

Academic Standards and Education Committee

Mon 03 July 2023, 14:00 - 16:00

MS Teams



Attendees

Board members

Professor Keith Phalp (Chair and Pro-Vice Chancellor Education and Quality (Interim)), Jules Forrest (Secretary and Head of Academic Quality), Norah Deka (Vice-President (Education) Students' Union (SUBU)), Jacky Mack (Academic Registrar), Dr Gelareh Roushan (Head of Fusion Learning Innovation and Excellence (FLIE)), Dr Shelley Thompson (Deputy Dean (BUBS)), Professor Sara White (Deputy Dean (FHSS)), Dr Melanie Gray ((Deputy Dean (FMC)), Professor Carly Stewart (Deputy Dean (FST)), Nicole Chee (Faculty Student Rep, (BUBS)), Rosalind Ashcroft (Head Of Academic Operations), Andrew Bird (Head Of International Marketing And Student Recruitment)

APOLOGIES

Professor Philip Sewell (Apprenticeship Lead (Interim)), Professor Katharine Cox (Member of the Professoriate), Mandi Barron (Director Of Student Services), Samantha Leahy-Harland (Chief Executive, Students' Union (SUBU)), Professor Carol Clark (Member of the Professoriate), Professor Sabour Zoheir (Member of the Professoriate), Jane Wakefield (Director of Marketing and Communications)

IN ATTENDANCE

Anna Burgess (Academic Quality Administrator, Clerk), Lucy Murfitt (Academic Quality Administrator), Huseyin Dogan (attended to present item 4.1), Alex Jacobs (attended to present item 5.5.1 and Item 5.5.2), Jo Thurston (attended to present item 5.5.6), Jack Guymer (attended to present item 5.5.7 and 5.5.8), Fiona Knight (attended to present item 5.5.9), Paula Callus (attended to present item 5.6.1)

Meeting minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Clerk

Apologies were noted as listed above

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Chair

No declarations of interest were recorded

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1. Accuracy: ASEC 24 May 2023

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

Approval

Chair

3.2. Matters Arising/ Actions Log

Updates on the open actions were given as follows:

24.05.2023 4.2 OfS Condition of Registration B3. PRIME to consider how to present BU data in the context of B3 so that any potential risk could be monitored by faculties. Action ongoing.

24.05.2023 4.5 Annual Report: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Secretary to review the agenda planner against the ASEC Terms of Reference for the next Academic Year 2023/24 Action ongoing, the action would be considered during ASEC agenda planning for 2023-24

25.01.2023 4.1A Student Outcomes Data. Members suggested that further discussions to take place at future ASEC to explore BTEC versus A-Level achievement and the demographic profile of the students joining the university. Action ongoing, the item would be considered during ASEC agenda planning for 2023-24

25.01.2023 4.1B Student Outcomes Data. Apprenticeship Data would be included in future Student Outcomes Data provided to the Committee. Action ongoing, the PRIME team had agreed to the action, and it would remain on the action log until it had been completed.

All other actions were closed and could be viewed on the Actions log.

4. FOR DISCUSSION

4.1. Generative Artificial Intelligence: Recommendations for BU

A working group in FST had been set up to consider Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) for BU and a summary of their recommendations was presented to the committee for discussion. It had been agreed for BU to use the term Generative AI because it encompassed the different Artificial Intelligence tools that were available. The working group had met with students and academics to consider how the technology could be used in teaching and assessments, looking at when it was appropriate for it to be utilised and considering how to prevent plagiarism.

They proposed three levels of Generative AI for coursework:

- Level A. Students could use it and it was part of delivery and assessment.
- Level B. Students could use it with appropriate referencing.
- Level C. Students could not use it and its use would be an Academic Offence.

With regards to assessment via exam, Generative AI it should be either be allowed or not.

Unit leaders would be asked what level the assessment met and would need to write a clear justification for their choice. It was recognised that work would need to take place to update university policies, provide more guidance on referencing, consider academic integrity in this area, arrange licensing for the use of permitted software, and consider how exams could be locked down to stop the use the Generative AI where it was not allowed. Training would need to occur for Academic Offences panel members and clear communications developed for students.

It was questioned whether there would need to be changes to the 6C assessment policy that limited units to two pieces of summative assessment. If students were using Generative AI in lab-based work, it was queried whether this could it be used towards their assessment marks. The existing policy did allow for formative assessment that could be developed into a final submission and developmental assessment was permitted. Consideration would need to be made about ensuring student attendance and engagement with workshops and seminars. It was suggested that academic teams were not always clear about the word count equivalencies of different types of assessment.

The University needed to consider how to respond to this fast-moving landscape and how transparent it was being with students about using Generative AI to inform and support their learning. It was highlighted that responding to this challenge was something the whole sector was facing, given how fast paced the technological developments were this needed more consideration at an institutional level and new approaches to assessment, learning and teaching would take time to be embedded.

The working group planned to implement the three levels for assignments from September 2023 and the committee confirmed that this could be done without changing the policies. Communications had gone out to students to say the use of this technology was not permitted unless it was specifically allowed for in their assignment brief and this proposal still met those criteria. If required, more significant changes to the policy position could then be developed in the future.

4.2. Assessment Review Progress Update

For Discussion

Dr G Roushan

The Assessment Review project had been the outcome of discussions at ASEC in 2022 around whether any changes implemented in the pandemic should be retained. The aim of the review was to look at the impact of assessment design and feedback on student experience, progression, and outcomes. The data showed that students performed less well in exams compared to coursework at all academic levels. When the data was broken down into different protected characteristics, the gap in performance grew wider. The data raised the question of whether the University wanted to continue with exams as a mode of assessment.

