

E-ASEC Summary: 23 – 30 March 2022

Summary of responses by the committee

Paper	Summary	Chair's View
Consumer Protection Action – Updates to ARPPs 2B, 4A, 4B and 6C – To approve	The committee members who responded approved the paper, with comments listed below.	Confirmed approved
Comments		
On the whole a good initiative and well thought through but there are some matters to be considered when taking this forward Re table 1: I have no issue with the definition of 'Scheduled learning and teaching,' given here or with publishing that as described. I would suggest that the % on/ offline should be indicative as a) it is likely that BU might change its policy on this from time to time and b) there might be very good reasons for specific programmes to vary their practice from time to time (especially those that are effectively CPD or find pedagogical benefits and positive student experience arise from a hybrid approach. Where assessment is course work, it becomes very difficult if not impossible to make a meaningful distinction between independent study and assessment. Students, moreover, focus very much on the latter - in some cases to the degree that they will not engage in anything they do not perceive as directly related to assessment. there is a danger, therefore, in suggesting that a sizable chunk of time on their unit is 'optional' (which alas is how some understand indep. study.) we don't want to encourage the view that, for example, time spend actually writing an essay is part of assessment, while reading that should feed into that work isn't. in practical units such as film making, moreover, almost everything the students do independently will end up on screen or in the supporting documentation - so a breakdown of this sort would have more than 100 out of those 200 hours as assessment while cognisant of the risks around CP I am very concerned that, on top of 6C, we are writing our academics into ever tighter regulatory cages which prevent creativity and responsiveness in their pedagogy. avoiding or minimising this risk should be a consideration in everything we do in this space. 2.10 - a much better and more workable use of the 'types of assessment' that will better reflect actual practice and student understanding. 2.12 onward Suggest we look at adapting UDF to a) provide a check/ reference point in ensuring delivery is as agreed and b) serving the purposes of HoDs and Unit teams. UDF should be populated (automatically or manually) with the data from SITS and should calculate total hours per student such that UL can ensure limits are met. I would suggest a second sheet that capture non-timetabled contact time (eg dissertation tutorials) and potentially marking etc, thus enabling them to inform workloading etc as well as timetabling. 2.16 onwards very welcome adjustments in principle agreed, so long as further development takes into account above issues Response received from Jack Guymer:		Christa van Raalte

<i>Whilst the suggestion to express the time spent in both face-to-face and online as indicative is noted, the paper to ASEC outlines how BU needs to be transparent and accurate about what a student can expect in terms of delivery. Notwithstanding issues relating to consistent and auditable data, we need to provide precise information to applicants on how a programme will be delivered in terms of scheduled 'in person' and 'online' learning as to ensure expectations are clear. This is in line with CMA guidance and best practice as evidenced across the sector. In terms of flexibility, the proposed changes to 4B - Programme and Unit Modifications: Policy will enable programme teams to change information on unit mode of delivery without the requirement for student agreement where the change does not affect the overall mode of delivery at a programme-level; unit-level information will not routinely be shared with applicants. The % online/in person will be set as guidelines or a framework which Faculties can use to ascertain alignment to the BU offer, which may shift over time in response to external and internal factors, strategic intentions, student feedback or the development of new types of provision. This 'framework' is in development and will be shared with Faculties to support this activity. Response to comment 2 - Feedback is very much welcomed. The proposal for expected learning hours to include 'independent learning' and 'assessment' is based on advice and guidance from the QAA and CMA; the latter requiring providers to publish information on the expected workload of students. Whilst there are no intentions to prevent creativity and responsiveness, the number of hours spent in independent learning and assessment is indicative and will feed an overall picture of delivery at a programme-level rather than unit, with programme-level information shared with applicants. There is an opportunity through our communications with applicants and current students to clearly explain how each activity covered under the definition of expected learning hours are central to achieving the learning outcomes of the unit/programme. This will be covered in the implementation plan to ASEC in May 2022.</i> 2.12 onward. Suggest we look at adapting UDF to a) provide a check/ reference point in ensuring delivery is as agreed and b) serving the purposes of HoDs and Unit teams. UDF should be populated (automatically or manually) with the data from SITS and should calculate total hours per student such that UL can ensure limits are met. I would suggest a second sheet that capture non-timetabled contact time (eg dissertation tutorials) and potentially marking etc, thus enabling them to inform workloading etc as well as timetabling Response from Jack Guyer: <i>A conversation is happening between Student Administration, PRIME and Timetabling around these issues. This will be covered in the implementation plan to ASEC in May 2022.</i> 2.16 onwards very welcome adjustments in principle agreed, so long as further development takes into account above issues	
Approved	Mandi Barron
Approved	Julie Turner-Cobb
I approve of the suggested changes with the following comments. I very much agree with Christa's comments regarding making in person and online scheduled hrs indicative to enable us to be agile to change. I also totally agree with the suggestion regarding the Unit Delivery Forms. This is much needed.	Philip Sewell
In Principle I agree but as above concerned re in Person and online hours	Sara White
I agree with the definition of scheduled learning and teaching and similarly echo Christa's suggestions (especially as it relates to the time allocated for assessment). To the assessment hours, hours effort doesn't necessarily translate into the desired outcome, so (as ever) communication of hours associated with assessment will be important. On contact hours and the timetable, we will need to ensure clear communication to students as it relates to hours. The reason I say this is that a timetable hour is actually 50 minutes. It	Shelley Thompson

