

Academic Standards and Education Committee (ASEC)

29 January 2020, 14:00 to 17:00

The Board Room

Attendees

Board members

Prof. Tim McIntyre-Bhatty (Chair and Deputy Vice-Chancellor),
Prof. Michael Silk (Deputy Chair and Deputy Dean - Research and Professional Practice (FM)),
Adam Child (Secretary and Head of Academic Quality (Academic Services)), Mandi Barron (Director of Student Services (SS)),
Justin Cole (Director of Marketing and Communications), Lenrick Greaves (Vice-President (Education), Students' Union (SUBU)),
Georgia Hill (Faculty Representative, Faculty of Management), Samantha Leahy-Harland (Chief Executive, Students' Union (SUBU)),
Kelly Lovelock (Faculty Representative, Faculty of Health and Social Sciences), Jacky Mack (Academic Registrar (Academic Services)),
Prof. Kevin McGhee (Deputy Dean (FST)), Dr John Oliver (Interim Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (FM)),
Diana Pelino (Faculty Representative, Faculty of Media and Communication),
Dr Gelareh Roushan (Head of Fusion Learning, Innovation and Excellence (FLIE)), Prof. Julie Turner-Cobb (Member of the Professoriate),
Henry Turner Ward (Faculty Representative, Faculty of Science and Technology),
Dr Christa van Raalte (Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (FMC)),
Dr Sara White (Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (FHSS))

Observers

Jules Forrest (Academic Quality Manager (Academic Services)), Dr Corrina Osborne (Head of Academic Operations),
Judy Smith (Clerk and Academic Quality Officer (Academic Services))

Apologies

Dr Lois Farquharson (Executive Dean (FM)), Prof. Christopher Hartwell (Member of the Professoriate), Prof. Kerstin Stutterheim (Member of Senate)

Meeting minutes

1. Apologies

Information

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Declarations of Interest

Information

No declarations of interest were recorded.

.Chair

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

3.1. Accuracy ASEC 16 October 2019

Decision

The Minutes of the meeting were approved as an accurate record.

.Chair

 ASEC Minutes 16.10.2019.pdf

3.2. Accuracy e-ASEC 2 - 6 December 2020

Decision

The Minutes of the e-meeting were approved as an accurate record.

.Chair

 e-ASEC Minutes 02.12.2019.pdf

3.3. Matters Arising/Actions Log

Discussion

18/068 - The Secretary confirmed that further user testing was taking place on individual ARPPs being reviewed for the next republication cycle. The suggestion was to retain this action on the actions log until May, as that was the final opportunity for ASEC consideration for ARPPs undergoing major changes for 2020/21 implementation. At that point the action could be closed.

.Adam Child

 ASEC Actions Log 2019-20.pdf

4. Ratification of Chair's Actions

.Adam Child

4.1. Chair's Action – IMechE: MSc and MEng review by correspondence

.Adam Child

The Secretary summarised the Chair's Action, which was to support the re-accreditation process for the MSc and MEng Engineering programmes by IMechE. The PSRB had a date for its own Academic Standards Committee meeting which BU had to meet. Review work still needed to be completed in time for the meeting and a 'review by correspondence' had been proposed to enable the full range of PSRB recommendations to be implemented. The Chair confirmed that initial queries he had raised had been resolved ahead of approving the Chair's action.

The Chair's Action was **ratified**.

 Chair's Action - IMechE review by correspondence.pdf

5. For Discussion

5.1. Student Population Statistics

Discussion

.Dr Liam Sheridan

In introducing the report, the PRIME Manager highlighted a number of findings within the data including a slight increase in first year non-continuation which was predictive of the expected completion rates for students entering in 2018/19. The proportion of Firsts and 2.i was stable at around 80% with a greater proportion of Firsts in the latest year of data.

Postgraduate Taught completion rates were above 90% and it was noted that reasons for withdrawals were usually non-academic. There had been a slight reduction in the proportion of Master's students achieving Merits or above. For Postgraduate Research the four year completion rate had reduced slightly, albeit with small numbers in each year.

The student representative from Faculty of Management reported that 22 students on SimOn had said that staff were unhelpful, unengaging and unapproachable and felt that this could have had an impact on continuation rates. The Faculty Deputy Dean Research and Professional Practice indicated that further discussion with the student representative to explore this issue would be valuable.

