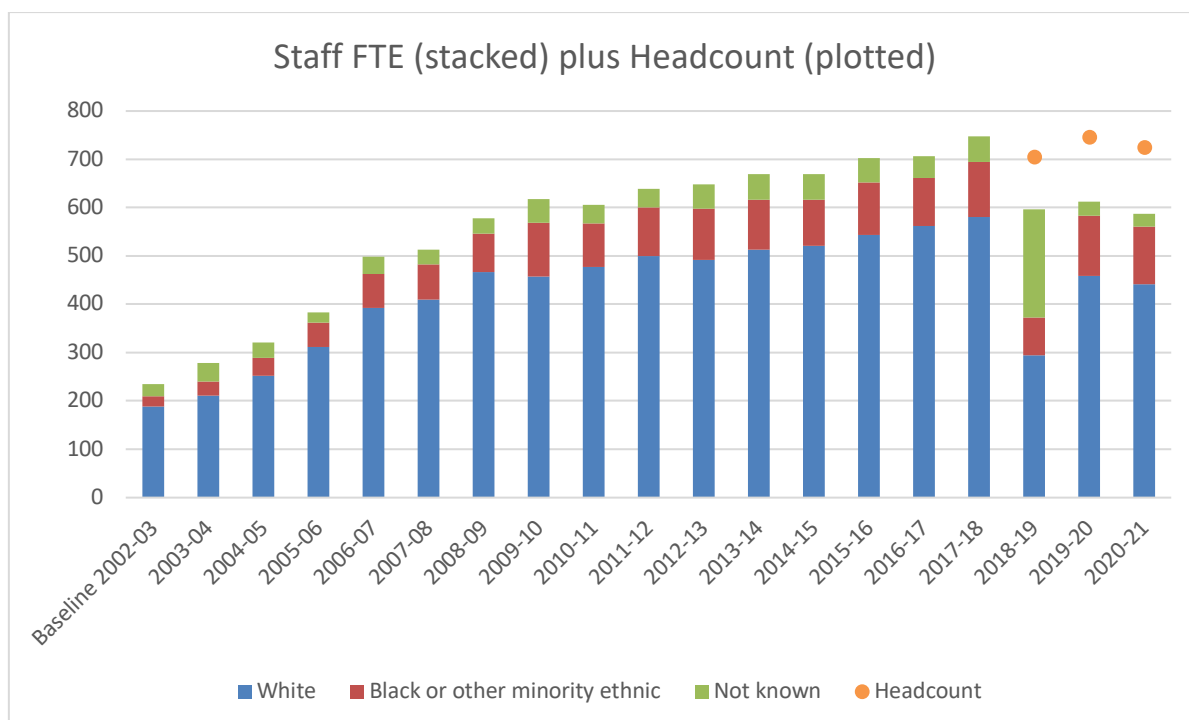
2.2 Job/Staffing FTE Staff Outputs

Reporting Period: Academic Year 2020-21

The figures stated below are the combined totals of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff from all three Universities at Medway, broken down by ethnicity. Data from the Baseline year (2002-03) charts FTE only and from 2018-19 onwards both FTE and Headcount are presented.

	Baseline 2002-03	2003- 04	2004- 05	2005- 06	2006- 07	2007- 08	2008- 09	2009- 10	2010- 11	2011- 12	2012- 13
White	188	211	252	312	392	410	467	458	477	500	492 *
Black or other minority ethnic	22	29	37	50	71	72	79	111	91	100	106 *
Not known	25	38	32	21	36	31	32	49	38	39	50 *
TOTAL	235	277	321	383	499	513	578	618	606	639	648 *

	2013- 14	2014- 15	2015- 16	2016- 17	2017- 18	2018-19 FTE Headcount	2019-20 FTE Headcount	2020-21 FTE Headcount
White	513	521	543	562	581	464	553	459
Black or other minority ethnic	104	95	109	100	113	198	98	124
Not known	53	53	51	44	53	35	35	30
TOTAL	670	669	703	706	747	597	597	613



