Academic Standards and Education Committee (ASEC)

Wed 26 January 2022, 14:00 - 17:00

MS Teams

Attendees

Board members

Professor Tim McIntyre-Bhatty (Chair and Deputy Vice-Chancellor),
Professor Philip Sewell (Deputy Chair and Head of Department, Faculty of Science and Technology (FST)),
Jules Forrest (Secretary and Head of Academic Quality), John Bernard (Student Faculty Officer, BUBS),
Andrew Bird (Head of International Marketing and Student Recruitment), Dr Carol Clark (Member of Senate),
Professor Katharine Cox (Member of the Professoriate), Dr Kathy Hodder (Head of Department, FST),
Samantha Leahy-Harland (Chief Executive, Students' Union (SUBU)), Jacky Mack (Academic Registrar),
Paige Norton-Edwards (Student Faculty Officer, FST), Olubunmi Okunnu (Student Faculty Officer, FMC),
Dr Gelareh Roushan (Head of Fusion Learning Innovation and Excellence (FLIE)), Amanda Stevens (Head of Frontline Services),
Dr Shelley Thompson (Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (BUBS)), Professor Julie Turner-Cobb (Member of the Professoriate),
Dr Sara White (Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (FHSS)), Professor Sabeur Zoheir (Member of the Professoriate)

Apologies

Mandi Barron (Director of Student Services), Professor Christos Gatzidis (Acting Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (FST)),
Dr Christa van Raalte (Deputy Dean - Education and Professional Practice (FMC))

Observers

Rosalind Ashcroft (Head of Academic Operations), Professor Carol Evans, Rebekah Kerslake (Academic Quality Officer),
Judy Lou Smith (Academic Quality Team Leader and Clerk)

Meeting minutes

1. Apologies

Information
Clerk

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Declarations of Interest

Information
Chair

No declarations of interest were recorded.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

3.1. Accuracy: ASEC 13 October 2021

Decision
Chair

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

ASEC Minutes 13.10.2021 - Confirmed.pdf

3.2. Summary: e-ASEC 10 – 12 November 2021

Decision
Chair

The Summary of the e-meeting was **approved** as an accurate record.

e-ASEC Summary 10 - 12 November 2021.pdf

3.3. Summary: e-ASEC 6 – 9 December 2021

Decision
Chair

The Summary of the e-meeting was **approved** as an accurate record.

e-ASEC Summary 6 - 9 December 2021.pdf

3.4. Matters Arising/Actions Log

Discussion
Various

5.4 - ARPP 6J Update: Exceptional Circumstances: This has been discussed with Student Services. Awaiting final confirmation before republishing.

All other actions were closed and can be viewed on the Actions Log.

ASEC Actions Log 2021-22.pdf

4. For Discussion

4.1. Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2020/21

Discussion
Christa Lippold

The Head of Leadership and Talent Development presented the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2020-21. This report demonstrates how the University meets its obligations under the Equality Act, including the events and key activities that had taken place in the last year. The overarching objective was to create a secure and diverse environment for both staff and students. A BU2025 objective is for all departments to achieve Athena Swan accreditation. There are aspirations around racial inclusion and reducing the gender pay gap. Another area of focus was creating an inclusive educational environment for staff and students, including those with hidden disabilities and the Equality and Diversity Committee was working closely with SUBU to achieve these objectives. It was also noted that REF submissions were more diverse and representative of the University community now than they had been in 2014, with an increase in the proportion of academic staff submitting outputs within REF increasing from 29% to 76%.

The Head of FLIE was leading the Race Equality Charter submission and it had been highlighted that there were overlapping strands and activities in relation to equality and diversity objectives that needed to be consolidated in order to to take them forward effectively. This aligned to an action from the Access, Excellence and Impact Committee (AEIC) which the Academic Registrar would take forward as Chair of that committee.

Action A: Academic Registrar

Engagement and inclusivity are actions included in the report. The Committee was asked to note areas where the University should be vigilant and where less progress than planned was being made.

Reflecting on the dominance of certain demographics at PGT level, a query was raised as to how teaching staff were supported to teach a more diverse student body. The Head of FLIE commented that there was an action in the Race Equality Charter action plan to support staff and this would be implemented for students and staff. There was more work to be done in terms of raising awareness, but the University was looking at the diversity of the curriculum and giving more diverse opportunities to BAME students for learning and teaching. Feedback received was that BU had been commended for mentoring in the Race Equality Charter submission. It was noted that there was the need to establish a more systematic, institutional approach to mentoring to be sustainable in terms of effectively supporting staff.