Action A: MS/JO

When considering the data provided outlining differences between BAME and non-BAME students the SUBU Vice-President (Education) suggested there were likely differences between the categories included within the BAME data and requested that information on different student groups be circulated. The PRIME Manager noted that these data would soon be available in Qlikview.

Action B: LS

In discussing the steps to be taken to resolve gaps in continuation and attainment it was noted that AEIC had funded a 'Retention and Achievement' project providing proactive advice to students who had failed assessments or were on the cusp of achieving a higher degree classification. The project was being piloted with specific programmes but it was noted that reasons for non-continuation were not exclusively academic and included financial concerns and caring responsibilities. Reasons for leaving were self-reported by the student if they chose to leave the University.

It was noted that students who were repeating or carrying credit were included in the statistics as continuing students. The report did not outline the overall impact of carrying credit on continuation and completion rates as this was not yet known. However there was some anecdotal evidence at Faculty level that carrying credit supported continuation for students who would otherwise be demotivated to attend for a year to undertake a single unit.

The Chair asked if there was value in considering the intersectionality of parts of the report, for example between 4.7 and 4.9 showing BAME and Low Participation Neighbourhood (LPN) degree outcomes. There were relatively small numbers of BME and LPN students but this could be explored as well as reviewing disability type, noting a key difference between ALS and disability. The Academic Registrar confirmed that a review of inter-sectional data had been conducted to inform the Access and Participation Plan and AEIC was developing a project based on an initiative from University College London which would include curriculum and employability strands. Details were to be included as part of an update to ULT in February.

The Committee reflected on the efforts made to support students who would not otherwise have entered higher education. It was important to recognise the achievements of these students regardless of degree outcome and capture the impact of steps taken by academic staff to enable their success. A key area of development was supporting students holding BTECs on entry. While BTECs were changing to reflect the demand of higher education, BU needed to look at providing further support. An earlier piece of work undertaken by the AEIC Operations Group was to be reviewed at AEIC to establish what actions could be taken to improve support for BTEC students.

Action C: JM

Differences between Faculty proportions of 'good honours' were noted. Increases in the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences were believed to be through the greater use of pass/fail assessments for practice elements over time in order to ensure fairness for students. Media and Communications highlighted an increased emphasis on skills development within the curriculum and an increased variety of assessment tasks.

The Academic Registrar queried if high non-continuation rates were being picked up through AMER at departmental level. It was noted that Creative Technology had responded to its low continuation rates and expected the 2019/20 data to show an improvement.

The Committee asked if the detail on four year Doctoral completion rates could be provided for each Faculty. Due to the start dates for these students, the data was available under the previous academic schools structure.

Action D: LS

The PRIME Manager explained that the data captured by HESA to calculate continuation and completion did not include students who had left BU before 1st December. When considering a broader definition to include students who became live in SITS, the completion rate is lower at 74%.

In concluding the discussion the Chair noted that similar areas for consideration had emerged from previous years of data and it was imperative that the University used existing processes and fora to respond appropriately to areas where improvements were required.

 Student Population Statistics.pdf

5.2. Update: Degree Outcomes Statement

The Head of Academic Quality summarised the paper, which set the background and context for the development of the Degree Outcomes Statement following wider sector discussions, as well as showing the University's current position within the OfS's data. The OfS had indicated concerns with sector grade inflation. Degree Outcomes Statements were an opportunity to explain trends in institutional data over a five year period. The draft statement was to be presented to the Committee at the meeting in March ahead of a final approval route outlined in the covering paper.

The Committee discussed the the potential appointment of a Chief External Examiner or similar role to inform the development of the Degree Outcomes Statement. The consensus was that these roles would not necessarily add value over and above other forms of external scrutiny unless the role and remit was very distinct and clear. There were no data available which gave a view on how common these roles were within the sector. It was noted that many members of the University community has experience of regulations elsewhere and information on the details of other institutions was readily available for comparative purposes.

The Committee **agreed** with the proposed process to move forward the development of the Degree Outcomes Statement.

To further inform the statement, the Chair asked that any feedback on the key messages for inclusion be submitted to the Secretary.