*MKC staff numbers not included from 2012-13 onwards

3. General Campus Update

3.1 University of Kent

The 2020/21 academic year continued to be dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic with the University continuing to offer a blended learning model and the majority of teaching, assessment and examinations undertaken online in accordance with government restrictions and guidance. Notable exceptions included Social Work, Journalism and Sports Therapy which required access to specialist facilities and/or employer provision. Social distancing remained in place across all campus buildings until the removal of restrictions in July 2021 with a phased return to working on campus implemented across the summer months prior to implementation of a new hybrid working model. The end of Summer was marked by a Staff Conference and on-campus Staff BBQ to aid and support this transition and to welcome new colleagues who joined the University during the period of lockdown.

The University's new Divisional structure officially came into effect on 1st November 2020 with work previously delivered by three faculties reconfigured to six new academic Divisions which offer enhanced accountability and agility to support deliver of our ambitions in the years ahead. This has been supported by a comprehensive mid-term review of the Kent 2025 strategy, and the completion of a new Medway strategy which sets out an innovative and distinct academic portfolio building on global excellence in education and research but with an enhanced civic focus aligned to the regional needs of Medway. The strategy strengthens our engagement with businesses and communities, enhancing access to HE, degree apprenticeships and lifelong learning.

Global excellence remains a cornerstone of our research and innovation activities and we continue to deliver significant cultural, social and economic benefits to our regional, national and international communities. We have recently launched three Signature Research Themes which bring together a wide range of ideas and approaches through cross-disciplinary collaboration to enhance the cutting-edge and innovative research for which we are known. Our Institute for Cultural and Creative Industries (ICCI) continues to deliver a creative programme of activities across the region, with projects like Creative Estuary and The Docking Station supporting Medway's cultural strategy and ambition to achieve its potential as a major cultural hub. KBS Medway are supporting local SMEs to innovate and grow through the Government's flagship business recovery Help to Grow programme, and working with the Office for National Statistics to evaluate skill complementarities. They are also contributing to the Growing Kent and Medway consortium led by horticultural and agricultural research institution NIAB EMR.

In terms of on-campus developments, realignment of the Medway portfolio has resulted in the relocation of two academic Schools from Medway to Canterbury - the Schools of Computing and Sports Exercise and Sports Science - with the Centre for Child Protection moving from Canterbury to Medway to operate directly alongside Social Work. These moves will be supplemented by the relocation of KBS Medway from the Dockyard to the Pembroke campus from September 2022. Significant efforts are now being made to enhance the student experience with improved social spaces across our Pembroke and Dockyard sites. A sustainability project to improve staff and student wellbeing has also commenced with the installation of seating, a trail gym and a large covered area to the green space adjacent to the Rochester Building.

3.2 University of Greenwich

In an academic year dominated by the challenges of Covid-19, the Faculty of Engineering and Science, the principal Faculty at Medway, achieved growth of around 8% in student numbers across all areas of activity compared with the previous year. A number of overseas MSc students deferred their start from September 2020 to January 2021 and the Faculty received around 591 January starters, the majority of which will be on the two-year MSc with Industrial Practice programmes. This is a substantial increase on previous years and with the January intake means that we have a population of around 1000 postgraduate students at Medway.

In line with the increase in students, there has been a corresponding growth in both academic and professional services staff during 2020-21; the University also welcomed a new Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor Jane Roscoe, in February 2021.

Due to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, the University offered a blended approach to teaching for term 1 with large lectures delivered online and practical sessions on campus. Various safety precautions were put in place on the campus, eg. one-way systems through the buildings, extensive signage around campus, teaching rooms rearranged for social distancing and room capacities set, sanitiser stations and cleaning products at all entrances and exits and in teaching rooms. To facilitate the Covid safe delivery of practical work, the Sports Hall on campus was converted into a laboratory for Engineering and Science first year students, as featured on BBC South East Today, and this also resulted in the Faculty of Engineering and Science technical team winning the 2021 University Alliance Professionals award for work to mitigate the effects of Covid.