The Committee observed that Universal Design approaches could be used to adopt a more inclusive approach to curriculum design which would inherently be accessible to most students without the need for different initiatives or specific individual adjustments. It was suggested that approximately 90% of students could potentially be accommodated in this way through consistent use of inclusive learning design/universal design, so that there would only be a minority of students with very specialised needs who would need additional support to access the curriculum. The aims should be to ensure that there is not a myriad of different initiatives to address like issues, and that there is a shared understanding amongst staff of good practice in these regards. As an example, the Digital Pedagogies framework encourages curriculum re-design at unit level including decolonisation of curriculum. It was agreed that the further exploration and use of inclusive learning design/universal design principles would be actioned through the continued development of the Digital Pedagogies Framework and AEIC.

Action B: Head of FLIE

It was suggested that work could be done around cultural competencies in the classroom and ensuring that the right language is used in the right context, both in the classroom and the workplace. BU is a diverse community, and these issues should be discussed openly. Discussions relating to cultural competencies could be embedded in development sessions for staff, for example in considering inclusive learning design/universal design and understanding how adjustments are made for students (and staff) with disabilities, both visible and invisible, and this should also be built into assessment and feedback. The Committee noted that within BU there is currently ongoing work to improve the way in which information about individual student support needs is communicated and managed between the Additional Learning Support Team and Faculties, to improve the student experience and support staff in managing the delivery of adjustments. The Committee noted that there are some circumstances in which it is not possible to make reasonable adjustments which would enable a particular individual to access a course or undertake a particular role.

It was recognised that there would be value to staff in drawing together all the different initiatives, activities and developing practice around inclusivity, equality and diversity on to a single platform so that the good practice was captured and shared with all staff.

Professor Carol Evans reported that she is working with Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO) on a case study in disability and support and would welcome contributions from BU where good practice could be shared. Professor Evans also advised of her involvement in the evolution of inclusive frameworks for the Disability Inclusion Framework and invited BU staff to contact her should they wish to become involved. A number of members indicated their interest in Professor Evans' work and desire to learn more about opportunities for further engagement on this topic.

Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2020-21.pdf

4.2. Assessment Plan 2022-23

Discussion - Verbal
Dr Gelareh Roushan

The Head of FLIE reported how the sector was shifting towards an increased emphasis on digital assessment. It was noted that there were benefits to changing approaches to assessment including enhanced inclusivity, responding to student feedback relating to assessment and the broader student experience, and the impact of types of assessment on those with different entry qualifications and characteristics. It was also noted that it was important to maintain consistency and to have clear definitions of the types of assessments. The focus for approaches to assessment should not just relate to the next academic year, 2022/23, but more broadly to how assessment at BU evolves to support a good educational experience going forward. The Head of FLIE proposed to work with Deputy Deans to support the development of an assessment plan for each Faculty.

It was noted that it would be important to link the discussions on assessment methods into the ongoing work under the Consumer Protection Action Plan, so that there is clarity as to when a change in assessment would require student consultation and consent and what information about assessment needs to be included in course information.

The FHSS DDE reported that the impact of online assessments had led to an increase of the number of academic offences in that Faculty. It was reported that there appeared to be an increase in plagiarism cases where students' first language was not English. The Committee noted that it is important to ensure that students understand what constitutes an academic offence, e.g. what actions constitute plagiarism. It was noted there was a need for consistent messaging from all levels of the University in this regard. The Academic Integrity working group were considering how student communications could be enhanced to support key messages to students regarding academic offences. Student communications on this theme had been sent in October 2021 and there were more planned for later this semester.

It was reported that the Business School is taking part in an Advance HE study, with fifteen other Business Schools, looking specifically at assessment and feedback. The themes are around authentic feedback and principles of assessment design and focusing on key areas such as the attainment gap and academic integrity.

It was noted that assessments need to be designed in a way that limits opportunities for plagiarism. Students should be involved in designing assessments and engaged in that development process, so that they better understand the benefits of different assessment types.

The FST Student Representative highlighted that key lab skills were vital and should be included in induction at the commencement of each academic year.

The Head of Academic Quality and Head of FLIE would take this further with Faculties and report back to the Committee with an Assessment Plan in April.