Action: All

 Update - Degree Outcomes Statement.pdf

Discussion

.Adam Child

5.3. Annual Report: Dignity, Diversity and Equality Steering Group

Discussion

.Dr James Palfreman-Kay

The Equality and Diversity Adviser provided an overview of 2018/19 activity which focussed particularly on education and the student experience. Work had been aligned to the BU2025 values and covered protected characteristics including disability, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion. Notable achievements included the expansion of the Islamic Prayer room, good engagement with events funded by the Office for Students and SUBU's development of a survey to explore diversity in the curriculum. There was still more work to do to consider the outcomes and findings from the programme of work, particularly the practical elements that support diversity. For example there were broader questions around the capacity of some services, such as the nursery, the emergence of new areas such as veganism and the increasing numbers of students with caring responsibilities.

A key area had been mental health, with a conference showcasing work which was being done in support of staff and students. There was continued growth of students with mental health issues. The information obtained from SITS showed this, but it was also noted that there could be multiple health issues and also learning difficulties. Self-reporting students were not always diagnosed by a health professional. It was also noted that some students did not want to disclose conditions and it was important to create an environment in which students felt comfortable doing so.

The SUBU Vice President (Education) explained that the mental health of black male students was a particular concern, with associated taboos regarding discussing issues with peers and professionals. Student Services encourage men to access support services where needed and the increased number of male staff could potentially help. The Director of Student Services was keen to work with SUBU on this issue and to share summary data on access to wellbeing services.

Action: MB

The Committee discussed the best means to communicate the range of events and services to students and noted the importance of encouraging a wide network of student support. A comment was made that students were sometimes bombarded by initiatives and that we needed to be coherent about how these functions were packaged. It was suggested that activity be phased to ensure each had the maximum impact and with reference to the academic year's cycle, for example 'wobble week' and the induction period. Longer more sustained activity periods might increase engagement if timed appropriately.

 Annual Report Dignity, Diversity and Equality Steering Group.pdf

6. For approval/endorsement

6.1. Approval of Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures relating to Admissions, Academic Appeals and Complaints

Decision

.Adam Child

In introducing the proposals the Head of Academic Quality explained that ARPP owners are able to make changes to their policy and procedure documents in line with the Senate Scheme of Delegation and ARPP 1C. There was a degree of interpretation in determining whether individual changes are categorised as major, which require committee approval, and minor which do not. A series of changes had been made to the ARPPs relating to admissions in order to make them clearer and more usable for staff and students. Having reviewed these changes in detail, some were latterly categorised as major and so required committee oversight and approval. These were presented systematically in the appendices to the paper with details of the main changes flagged.

A review of initial committee approvals also showed a gap in the records for approval for the ARPPs relating to academic appeals and student complaints, with records available to 2006/07. To remedy this the ARPPs were presented for reapproval. However it was noted that recent changes to these ARPPs had not been categorised as major.

It was also noted that the process review conducted and referenced in paragraph 2.15 was to ensure retrospective approval was not necessary again in future.

The ARPPs presented were **recommended** for submission to Senate for approval.

 Approval of ARPPs.pdf

6.2. Outcomes of pilot partner review and approval of revised 7C – Partner Review: Policy and Procedure

Decision
Wing Chow

It was confirmed that the Committee was being asked to approve the outcome of the Partner Review for Bournemouth and Poole College as well as consider the revised version of 7C Partner Review for recommendation to Senate.

There were no comments on the outcomes of the pilot partner review. The partnership with Bournemouth and Poole College was therefore **approved** for a period of four years until the end of 2021/22 to allow alignment of the next review with the renewal of the franchise and validation contracts.

With reference to the proposed policy section 5.5, which outlined who would produce the initial review report, it was noted that this placed a high level of expectation on Academic Quality and the QAEG member conducting the first stage of the review, particularly as this could lead to a recommendation to close the partnership. It was unlikely that BU would opt to close a partnership without a form of review event. It was suggested that points (ii) and (iii) under 5.5 be merged to confirm that a partner event would be needed to facilitate closure of a partnership. However it was noted that under 6.1 of the policy that it was possible to conduct an event by correspondence if that was a more appropriate option.