Our examinations in April/May and the exam boards in June were successfully conducted online.

In person graduation ceremonies for our 2020 and 2021 cohorts took place at Rochester Cathedral in September 2021 and were very well attended.

Other academic headlines include the approval of a new Climate Change degree, the re-accreditation of a suite of Engineering programmes by the Institution of Engineering and Technology, and Faculty's Forensic Science programme again achieved 100% in overall student satisfaction in the NSS this year.

In terms of research, the Faculty submitted a strong REF submission, with work from over 100 staff submitted, which is a significant increase from the last REF in 2014. The biggest submissions were in Agriculture, Chemistry and Engineering.

The Natural Resources Institute has constructed three new facilities under its £7.5m Research England 'Expanding Excellence in England', Food and Nutrition Security Initiative (FaNSI) award. These include a state of the art 'Climate Change Greenhouse', an 'Agronomy and Ecology Laboratory' and a 'Food Processing Laboratory'. Under this award, NRI recruited 30 new world leading researchers in areas such as 'climate change', 'sustainable agricultural intensification', 'food systems' and 'food loss and waste'. NRI was a partner in a successful bid to UKRI for £18m to collaborate on generating enterprise in the South East region's food sector. The programme, called "Growing Kent and Medway includes infrastructure and support for accelerating enterprise activities.

The popular GREat Talks, a series of public lectures, took place online during 2020/21, and were well attended. The subjects of the Talks included Global Development, subsidence in Southern England, the environmental impact of COVID-19, Ageing, Obesity and Metabolism and Electrifying the Production of Drugs and Chemicals.

The new University Strategy 2021-2030 was launched in April 2021 and in the context of the Medway Campus, this will include the enhancement of the existing expertise in global sustainability, science and engineering to provide a range of services for local and regional enterprise that are aligned to the regional economic agenda, the UK industrial Strategy and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In other University developments, it was announced that the School of Computing and Mathematical Sciences together with Construction would be joining the Faculty of Engineering and Science from 1st September 2021 but remaining on the Greenwich Campus.

3.3 Canterbury Christ Church University

The University community of staff and students at Canterbury Christ Church Medway campus have continued to move forward together positively during the 2020-2021 academic year, and we welcome health students back onto the Medway Campus in January 2021, in line with the changes to Lockdown restrictions at that point.

This allowed some of our student the opportunity to 'catch-up' with clinical skills development within our Simulation Suites, prior to undertaking placements within local hospital trusts and community setting when it was possible to be accommodated. This is particularly important since Covid 19 has disrupted many of the 'placement plans' for health students and we want to ensure that students have the best possible chance of completing their course on-time, to enter employment and become party of the workforce solution to Covid 19.

Whilst our success in attracting new students to health programmes continued, both at Foundation level, first year undergraduate and postgraduate routes, many Qualified staff within the NHS took 'breaks' in study to concentrate their efforts in clinical practice and we are looking forward to re-engaging with them when they return.

Our CCCU Estates Team have continued to support us to maintain our Covid 19 secure site, in partnership with the other universities across the campus, with CCCU premises remaining open for most of the year to support health students. Our Medway based staff have demonstrated their commitment and resilience to supporting students during challenging times, through swift programme redesigns to enable studies to continue to meet Professional, Regulatory, and Statutory Body requirements, despite the impact of Covid19.

CCCU is proud that our Medway staff and students have provided significant contributions to the local, regional and national responses to Covid 19.

3.4 Drill Hall Library

The academic year 2020/21 brought challenges, within the context of the pandemic, for the Drill Hall Library team to maintain and deliver services and support to students. However, the circumstances also presented opportunities to support Medway students both on campus and virtually making use of the technology available to us, allowing the library to remain an integral part of the academic life of our students.

