

Academic Standards and Education Committee (ASEC)

18 March 2020, 14:00 to 17:00

Converted to e-Meeting due to Covid-19

Attendees

Board members

Prof. T McIntyre-Bhatty (Chair and Deputy Vice-Chancellor),

Prof. Michael Silk (Deputy Chair and Deputy Dean - Research and Professional Practice (FM)),

Jules Forrest (Secretary and Head of Academic Quality (Academic Services)), Mandi Barron (Director of Student Services (SS)),

Lenrick Greaves (Vice-President (Education), Students' Union (SUBU)), Prof. Christopher Hartwell (Member of the Professoriate),

Georgia Hill (Faculty Representative, Faculty of Management), Samantha Leahy-Harland (Chief Executive, Students' Union (SUBU)),

Dr John Oliver (Interim Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (FM)),

Diana Pelino (Faculty Representative, Faculty of Media and Communication), Prof. Julie Turner-Cobb (Member of the Professoriate),

Dr Christa van Raalte (Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (FMC)),

Dr Sara White (Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (FHSS))

Observers

Judy Smith (Clerk and Academic Quality Officer (Academic Services))

Apologies

Dr Carol Clark (Member of Senate), Prof. Kerstin Stutterheim (Member of Senate)

Meeting minutes

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

Information

Clerk

2. Declarations of Interest

None recorded due to the meeting being conducted as an e-meeting.

Prof. T McIntyre-Bhatty

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

3.1. Accuracy ASEC 29 January 2020

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

 3.1 ASEC Minutes 29.01.2020 (Unconfirmed) - For approval.pdf

Decision

Prof. T McIntyre-Bhatty

3.2. Accuracy e-ASEC 24-28 February 2020

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

 3.2 e-ASEC Minutes 24-28.02.2020 (Unconfirmed) - For approval.pdf

Decision

Prof. T McIntyre-Bhatty

3.3. Matters Arising/Actions Log

18/068 - The ARPP project has been refocussed to implement changes necessary to secure the processes for approval, updating and recording of ARPP documents; these have been rolled out for the 2019/20 round of updates. Further development of the templates will be progressed during the 2020/21 ARPP update cycle and submitted to ASEC for consideration where appropriate.

5.1 A - The FM DDEPP met with FM student rep to discuss concerns. The subject was also raised and considered at Faculty Executive Team, and FASEC. DDEPP to monitor going forward. The action is closed.

5.1 C - On 4 March 2020 the AEIC re-considered the recommendations on support for BTEC students which were outlined in a paper from the AEIC Operations Group in January 2019. It was acknowledged that these recommendations and other activity to support BTEC students impact strongly on APP targets. They are therefore to be included in the collation of activity to address APP targets currently being completed by faculties and professional services. The collated activity will be reported to the April meeting of the AEIC for consideration and review.

5.3 - MB has sent LG info about students accessing Student Wellbeing support however no suggestions on how to improve engagement have been forthcoming.

8 - FHSS confirmed that two senior representatives were invited to the March FASEC meeting. FMC confirmed that all four Department representatives had been invited to attend future FASEC meetings.

Actions not mentioned above are still in progress and can be viewed on the Actions Log.

 3.3 ASEC Actions Log 2019-20.pdf

4. For Discussion

4.1. Student Services Annual Report

Discussion

Mandi Barron

It was noted that plans to apply for University of Sanctuary status were positive. It was also noted that it would be useful if BU was able to develop scholarships, e.g. as at the University of Leicester and especially at PhD level, where there could be scope to enhance the number of SSH studentships being awarded.

The integration of international students an early stage during Induction/Arrivals week and the numbers of students engaging in sports related activities were also noted as positive developments.

It was suggested that there should be a focus on the wellbeing support offered by BU, with minority groups such as LGBTQ+ or BAME students, noting that a consideration of data intersections between groups of students in response to student wellbeing was widely promoted in recent policy and research.

The report was **noted**.

 4.1 Student Services Annual Report 2019-20 - For discussion.pdf

4.2. Discussion of potential amendments to ARPP 6H – Academic Offences Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards

Discussion
Jules Forrest

Members noted that this was an important discussion and that the proposed changes would be beneficial, particularly in terms of the clarification around what was and was not defined as 'academic judgement'. The changes would make the outcomes of the process more transparent to students and a rationale for reaching a penalty would be required to be shared with students.

It was noted that Paragraph 30 of the OIA feedback to BU referenced in the paper made an explicit suggestion that the University aligns policy approaches more closely with the Good Practice Framework (GPF). While it was acknowledged that allowing appeals against matters of academic judgement are currently the subject of live debate, in the sector it was suggested that the risks of not aligning could be damaging from a reputational point of view.

A query was raised as to how many other UK institutions were aligned to the framework. The Secretary responded that membership of the OIA scheme was a condition of registration and that some limited sector research indicated that only a few institutions had adopted the approach to academic misconduct in the GPF.

The GPF and the Academic Quality paper were not intended to suggest that academic judgement should not play a role in deciding whether a student had committed an academic offence. The OIA GPF specifically refers to matters of 'academic judgement' vs 'matters of fact', and states that 'identifying suspected academic misconduct and making decisions on disciplinary cases will often, but not always, involve academic judgement.' It goes on to state that 'decisions on the penalty to be applied will not normally involve academic judgement.'

A query was raised around the matter of intent and whether it was necessary to determine whether a student meant to cheat, or whether it was sufficient simply to determine whether they did or did not cheat. The Secretary responded that the question of intent may be a matter of debate, but that the BU policy recognises intent as a defining element of an academic offence: "The definition of an academic offence... assumes dishonest intent. A distinction should be drawn between such dishonest intent and a lack of competence on the part of a student" - ARPP 6H section 6.1.2.

