**September**

Phew, it’s been a long, hectic and stressful summer! Academic colleagues are returning from their summer break asking if I have enjoyed mine! Ha, I wish! I have spent most of the summer addressing appeals, sorting issues like missing marks. If only we had more time to check things properly, it’s just all so rushed. Now I’m knee deep in resit assignments, again trying to get them logged as quickly as possible as we need the marks urgently, resit boards in a couple of weeks! The calendar is just way too tight this time of year, I wish it could be addressed. Oh well, induction and enrolment issues to assist with next and then I’ve got to make up new student files and archive old ones.....

**October**

Lots of students queuing at the office, most of them want letters to open bank accounts so that they can get their mitts on their pennies! Aside from that, lots of questions re induction base rooms, class timetables, council tax exemption, all information they have already had, however, most of them seem very confused and seem to be suffering from information overload. Perhaps we should look at the induction process? Is there anything we can do to make the start of year a little less daunting?

Got to make sure they are all enrolled, otherwise there will be no letters, either for bank accounts, home office or council tax exemption! Spent all afternoon phoning students who are meant to be here but haven’t turned up or enrolled, most of them have gone elsewhere but haven’t told us, why can’t people communicate? Does anyone follow up on any overseas students who don’t turn up ..... ?

**November**

Little bit of ‘down’ time now, as ‘down’ as it ever is! Need to start making sure I’ve got everything I need for this year, trying to persuade academics to give me their exam papers and assignments. I’ve just realised that one tutor issued his the first week of term but I haven’t had it and now resit students will get it late. I have to give them the same time to do it, so it could mean the main cohort may not get their feedback within the appropriate time. It’s not like I am asking for anything extra is it? When the brief is compiled just send me a copy, is it really that awkward? Some tutors have only got to write assessments for one or two units, but I’ve got to send all assessments out for my subject group! Graduation week now too, bit odd as I have lots of students here wondering where their classes are, I haven’t been told of any cancellations, reading weeks don’t exist anymore, well not as far as I am aware .....

**December**

Phew, roll on Christmas. Need a break. But, before I can go off and relax, I must make sure all the end of period 1 assessments are sorted. Got some exam papers in, but not all. I would really rather not have to send them out or email them to externals this close to the xmas hols, it tends to be when they get forgotten or lost .....

**January**

Well that break went quickly! I’m setting dates for end of period 1 unit assessment boards. Mind you, if I don’t get all my Period 1 exam papers typed, checked and moderated as soon as I get back after the New Year, there will be no marks to take to the board!

New timetables for some students for Period 2. Not sure if they have been told but there are a lot of confused faces and calls re classes not being where they think should be!

**February**

It’s all about the unit boards this month, seems weird having exam boards at this time of year, but it does ease the pressure getting these out of the way now! I do sometimes think though, that not everyone is aware that these boards are ‘official’ and the results are confirmed as final. Perhaps we need to redeliver that message?

Quite a few students starting to come to the office now, questions re EC, late submission, defers/refers, they do get confused! I have to make sure I answer every question as fully and informatively as I can, making sure the student understands. It’s all to easy to refer them somewhere else, ‘look on the portal, check your handbook’ etc, but, at the end of the day, maybe all they want to do is chat it through with someone, not such a bad thing is it? Good job too because they are saying they have been told things which simply aren’t true! These procedures are all too familiar to us, but not always that clear, to anyone!

**March**

Dealing with queries re results from last month’s UABs, trying to explain to students that they need to do these resits in the summer, not now! The sooner this gets sorted the better, we can have in unit resits but need to address the operational issues first. Must speak to someone about this urgently, I’m not sure anyone has given it much thought!

Exam papers coming in thick and fast now, but I’ve got a drawer full of them waiting to be checking and its proving difficult getting tutors to come and check them! They have to go to the external examiner as well and time is cracking on. This is why I need papers in earlier in the year, to avoid this backlog which is fast becoming my problem! I wonder if we can change this process somehow, what would help? I think there is an assumption that the typed papers doesn’t need to be checked, which I agree with to a certain extent, that said, the content of many papers are actually changed at this stage. Maybe we should just send the paper straight to the external, and then get it checked but would that be a favourable move? Maybe I will suggest it.........

**April**

Exam papers still a priority, getting there slowly I think. Still getting grief from the assessments officer as she is now under pressure with a backlog of papers to print! Lots of training too this month, Quercus team want to let us know of the system changes for exam board admin ..........

**May**

All systems go now! The really busy time starts here! Exams on at the moment, and I am actually getting some marks in. I have been chasing some unit leaders for marks for assessments that were completed in March, but still haven’t got them yet. It would help me so much if I could have things as they are ready, rather than in one big lump at the end of the year. It would also mean that the marks could be checked and signed off now, also saving the tutors a backlog.

**June**

Still all systems go! Just marks, marks and more marks, well, or not in some cases! I do have sympathy with tutors, some of them have way too much marking to do, but it always seems to be the biggest units where the assessments are set last or have an exam. There maybe an academic reason for this, but I can’t help thinking it would be easier with an earlier hand in date or no exam?

Oh great, some of the external examiners are now saying they can’t make the date of the board, 4 months after they agreed to, as they are needed at their University for their own boards. Strange this, seeing as some of our unit leaders have now said they can’t make our boards as they are externals elsewhere! I wonder what should be priority?! Is there a protocol? Anyway, rebooking of room, resending of agenda and reordering of refreshments required!

I could do without it to be honest ............

**July**

Unit boards done, award boards now, although I have spent most of this week doing Chairs Actions amending unit board decisions! These marks have been signed off so it’s a tad irritating, but necessary if the award boards are to make an accurate decision. It’s a shame we don’t have more time to help unit leaders check non submissions and absences from tests and exams, but, like with the exam papers, we can’t check every single unit we have responsibility for, there are simply too many!

Results out soon, students already getting confused as to what they need to do, I really don’t know how we can make the instructions any clearer! Spend most of the week talking students through how to download resit work and when they need to do it by. Still, at least they are checking, it’s the ones who aren’t bothering that worry me ......

**August**

Time to squeeze in some leave, no more than 2 weeks though as we all have to take our leave this month unfortunately! Leaves us somewhat thin on the ground but we need to make sure we are covered. Best make the most of it, doubt I will get much more until Christmas. Phones ringing off the hook with student queries re resit work. Spending most of my time researching background info for appeals, they are coming thick and fast, seems they are from most of the students who didn’t understand the assessment process, have been misinformed or didn’t check!

Still haven’t had some resit briefs in from tutors. I understand that they think if no one failed they don’t need to do one, but, problem is, when a student appeal provides proof of submission or attendance and a mark is found but is a fail, then we have no work to send them. We really need to persuade academic colleagues how important this is. If we don’t use it we can save it for next year and they can tick it off next years to do list! Result!