COVID

As it was the case in the previous academic year, Covid challenged our operations and the services and support that we offer. Providing clear guidance to our users in line with the Government messages at the time was a priority for the Drill Hall team focusing on clear communication about face masks, space and hygiene for users visiting the library.

From September to December 2020 the Library was open during the week (8am to 9 pm) and weekends (9am to 5pm) with a capacity of 190 study spaces. Mindful of the need to offer students remote support, the team developed a virtual tour of the Drill Hall as part of the new students' induction process that received 346 visits. The library also implemented an IT remote chat to offer the necessary support when students visited our facilities whilst ensuring social distancing was respected. The remote chat received 139 requests for IT support from students in the library and although originally it was only used for IT issues its now available for all DHL services.

From January 2021, during the third lockdown, the Drill Hall remained open with a slight reduction in hours: Monday to Friday: 9am to 7 pm and weekends: 9am to 5pm. Our offer of study spaces was reduced to 150 and the Group Zone was closed to ensure compliance with guidance on social distancing. From March 2021, once schools opened, the Drill Hall adjusted its opening hours and capacity back to our September offer.

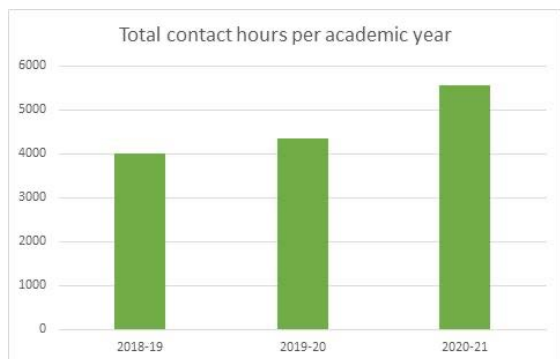
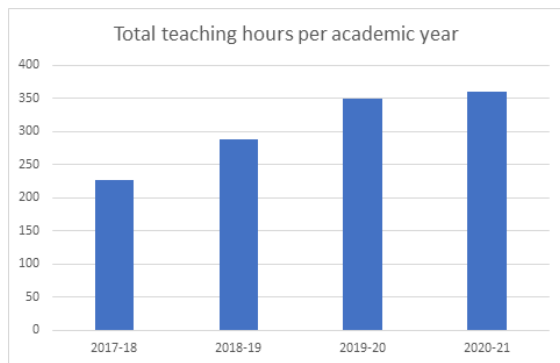
Students using the Drill Hall Library: Gate Stats

These are the gates stats per institutions from 1st Sept 2020 to 30th Aug 2021. The total number of student visits to the DHL library for the academic year 2020-21 is 44,680.

Greenwich	19,927
Kent	14,281
CCCU	10,472

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning numbers have continued to grow from previous year. The circumstances of the pandemic meant that the delivery of these activities were done online. During 2020-21, the Academic Support team at the DHL delivered 416 teaching sessions across courses from our three partner institutions. Both teaching hours and total contact hours increased this year through a mix of remote and in person sessions. At the end of each session students are asked to complete a survey on how useful they found it on a scale of 1-5. Feedback collected after sessions were delivered tell us that over 95% of students found the sessions very useful or useful.



Furniture and PCs

The final phase of the PC and Furniture projects were completed between June and July. 75 PCs for all the Group Study and Training rooms were replaced. Also, the furniture in the Silent and Quiet zones was replaced with furniture to encourage individual working or one to one working respectively. By installing screens we created separation between the users that has helped us to encourage user to keep social distancing. As part of this work additional desk power was deployed to 250 study spaces in the Library to allow students to charge their own devices.