There was a discussion around whether BU should publish two versions of the ARPP, a student friendly one and a more 'legalistic' one with the detail; or a more diagrammatic representation for students. The Chair asked the Academic Quality Team to consider how to ensure that material in the ARPPs was able to be communicated effectively to students through various channels.

The paper was **noted**.

Action: Academic Quality to consider how to ensure that material in the ARPPs is able to be communicated effectively to students through various channels.

 4.2 Potential amendments to ARPP 6H - Academic Offences - For discussion.pdf

5. For Approval/Endorsement

5.1. Draft Degree Outcomes Statement

Decision
Adam Child

The SUVP (Education) commented that the BME attainment gap of 13% was still significant, although it had closed, but noted that efforts to reduce this were reassuring and consistent.

The paper was **endorsed** by the committee.

 5.1 Draft Degree Outcomes Statement - For approval.pdf

5.2. Annual Report: Appeals and Complaints - 2019

Decision
Jules Forrest/Adam Child

In response to a query regarding how the number of complaints at BU compared to the sector, the Secretary noted that this data set was not made public, but that participation in the OIA contextual data pilot (due to take place in 2019/20) may provide access to a partial data set which would assist in providing context.

It was noted that a value within the report had been rounded from 9.6% to 10%, and a request was made that this be addressed within the report.

The report was **recommended for referral** to the Board.

ACTION: Academic Quality to review the comment regarding rounding of 9.6% to 10%.

 5.2 Appeals and Complaints Annual Report 2019 - For approval.pdf

5.3. Approval of revised ARPP 5B – Student Engagement and Feedback: Policy and Procedure

Decision
Prof. Michael Silk

There was a discussion around whether the service standard for responding to student feedback gathered via student forums should be 48 or 72 hours.

The Chair confirmed that a response to student cohorts to note action taken, or action to be taken, should be made at the earliest opportunity and hence within 48 hours, or 2 working days.

The paper was **approved** by the committee.

5.4. Approval of amendments to ARPP 6J - Exceptional Circumstances including Extensions: Policy and Procedure

Decision
Jules Forrest

A comment was made regarding differences in terminology within the document, specifically the use of the word 'disadvantage' in appendix 2 and 'impact' in section 4.4. The Secretary responded that this would be revised to ensure consistent application of terminology.

The paper was **approved** by the committee.

 5.4 Amendments to ARPP 6J - Exceptional Circumstances - For approval.pdf

5.5. Programme Development Proposals

5.5.1. MSc Social Research in FHSS

Decision
Dr Sara White

In response to queries raised regarding whether there was market demand for this course, the FHSS DDE reported that market research demonstrated that this programme was unique and that FHSS had developed the programme in response to demands from service providers. Over the past few years MSc Clinical Research had been delivered, but following feedback from applicants, the programme had been separated into two separate programmes: MSc Health Research and MSc Social Research. No additional resources were required as they were already covered by current staff members.

The Secretary confirmed that the units had been adapted and as such over a third of the credit was different to MSc Health Research. The programme level ILOs had also been amended to further differentiate this programme from MSc Health Research. Noting a query on the relevance of the content in relation to the revised title, the Academic Quality team recommended that the programme approval panel consider the alignment between content and the proposed title in regard to the generic nature of a social research degree.

The proposal was **approved** by the committee.

 5.5.1 Programme Development Proposal - MSc Social Research in FHSS - For approval.pdf

5.5.2. FdSc 3D Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) and BSc (Hons) Computer Generated Imagery 3D (CGI) in FST

Decision
Prof. Kevin McGhee/ Kurt French

In response to a comment from a committee member, the Secretary confirmed that alignment with BU placements policy as outlined in policy document '2B - Programme Structure and Curriculum Design Characteristics' would be considered via the approval event.

The proposal was **approved** by the committee.

 5.5.2 Programme Development Proposal - 3D Computer Generated Imagery in FST - For approval.pdf

5.6. Programme Review Deferral Requests

5.6.1. MA 3D Computer Animation in FMC

Decision
Dr Shelley Thompson

The request for the programme review deferral for MA 3D Computer Animation in FMC was **approved**.

 5.6.1 Programme Review Deferral - MA 3D Computer Animation in FMC - For approval.pdf

6. For Note

6.1. Updates on development of Unit Monitoring and Assessment Board procedures

Information
Jules Forrest

Regarding Programme Assessment Reviews (PAR), concern was expressed that holding an earlier PAR could result in less innovation, less updating of assignment briefs and encouraging staff to simply re-purpose existing assignment briefs. It was also suggested that this would make it difficult to respond in an agile manner to changes in cohort size or staff profiles. It was felt that a later window for 'amendments and upgrades' to assignment briefs would be beneficial.

Given the social distancing measures currently in force, it was suggested that it would be worth ensuring PAR could be 'future-proofed' and conducted as a virtual exercise.

The paper was **noted**.

 6.1 Updates on Unit Monitoring and Assessment Board Procedures - For note.pdf

7. Any Other Business

There were two separate items raised by committee members:

1. A concern was raised regarding the placements policy in draft revisions to '2B - Programme Structure and Curriculum Design Characteristics: Procedure' and the Operational Placements Policy 4K not being aligned with QAA guidelines and terminology.

The Secretary responded that ARPP 2B was the Curriculum Design Characteristics policy/procedure which contained a section on placements. This ARPP was currently subject to review and the comments made would inform this update.

ACTION: Academic Quality to consider this comment while updating this ARPP document.

2. The FMC Faculty Representative raised concerns regarding facilities and equipment at the new Poole Gateway building. The FMC DDE responded and offered to meet with the Faculty Representative to discuss further.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 20 May 2020 at 14:00 in the Board Room.