may seem like a minor thing and potentially perceived as nit-picky, however, we have had student comments and some informal complaints that time in lectures/seminars isn't actually an hour. For the definitions of assessment, I'm still hesitant on distinguishing exams from tests, quizzes, time-constrained papers, and MCQs on the basis of invigilation. Student perception of tests, quizzes and MCQs are sometimes that these are exams by another name. We have had informal complaints to this effect where students indicate they chose an option (or indeed a programme) because it was 100% coursework only to find they had to take an 'exam'. I appreciate the distinction around invigilation and have discussed this in those cases where students have queried/complained about characterising these types of assessments as coursework. However, from a student perception perspective, whether they see something as an exam or not does not necessarily take into consideration the conditions under which they take it. We may determine that this is more of a communication challenge, but would be something we need to be clear about with prospective and current students. <i>Response from Jack Guymer:</i> <i>Thank you for your comments. Regarding the point about 50min scheduled slots it is helpful to have this raised now and this will be considered as part of the student-facing communications.</i> <i>Regarding the assessment comments, this is helpful feedback and we recognise that the descriptions for different types of assessment need to accurately reflect how students experience these assessments. We have revisited 6C to incorporate this aspect and this will be resubmitted to ASEC for consideration in May 2022.</i>	
Approve. I, however, note the discussion above in these comments on UDFs and using these to monitor effectively compliance with the published unit specs. This is a very good idea and quite possibly the only way forward but what worries me is a) how we do this in an automated manner (it is impossible for the Faculty -or indeed anybody- to check UDF hours to unit spec hours, in FST we have hundreds of units) b) the fact that we're pushing this again to May and beyond that as per Jack's response, which means that we get close to the summer period and a similar situation/timeline to last AY with this.	Christos Gatzidis
This policy gets us to really consider the holistic experience of unit delivery - - this will mark a difference way of thinking about learning and teaching for colleagues so suggest we think through ways of engaging staff to fully engage with the principles of this. By placing emphasis on the unit though we can lose sight of the programme. Thinking about how a modification affects the programme will ensure that colleagues have sight of the holistic experience for students – is there a checker to ensure this has been considered? Having a single source for unit's scheduled learning and teaching time via SITS makes sense to me – as teams spend an inordinate amount of time chasing latest documentation and we would want to avoid duplication and error. If these figures could feed directly into a timetabling and workplanning process – that would be great. Students do appreciate asynchronous materials – bitesize lectures, prompts to respond to. I'd like to see us consider some asynchronous learning as scheduled learning and teaching – if not, it seems to me we're missing this potential innovation. There seem to me to be very few instances where we would be making non-material changes, and so qualify for the lighter touch consultation. This is likely to reduce the amount of change a team makes in year and places more emphasis on 'getting it right' from the beginning/revalidation. Whilst I note the potential to reduce innovation it could also save us a lot of time resource and avoid year on year 'churn'. On another note, the track changed policy is very helpful to see change. Whilst I've argued above against duplication – these marked up copies are really useful for colleagues to see where a change has been implemented. Do we provide a marked up copy (say for a year) so that colleagues can see this change?	Katharine Cox