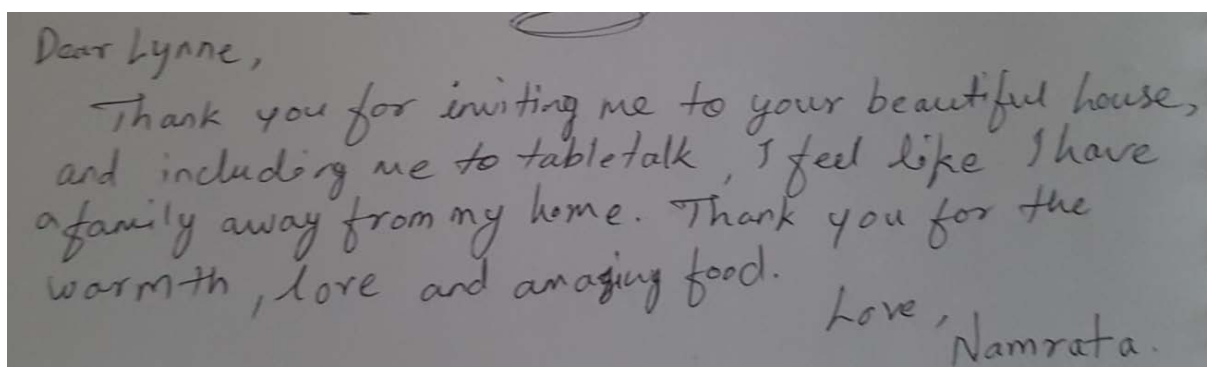
As part of the furniture project 830 metres of new bookshelves were installed to replace existing ones. These new shelves include shelves purchased but also shelves recycle from Stockwell Street Library (University of Greenwich). In addition, 120 metres of shelving in the Quiet and Silent Zones were moved to create more discrete areas for users to study individually. As part of the furniture upgrade, the DHL donated 207 chairs to Medway Public Libraries.

Training Room Upgrade

With teaching and learning activities increasing, the modernisation of training rooms DC107 and DC117 was set as a priority. The rooms have been reconfigured and upgrades to equipment took place, included replacing the aging projector with large LCD displays and replacing the old metal cabinet that housed the teaching equipment with an up-to-date lectern and new chairs. The rooms also have been fitted with new screens, webcams and PCs to facilitate both remote and onsite training sessions.

3.5 Medway Chaplaincy

- The Bargain Corner ran on a much lower key basis for the first three weeks of term.
- Our weekly TABLEtalk programme made a very successful transition to Zoom. Student feedback can be found on our blog: <https://medwaystudents.blogspot.com/2021/01/tabletalk-what-do-students-say.html>
- A weekly reflection was introduced via a YouTube channel entitled 'Take Ten with Lynne'. A total of 53 reflection videos have been produced throughout the year, with almost 1700 views. Here are links to the three most popular videos:
 - New Beginnings: <https://youtu.be/zREE48g-97k>
 - That Empty Chair: <https://youtu.be/UnkonP2OD80>
 - World Mental Health Day: https://youtu.be/Aao_o4oJvDw
- Throughout the autumn term we held a Photo Caption Competition for 10 weeks. The purpose of which was purely some light entertainment in the midst of challenging times. Each week's winner received a £10 Amazon voucher.
- As we couldn't hold an on campus Remembrance Day service (Nov 2020), we produced a video service, along with the help of a number of staff and students. See link: <https://youtu.be/2YeAdnSEsIE>
- During Sept 20 / Jan 21 Welcome Weeks, my colleague (Kirsten Wynn) and I presented a session on British Culture & Customs as part of GREFest.
- Chaplaincy partnered with the University of Kent for their Worldfest 2021. Ten of our international students produced videos for a Virtual World Tour. See link: <https://medwaystudents.blogspot.com/2021/03/worldfest2021-virtual-world-tour.html>
- As Chaplain I sit on the Medway Bursary Board with a rep from each university. This year we have had the privilege of awarding £80,000 to students in need. Much of this addressing digital poverty.
- Other Events:
 - Dec 20 - Xmas Concert – Kent alumni
 - Dec 31 - NY Eve Zoomathon (8pm-midnight) - 10 participants
 - March 23 - National Day of Remembering
 - May 29 - Garden Party - 13 participants (see comment below)
 - June 26 - Rochester Trip & Quiz Trail - 12 participants
 - July 10 - White Cliffs walk - 13 participants (see image)



May 29th 2021 – Garden Party



July 10th – White Cliffs walk

Pastoral Care

From Sept 2020 – Aug 2021 I have met with **77** students pastorally; amounting to **214** actual points of contact.