Action: WC

The pilot method had demonstrated that a variety of staff were involved in reaching the decision to recommend reapproval of the partnership. Through the pilot exercise, issues were identified which could be resolved as detailed in the action plan. In the event that a partner review event was to be held this was to be chaired by an academic member of ASEC. There were no objections to the proposal as it drew on experience among ASEC members regarding its remit for the oversight of partnerships.

The revised ARPP 7C - Partner Review: Policy was **recommended** to Senate for approval, subject to the amendments noted above.

 Revisions to ARPP 7C - Partner Review Policy.pdf

6.3. Focussed Enhancement Review 2019-20

Decision
Adam Child

The Head of Academic Quality explained that the The Access, Excellence and Impact Committee (AEIC) had discussed at its meeting in December where BU might utilise the Focussed Enhancement Review process in 2019/20. AEIC had prioritised two areas: identifying good practice in relation to TEF criteria and BAME progression and success. The Committee agreed with the recommendations but in particular highlighted the importance of BAME success and progression. It was noted that TEF was delayed until 2021, although the FER could still be used ahead of time to prepare evidence of positive impact for students.

In addition, AEIC also considered progression into the second year a key area that would benefit from further review via a FER. ASEC requested that this be taken forward at the earliest opportunity.

The Deputy Chair noted that the FER policy and procedure was cast in a way that was less directly applicable when conducting a review with an institutional theme. It was suggested that be reviewed as part of the next major revision of the 9C ARPP.

The proposed Focussed Enhancement Reviews were **approved**.

 Focussed Enhancement Review 2019-20.pdf

6.4. Programme Development Proposals

6.4.1. Confirmation of FdSc Nursing Associate non-Degree Apprenticeship route in FHSS

Decision
Dr Sara White

The Nursing Associate apprenticeship had been validated with Bournemouth & Poole College in 2018 and the proposal was to allow a non-apprenticeship route for the same programme. A query was raised as to whether sufficient placements were available to support any additional students. The DDEPP for FHSS responded that numbers for the non-apprenticeship route would likely be small. Negotiations with contract partners were taking place and it was hoped to increase placements by 12 - 15%. It was essential to plan for that level of increase even though not all the places might be required.

The proposal was **approved**.

 Confirmation of FdSc Nursing Associate non-Degree Apprenticeship route.pdf

6.4.2. Grad Certificate / PG Certificate Critical Care in FHSS

Decision
Dr Sara White

In introducing the proposal the DDEPP for FHSS noted that the Faculty had been running critical care programmes as part of its CPD framework for some time, which had been revalidated in line with the new national standards. However there was a need to define new award titles of at least 60 credits within the CPD framework as clarified in 1.4 of the proposal.

It was confirmed that the award could be at Level 6 or Level 7 based on the applicant's previous qualifications and experience. However the assessments within the units would differ based on the academic level.

The proposal was **approved**.

 Programme Development Proposal - FHSS GradCert PGCert Critical Care.pdf

6.4.3. MSc Social Care Research in FHSS

Decision
Dr Sara White

The proposal was introduced as a response to the investment being made by NIHR into building research capacity. The new programme title enabled students with an interest in Social Care research to join the programme, alongside those undertaking the equivalent Health Research Masters. The Health Research programme had recently been renamed to better represent the programme content. Practice partners would then have the option of both programmes.

The MSc Health Research and MSc Social Care Research were to run with the same unit content with further specialisation through the dissertation.

The proposal was **not approved**.

 Programme Development Proposal - FHSS MSc Social Care Research.pdf

6.4.4. MSc Artificial Intelligence for Media (AIM) in FMC

Decision
Dr Richard Southern

The timescale for the development of the Master's programme was driven by an OfS funding proposal for £300k which had been submitted on 10 January 2020. The programme was therefore being submitted for approval before OfS funding was confirmed. If the funding was not approved, recruitment would be delayed for a year until 2021.

The target audience would be media professionals who had not previously had experience of artificial intelligence. The aim was to provide students with tools to apply within their professional context. Typical students would be animation or script writing graduates or any other kind of media professionals, including BU graduates from those disciplines. Although there were other courses in the area across the UK, BU was differentiating on the basis of the conversion of experienced media professionals rather than graduates from computer science backgrounds.