A note regarding the 'face to face' meetings with students - should we consider changing this to 'typically face to face' or similar? We've gone through a period of online provision which may occur again (so future-proofing) plus where students are on placement and hard to reach, a meeting in this way may be an advantage. Response from Jack Guymer: <i>Thank you for the feedback. Whilst asynchronous activities can be employed for certain units where there is a strong pedagogical rationale, these activities are not included in 'scheduled learning and teaching' as they are not all consistently auditable via the timetable. The risk of trying to capture activities that cannot be effectively audited could potentially lead to inaccuracies in what is communicated to students, and difficulties in meeting BU's Consumer Protection expectations. A significant number of modifications made last year would be considered 'non-material' under the revised policy. For instance, changes to unit-assessment accounted for 35% of modifications (31/89), with student consent sought where current students were affected. Under the proposal, student consent would only be required where a change affected the overall methods of assessment at a programme-level. Other changes to a unit, such as changes to aims and learning outcomes, would be considered 'non-material' in the majority of circumstances as well, with a requirement to obtain student consent under the previous policy where students were affected – these changes accounted for 15% of the modifications made in 2020/21 (13/89). It is pleasing to note that the 'tracked' policy was helpful to see the changes. As with other changes, we share a summary of all updates to our academic regulations, policies and procedures annually. This information is communicated through Faculty Academic Standards and Education Committee at the first meeting of the academic year as well.</i> A note regarding the 'face to face' meetings with students - should we consider changing this to 'typically face to face' or similar? We've gone through a period of online provision which may occur again (so future-proofing) plus where students are on placement and hard to reach, a meeting in this way may be an advantage. Response from Jack Guymer: <i>Thanks. Whilst the type of consultation activities listed in the draft policy are examples, the policy will be updated to make this clearer; this includes changing 'methods of consultation' to 'typical methods of consultation' (5.4 of 4B).</i>	
Approved	Jacky Mack
Approve. 2B section 6.3. (External References), is it appropriate to add a link to BU Digital Pedagogies Framework (that reflects on the Jisc Digital Capabilities Framework)?	Gelareh Roushan
I approve of the suggested changes with the following comments. Contact hours: Comment: The clarity around what constitutes scheduled learning hours is helpful for students, and a more central approach to monitoring and auditing the balance of delivery in line with the overall "BU offer" should ensure consistency in setting and meeting students' expectations. It would be helpful to have standard minimums and maximums for the number of hours that are scheduled versus independent study, as well as a breakdown within "scheduled" between face to face and online delivery (although this will need to be considered on a subject by subject basis). Modifications, Approval and Review Processes Comment: it is welcome that student consultation is expected for any change, material or not; and for material changes it would be helpful to have a section of the modifications form available to allow unit leaders to explicitly detail how they have responded to students' feedback in their proposal before seeking consent. It is also good for students that any change to their scheduled learning hours at either a unit or programme level will require their consent. The removal of the consent requirement for changes to assessment at a unit level should not be too big an issue, as changes cannot be made in-year without consent so students will be aware of the changes before they start their units. Generally, the proposals foreground students'	Samantha Leahy-Harland

needs and expectations, and provide clarity and transparency for staff on the level of consultation required for each level of change. Having seen many modification forms for FASECs, however, documenting this student consultation and consent will need to be a requirement for approval: currently modification forms with student feedback or consent are in the minority. <i>Response from Jack Guymer:</i> <i>Thank you for the feedback. The modification form will be revisited as part of this work, with intentions to document the outcome of student consultation and consent. Guidance on how to conduct student consultation and consent will also be provided.</i>	
The comments and suggestions above have addressed my concerns – approved.	Carol Clark