Greenwich	64	Kent	11	CCCU	2
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Under Grad	29	Masters	34	PhD	14
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Male	34	Female	43	X	0
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British	22	European	9	International	46
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Catholic/Christian	13	Muslim	7
Hindu	20	Buddhist	4
Jewish	0	None/Unknown	32

NOTE: High numbers of Greenwich students are reflective of the number of Indian MSc students who appear to need a lot of support.

3.6 GK Unions

1.0 Introduction

GKSU (Greenwich and Kent Students' Unions), is a partnership on the Medway campus between Greenwich Students' Union and Kent Union. It is now formally governed by the Greenwich Students' Union Board of Trustees, with oversight via the GKSU Strategy Board and Operations Committee, which include representation from both Home Unions and institutions, as well as current students.

GKSU is run by students for students to ensure that they have a voice, fulfil their potential and get the most from their University experience at Medway. GKSU services include:

- Activities – sports clubs, volunteering, societies and a varied Give It A Go and Team Medway Social programmes
- Representation – enhancing the visibility and impact of student voice in Medway through an Academic Rep programme and Medway Student Forums
- Advice Centre – confidential, impartial advice on issues including housing, finance and academic
- The Deep End – the bar and catering facility, offering our very own branded 'Campus Coffee', food, drink, a range of live events and the biggest screen on Campus for live sport.

1.1 GKSU Partnership Review and Medway Transfer Project

Following a consultation in 2020 with stakeholders at Medway and alongside the changing student population at Medway, the decision was made to transfer managing partners for Medway students' union services from Kent Union to Greenwich Students' Union (GSU). As the new managing partners. It was also agreed to create a new partnership agreement between Kent Union (KU), Greenwich Students' Union and Christ Church Students' Union (CCSU) to ensure all students can access a great service regardless of their university, and that the services are inclusive of all students. Students will be able to access the same range of opportunities and services they always have at the Medway campus. Operationally, these services will be led by the GSU team based at Medway on behalf of and/or in conjunction with the partner unions. Previously, GK Unions then GKSU was a brand of students' union services working closely with Kent Union and GSU. However, following feedback during the 2020 consultation, having a separate brand was confusing for the students. It was agreed to dissolve GKSU so the home unions have a clearer presence at the Medway campus. To support this, we have refocused communication to revolve around the physical location for SU services at Medway (The Hub) and encompass the partner union brands within the identity for the building. This has already been reflected in materials inside and out so students can easily see the home of their students' union on campus. Greenwich Students' Union as of June 2021, now

employ all Medway based union staff and have legal and financial responsibility for the services offered.

2.0 Student Activities

2.1 Sport Clubs (Team Medway):

Though the first term started well with many students returning to campus, staff collaborated with sports club leaders, the Universities to operate sports clubs safely and in line with covid regulations. Clubs successfully held trials and began training, due to the November lockdown, sports club training ceased. Regrettably, the plan for competitive sport in the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) league was unable to occur due to the pandemic. Though we had signed up a few dozen students to sports clubs, before activity ceased, the decision was made to refund all members in full. Clubs were offered the opportunity to run sessions in the Summer term as the restrictions relaxed but most felt that there wasn't the critical mass of students on campus to be able to hold sporting activity this late in the year.