The title was considered to be appropriate and had been discussed with potential partners including the BBC which had signalled an interest in the new programme.

The proposal was **approved**.

 Programme Development Proposal - FMC MSc Artificial Intelligence for Media.pdf

6.4.5. BA (Hons) Photography in FMC

Decision
Dr Ashley Woodfall

In discussing the proposed new title in Photography the Committee queried the relationship with existing provision at Wiltshire. The Faculty had been in dialogue with Wiltshire College, who are in the process of re-validating their media courses. Wiltshire's photography programme had a different emphasis to that anticipated at BU and the College was likely to create a different award title to reflect this, such as 'Professional Photography'.

It was confirmed that this course was also distinctive from courses offered at Arts University Bournemouth through the emphasis on media production and elements of the underpinning pedagogy. It was noted that there had been similar concerns when Film was introduced but it had proven possible for both institutions to attract students.

The proposal was **approved**.

 Programme Development Proposal - FMC BA Photography.pdf

6.4.6. BA (Hons) Immersive Media in FMC

Decision
Karl Rawstrone

The Committee noted the proposal and discussed the market research which showed very little data that helped predict course viability. The Faculty felt Immersive Media was a growth area and expected around 25 students as optional units on other FMC programmes had indicated popularity. The new programme would refresh the Faculty's portfolio and there were no comparative courses on offer, meaning it was an opportunity for some growth in overall numbers. The programme also supported the Faculty's aspiration to offer more choice within its portfolio through optional units.

The proposal was **approved**.

 Programme Development Proposal - FMC BA Immersive Media.pdf

6.4.7. DProf Creative and Media Practice in FMC

Decision
Dr Christa Van Raalte

In discussing the proposal the Committee explored the differences between the DProf and the existing EdD. The Faculty explained that the DProf intended to offer a route to doctoral qualification for industry contacts with a professional background to support professionalism of practice and those who wished to enter academia. The EdD was primarily for students with an interest in educational research.

There was an anticipated demand for the programme overseas although it was not clear how easily the programme would recruit given its residential element. There were concerns around the potential cohort size and resource intensiveness of delivery for a potentially minimal return. Further work would be needed to establish the viability of the market.

The proposal was **not approved**.

 Programme Development Proposal - FMC DProf Creative and Media Practice.pdf

6.4.8. LLM in International Law in FMC

Decision
Dr Marc Mimler

In discussing the proposal it was noted that the likely uptake was low with greater demand seen in the market for general law programmes. The programme was aimed at an overseas market and growth was anticipated with 10 - 15 students expected initially. The title had been chosen to reflect the bringing together of units with an international element meaning it was not a qualifying law degree.

The programme was built on the expertise of existing staff. The risk around demand was low as the programme offered core units as well as units from other programmes. There was one new unit which would provide students with more choice. However this meant the programme was not sufficiently differentiated from other law programmes to be progressed in its current form.

The proposal was **not approved**.

 Programme Development Proposal - FMC LLM International Law.pdf

6.4.9. BA (Hons) Multimedia Sports Journalism in FMC

Decision
Dr Shelley Thompson

In discussing the proposal it was queried whether the unique journalism content of the programme was too limited. It was noted that the whole first year would be shared with one third being sport and the rest being journalism content delivered collaboratively through the sport elements of the programme.

It was confirmed that at least one third of the programme would contain differential content related to the programme title. Collaboration with AFC Bournemouth was being planned to ensure the practical content of the course would be covered.

The proposal was **approved**.

 Programme Development Proposal - FMC BA Multimedia Sports Journalism.pdf

6.5. Deferral Request: Legal Practice Certificate (LPC)

Decision
Dr Katharine Cox

The deferral request was **approved**.

 Deferral Request - Legal Practice Certificate (LPC).pdf

7. For note

7.1. Partnerships Activity Report 2018/19

Information
Adam Child

The report was **noted**.

7.2. Pearson Institutional Review Report 2018/19

The report was **noted**.

8. Any Other Business

The student representatives requested that Faculty representatives be invited to attend FASEC meetings.

Action: DDEPPs

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

9.1. Wednesday, 18 March 2020, 14:00 - 17:00, Boardroom