Action: Heads of Academic Quality and FLIE

5. For Approval/Endorsement

5.1. Student Services Annual Report

Decision
Amanda Stevens

It was noted that the report was reflecting on the 2020/21 academic year and the timing did not align to other reports that related to key OfS conditions of registration. It was suggested that this report would benefit from being timed to be available to the October ASEC meeting, to coincide with other reports of a similar nature and enable more timely consideration of the implications of the report for actions and decisions during the academic year.

The Committee noted that there had been a substantial increase in wellbeing issues since the start of the pandemic and queried the impact on resources to deliver student services. It was noted that the structure of the student support and engagement team had been changed and this was being reviewed. The Director of Student Services and the Chief Operating Officer were considering what investment was required to support student wellbeing resources.

It was noted that universities should be equipping students to be self-supporting in order to build a resilient workforce. The difference in support provided at universities compared to school was significant and students needed to be informed of this, and available support mechanisms, prior to enrolment so that this is recognised as part of the transition to HE.

It was necessary to distinguish between the diverse range of wellbeing issues, medical issues and disabilities. The Committee noted that growth in reported mental health issues was recognised by Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO) and the Committee discussed use of a self-advocacy model supporting students to support themselves, clarifying support available and embedding wellbeing in curriculum design.

It was reported that some students had not accessed Additional Learning Support (ALS) testing (and hence support) due to a fear of the costs involved. At present all applicants were encouraged to engage with the support team before they started at BU. The Chair noted that there was clear evidence in University and sector data that the earlier students applied for and accessed support services, the more it benefitted their outcomes and overall achievement. The Committee noted the importance of providing strong communications and clarity to students regarding resources available to them at an early point in the induction process.

The report was **approved**.

Student Services Annual Report 2020-21.pdf

5.2. Approval of Academic Regulations

5.2.1. Update to ARPP 6K - Assessment Boards: Policy and Procedure

Decision
Jules Forrest

Updates to ARPP 6K - *Assessment Board: Policy and Procedure* were approved in January 2021. Among the changes made was the introduction of unit and programme boards. External examiners were expected to attend at least one assessment board per year as part of their role, however, whether this should be a Unit or Programme Board was not stipulated.

Following the experience from the 2020/21 assessment boards, it is now proposed that External Examiners are required to attend at least one Programme Board per academic year for the provision for which they are responsible. This will be implemented with immediate effect for 2021/22. External Examiners have been removed from the Terms of Reference for Unit Boards and included in the membership quorum for Programme Boards.

The paper was **approved**.

Update to ARPP 6K Assessment Boards Policy and Procedure.pdf

5.2.2. ARPP 7M - Employer Complaints (Apprenticeships) Policy and Procedure

Decision
Jules Forrest

The new ARPP 7M – *Employer Complaints (Apprenticeships): Policy and Procedure* sets out a process to enable employers of apprentices enrolled on BU apprenticeship provision to raise complaints. It is a requirement of the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) funding rules that a formal complaint policy is available to employers. The policy was approved by the University Leadership Team in December 2021.

The paper was **approved** for onward consideration by Senate.

7M - Employer Complaints (Apprenticeships) Policy and Procedure.pdf

5.3. External Examiner Nominations and Examination Teams for Research Degrees

Decision
Jules Forrest

The paper was **approved**.

External Examiner Appointments and PGR Teams.pdf

5.4. Programme Development Proposals

5.4.1. MBA/PGDip in Business Administration with Senior Leaders Apprenticeship (Level 7), BUBS

Decision
Deborah Taylor

The request for the programme development and delivery of the Level 7 Senior Leaders Apprenticeship (SLA) was considered by the Committee. The request to develop this apprenticeship had come from discussions with a BU partner, University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust (UHD), envisaging delivery of the programme to individuals employed by UHD and other Dorset healthcare providers.

It was noted that this was not a degree apprenticeship, and not integrated, so BU would not be responsible for delivering the End Point Assessment. The Level 7 Senior Leaders Apprenticeship (SLA) will be embedded in the existing PGDip Business Administration programme.

The Apprenticeship programme would be delivered part-time through blended learning with a closed cohort of healthcare managers. The four core modules were accredited by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). There would be no changes to Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) as they accommodated the knowledge, skills and behaviours which were part of the SLA. The indicative content would be adapted as specific content areas, such as supply chain, had not previously been included in the MBA and the indicative content would be made appropriate for work-based learning to support the Apprenticeship.