2.2 Social Sport (Team Medway Social):

Team Medway Social is typically a free social sport programme available to every student and staff member on campus. Team Medway Social ran a programme of online exercise classes over term 1. Engagement with online events was considerably lower than when students were able to access events in person but students appreciated and attended these initially with 47 students attending sessions across term 1. Feedback from students, and which was reinforced by the level of uptake, was that students wanted to attend events in person and were experience 'Teams fatigue'. Once restrictions were lifted, in the summer term, small classes of pilates were able to take place and we launched a Steps Challenge which could be engaged with independently for the remaining students left on campus.

2.3 Give It A Go:

	2019-2020	2020-2021
GIAG - Unique Students	794	347
GIAG - All Attendees	1833	361

The Give It A Go programme adapted significantly last year to offer a variety of activities which students could take part in remotely including online quizzes and online escape room activity. Packs were carefully created which students could collect, engage with including reading packs, aromatherapy making kits and Christmas Cookie decorating kits these all received a really positive uptake and 'sold out'. For Easter, an easter egg hunt was put on for students

still on campus and as part of the Worldfest programme, packs which introduced students to different cuisine were distributed.

2.4 Societies

	2019-2020	2020-2021
Number of Societies	42	34
Number of Individuals	644	249
Total Society Memberships	822	347

Unsurprisingly, the impact on the pandemic affected student engagement with societies last year. There were less than 350 memberships, of which 249 are unique students across 34 student led societies. This has been attributed to societies finding it difficult to engage with potential members and offer sessions online and with restrictions in place. Staff conducted a Networking Night for all student groups and reps which focused on recruiting and engaging members online and allowed groups to share best practise. The introduction of a GKSU Discord channel enabled societies to host online events, predominantly gaming focused, through here and over 200 students signed up to the online community and which students fed back that helped their mental health and enabled them to interact with others. Although engagement has been lower online, many groups tried to find innovative ways to meet online. Medway Engineering Society implemented a Teams channel to organise a mentoring scheme between their members, Medway Gaming Society ran regular Wednesday gaming competitions via Discord, and Medway Amateur Dramatic Society have collaborated on a radio play. Several societies have run successful online webinars, such as Black Pharmacists Initiative's *How To Maximise your Time as Pharmacy Student* and Medway Islamic Society's *Black Muslim History: Forgotten Heroes* for Black History Month. Medway Islamic Society notably and impressively exceeded their annual Charity Week record and fundraised £6445.81 purely using online methods. Once restrictions were lifted in Term 3, both the Engineering Society hosted an end of year drone flying event and the LGBTQ Society organised an end of year 'Q Fest' party, which, though both were limited to 30 members, were a great success.

2.5 Volunteering and GKSU Awards

Due to the low levels of activity across clubs and societies, a decision was made, in conjunction with the student group leaders, to change the format of the Awards into a recognition video to highlight the great work of all groups, despite the pandemic, instead of

an annual awards ceremony with nomination, shortlisting and judging panel to decide upon the winners for various categories. The GKSU Recognition Video 2021 can be found here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_O-rkiLI8Y.

3.0 Student Representation and Student Voice

The recruitment of Academic Reps was successful and the number of students who put themselves forward increased from previous years. As with all student leader training for 2020-21, this was conducted via Google Classroom and a notable success was that over 70% of our student reps completed the recommended Academic Rep training to be able to carry out their role, which was increased from previous years which ran training in person twice a year.

	2019-2020	2020-2021
Kent Reps	58	63
Greenwich Reps	85	81
Total no. of Reps	143	144

3.2 Leadership Elections

The Leadership Elections were facilitated completely online (both campaigning and all voting) on the Medway Campus using a shared Medway Votes branding and the GKSU team worked closely with the Home Unions to ensure Medway students engaged with the democratic process.

Greenwich Students' Union Elections

After all candidate briefings, there was a total of 7 Medway based candidates this year out of a total candidate pool of 31 (compared with 4 out of 24 last year, which equated to 16.6%). There were 1896 voters in the Greenwich Students Union Election of which 590 students were from Medway Campus which was a 56.9% increase from last year.

