

## Health and Safety convenor report

This has been an exceptional year when Health and Safety issues, while always central to trade union work, have acquired a new prominence and become the focus of national and local debate.

During the ongoing pandemic, the three campus trade unions at Bath (UCU, Unison, and Unite) have worked together to engage with management as it implements, or not, various control measures. Starting with the first nationally imposed restrictions, in March 2020, the university has introduced new practices broadly in line with government advice. Union H&S representatives have tried to ensure that any changes to working are in line with the most cautious recommendations made by different public agencies (NHS, PHE, HSE, etc). By comparison with other universities, Bath has worked to reasonable standards and has not, for example, tried to bring students back on campus unnecessarily. Measures were introduced to facilitate extended working from home, including the supply of suitable equipment and some degree of workstation assessment.

The principal concern of the campus unions in future is how, or if, the university will manage the return of students in the new academic year. As yet, there has been no indication of what social distancing measures will be in place and how many students will be expected to return to campus. The knock-on effect of continuing control measures is that we may find that we are required to do both on-campus and on-line working, with a resulting effect on workload, which carries its own health risks.

For now, the uncertainty over government guidance, the intentions of sector management, and the progress of the pandemic mean that we cannot predict what w