It was noted that the fee level needed to be reviewed by the Fees Board and that written confirmation must be received from the UHD regarding support for a cohort to participate in the programme and to confirm that the End Point Assessment would be commissioned by them.

The paper was **approved**.

PDP - Senior Leaders Apprenticeship.pdf

5.5. Programme Review Deferral Requests

5.5.1. MSc Public Health and SCPHN programmes, FHSS

Decision
Dr Sara White

The following programmes had requested deferral of their periodic reviews until 2022/23:

- MSc Public Health
- BSc (Hons) Public Health with Prof Reg as a Specialist & Community Public Health Nurse (Health Visiting)
- PG Dip Public Health with Prof Reg as a Specialist & Community Public Health Nurse (Health Visiting)
- BSc (Hons) Public Health with Prof Reg as a Specialist & Community Public Health Nurse (School Nursing)
- PG Dip Public Health with Prof Reg as a Specialist & Community Public Health Nurse (School Nursing)

The Academic Quality team had conducted health checks on these programmes and confirmed there was no risk in deferring the reviews until next academic year. The deferral requests had been approved by FASEC in January 2022.

The deferral requests were **approved**.

FHSS Programme Review Deferral Requests.pdf

5.6. CAS Exception Request – MSc Disaster Management, BUBS

Decision
Dr Shelley Thompson

MSc Disaster Management is taught through non-standard delivery, which consists of Continuing Professional Development units that include one intensive week of teaching, followed by 8 weeks of online learning. The units run sequentially and several units run across both semesters.

The request was **approved**.

CAS Exception Request - MSc Disaster Management.pdf

5.7. CAS Exception Request – MSc Biodiversity Conservation, FST

Decision
Professor Christos Gatzidis

It was explained that a January start option is not appropriate for MSc Biodiversity Conservation as the course contains a nature-based field experience, which is key to the course and its accreditation. This means that the delivery aligns with the seasons (spring and summer) during which most biodiversity is active within the UK.

The request was **approved**.

CAS Exception FST.pdf

5.8. Quality Assurance and Enhancement Group (QAEG) Nomination

Decision
Jules Forrest

The QAEG nomination for Sarah Leidner in BUBS was **approved**.

QAEG Nomination - S.Leidner.pdf

6. For Note

6.1. Pearson Institutional Review Report 2020/21

Information
Jules Forrest

The report was **noted**.

Pearson Institutional Review Report 2020-21.pdf

6.2. Arrivals and Induction Report

Information
Amanda Stevens

It was queried as to whether this report could be submitted to an earlier meeting of the Committee each year to improve the ability to rectify issues identified before the arrival of the next student intake. It was confirmed that action had been taken in response to issues identified prior to the submission of the report. It was suggested that more clarity and feedback on actions already taken should be included in the report and that the report be circulated earlier in the academic year via an e-committee.

Action: Director of Student Services

The paper was **noted**.

Arrivals and Induction Report.pdf

6.3. Pending External Examiner Appointments

Information
Jules Forrest

The paper was **noted**.

Pending External Examiner Appointments.pdf

6.4. Outcomes from recent Evaluation Events and List of Completed Evaluation Events

Information
Jules Forrest

The paper was **noted**.

ASEC - Outcomes of events Jan 22.pdf

6.5. BUBS FASEC Minutes

Information
Dr Shelley Thompson

The Minutes were **noted**.

BUBS FASEC Minutes 29.09.2021 - Confirmed.pdf

6.6. FHSS FASEC Minutes

Information
Dr Sara White

The Minutes were **noted**.

FHSS FASEC Minutes - 29.09.2021 - Confirmed.pdf

6.7. FMC FASEC Minutes

Information
Dr Christa Van Raalte

The Minutes were **noted**.

FMC FASEC Minutes 29.09.2021 - Confirmed.pdf

6.8. FST FASEC Minutes

Information
Professor Christos Gatzidis

The Minutes were **noted**.

FST FASEC Minutes 29.09.21 - Confirmed.pdf

6.9. JAB Minutes

Information
Jules Forrest

The Minutes were **noted**.

JAB Minutes 05.07.2021 - Unconfirmed.pdf

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

8.1. Thursday, 7 April 2022, 14:00 - 17:00, MS Teams