Kent Union Elections

18 candidates ran for election last year of which three candidates studied or had previously studied at Medway (16.6% of the candidates were from the Medway Campus). For the Kent Union election, the election was reduced to one day of voting and the number of votes cast was 191 down from 232 the previous year. However, it is important to note that there were lower overall student numbers than the previous year, and due to the number of students who

chose to study remotely, and lack of physical canvassing on campus, it was expected that engagement with student democracy would be lower. Some positive news was that the first ever Medway based candidate was successfully elected onto the team of full time officers into the Vice President for Education role.

3.3 Networks and Medway Student Forum

To provide students with a platform to raise issues and have their voices heard, GKSU launched a range of student networks and the Medway Student Forums, of which one per term were held. During welcome, student network (BAME, Postgraduate, Commuter) events were put on to attract students and encourage peer to peer networking and support. Engagement was low with most, except postgraduate network who had a group of proactive students successfully run a Jackbox event in the Deep End in Term 1 and a Postgraduate Picnic with interactive games in Term 3. In order to implement a Medway Student Forum, student representatives (from student groups and academic reps) were targeted, though all students were invited to attend to put forward, prioritise and discuss issues that affected them. Key themes reoccurred throughout the year; the quality and disparity of online learning, tuition fee refunds / students not feeling like they were getting value for money, the declining mental health of students and students not feeling part of a University community repeatedly came up. Staff and officers worked hard to tailor GKSU services, address issues, implement communication and made significant changes that had a positive influence of students. The biggest wins were getting the wifi quality at Pier Quays improved, creating an online community through Discord, in which 200 students were able to interact and build an online community after collating this feedback

4.0 Advice Centre

The Medway Advice Service provides free, confidential and impartial advice to all University of Greenwich and University of Kent students studying at the Medway Campus.

Number of New Cases Opened	
2019-2020	2020-2021
988	790

Throughout last academic year, students were able to access the service remotely via a Contact Form and advice was provided via Teams, telephone, and email. The Advice Service opened 790 new cases and worked on a range of existing cases. Although there were a lower

number of new cases opened in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20, this was anticipated due to lower student numbers on campus. The advisors encountered much more complex and in-depth cases with the continued trend as in previous years, of the main advice surrounding finance and academic concerns.

The Advice Service was operated remotely to ensure that all students, including those studying off campus or shielding, still had sufficient access to the Advice Service. The Advice Service assisted a significant number of students especially those that were directly and indirectly impacted by covid-19. Some standout successes included:

- Helping students obtain Compelling Personal Reasons funding via Student Finance England enabling them to achieve £9,250 in a Tuition Fee Loan so they could continue on their course.
- Helping students understand their state benefits entitlements; one particular student achieved an increase of over £300 per month in their income.
- Maximizing Student Finance funding which helped one particular student achieve full funding (of over £20,000 each academic year) when they were incorrectly assessed as ineligible helping them remain on the course.
- Maximizing students' income via available university funding; one particular student received £4,500 of extra funding.
- Helping students understand and exercise their appeal rights; one student successfully was permitted to re-sit and not repeat the year, saving them over £10,000 in fees that would have been charged.
- Accompanying students to a variety of university panel meetings so that they were supported and advised through the procedures and knew their rights.
- Explaining students' housing rights and any covid-19 schemes available which helped one student successfully negotiate their rent to be reduced by 50%.

The academic year was one of the most challenging academic years the Advice Service has encountered due to covid-19 and a range of other changes that needed to be made to the service. Despite this, the advisors have delivered a strong set of outcomes for students and have been able to provide advice in a much more flexible manner. These experiences will help shape the service in 2021-22.

5.0 The Deep End

Due to 2020/21 COVID-19 impact which affected the uncertainty of overall student footfall on both the Medway campus and the halls of residences occupancy, the decision was made to keep the Deep End closed and staff on furlough to protect GKSU's financial position. Additionally, the space was offered and utilised by Medway Council's for their lateral flow testing facility for students and the local area, which was felt to be a better use of the space.