The outcomes of student sessions included the need to demystify the academic language of assessments, to have face-to-face feedback conversations with students as a feed-forward mechanism, and to consider guidance and marking of group work.

The paper also included details of support and guidance for staff around Generative AI and sector research in the area. One of the possible responses to the Generative AI technology was to revert to exams for assessments but the attainment gap data suggested this was not a good idea. Embracing Generative AI could be a way to help reduce the assignment gap.

The committee discussed what the next steps would be for the outcomes. If exams were to be continued could there be mitigation to help support the students that had higher failure rates, for example BTEC students. It was felt that the recent change to exam definitions had made it clearer how many exams were being held across all Faculties. It was reported that Faculties had been reducing the number of exams and the group asked what evidence would be needed to show the reduction in the number of exams over the past few years. It was also questioned whether the university's policy position fully reflected this change and if more consideration of the policy position was required. The Secretary was asked to add this item to a future ASEC meeting and agree with the Academic Registrar on what evidence could be presented.

ACTION - Secretary

5. FOR APPROVAL AND ENDORSEMENT

5.1. AMER Update 2023

For Approval

J Forrest

The Annual Monitoring and Enhancement Review (AMER) processes were going through a large-scale review in 2023/24 and smaller procedural changes would be introduced for the 2023 cycle. The Academic Quality team had collected feedback from stakeholders and the changes agreed upon included the removal of the Department level action plans and summaries, the opportunity for Deputy Deans to set high-level strategic priorities based on analysis of Faculty data at an earlier point in the AMER cycle, combining the two Faculty level documents into a single template and dedicating the entire September FASEC meeting to AMER. The University would also be piloting scrutiny panels to sample programme action plans from across all Faculties. The panels would be chaired by PVC Education and Quality and supported by Academic Quality. The composition of the panel, and the involvement of SUBU, were still to be agreed.

The committee was asked to approve the two institutional themes for the 2023 AMER cycle as Continuation and BAME attainment.

Decision: the institutional themes were **approved**.

5.2. Admissions

Admissions-related papers had been submitted to ASEC following the removal of The Admissions Group (TAG), it was unclear what ASEC's role was in scrutinising these proposals. The committee discussed what information needed to be presented to ASEC and suggested that their role would be to scrutinise the academic quality and student experience elements rather than marketing and finance. Some documents could be for the committee to note before going to UET for approval. The aim of removing TAG had been to remove the committee approval requirements which could delay decisions. It was requested that the documents submitted should always include a section completed by the Admissions Manager, so that all the information was on the forms for them to make their decision. The Chair and Secretary would consider what review the approval mechanisms for admissions papers.

ACTION – Chair and Secretary

5.2.1. PG Entry Requirements Review

A Bird

The Market Research team had submitted their overview of the Postgraduate Taught entry requirements for 2024/25 academic year. No further changes were requested. At TAG it was agreed to look at applications by exception. The committee endorsed the paper and reflected that if any changes in entry requirements had an impact on quality data it would be useful for ASEC to be informed.

Decision: The paper was **endorsed**

5.2.2. Entry Requirement Review: MSc Computer Animation and Visual Effects (FMC)

A Bird

The Programme Leader and Market Research team requested changes to the entry requirements, to remove the portfolio and introduce subject requirements. Applicants would need to have one of the subjects listed on the review. The proposal was supported by the Faculty and the Market Research team, and it was confirmed that this did not go against what other universities were doing. The paper did not have comments from the Head of Admissions and the committee requested that those were added.

Decision: The paper was **endorsed** subject to the agreement from the Admissions Manager.

5.2.3. Entry Requirement Approval (ERA): MSc Artificial Intelligence for Media (FMC)

Dr M Gra

The Programme Leader had requested the removal of the portfolio as an entry requirement.

Decision: The paper was **endorsed**

5.2.4. Entry Requirement Approval (ERA) for MSc Physician Associate Studies (FHSS)

Prof S White

The Faculty were proposing to change the entry requirements so that applicants with a medical degree could not be accepted, applicants needed a GCSE Grade B (level 5) in Mathematics and English, IELTS tests requirements details were listed and additional selection measures included a Situational Judgement Test (SJT) plus an interview for the top scoring candidates on the SJT. The committee reviewed the paper and the rationales and raised the issues that the Admissions Manager had highlighted. It was questioned whether the market research should be focused on close competitors rather than everyone who offers the programmes to give a better insight. The Faculty responded that this was not a common programme so it was appropriate to look more widely in this case. The Admissions Manager did not agree with all the proposals, and it was requested that in the future the paper is returned to the Faculty before submission to ASEC so these areas could be addressed.

Decision: The committee **endorsed** the change to the IELTS and not accepting doctors on to the programme.

The change to the English and Mathematics entry requirements and the interview arrangements were **not endorsed** and needed more consideration.

5.2.5. Entry Requirement Approval Request for PGDip Specialist Nursing Programmes (FHSS)

Prof S White

The programme team was applying for approval of non-standard admissions regulations to meet the PSRB (Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)) requirements. These included IELTS (Academic) 7 with a minimum of 7 in speaking, listening and reading and 6.5 in writing. There were also a number of additional selection measures required.

Decision: The paper was **endorsed**

5.3. CAS Exception Requests

5.3.1. CAS Exception Request for Enhanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeship (FHSS)

Prof S White

The Faculty of Health and Social Sciences were requesting the approval of non-standard commencement dates for the new Enhanced Clinical Practitioner Apprenticeships. It was requested that the first cohort start in October and the second in April with no January intake.

Decision: The paper was **approved**.

5.4. Apprenticeship Academic Regulations Policy and Procedure Updates

**For Approval/
Endorsement**

The apprenticeships team had developed new policies to support compliance for apprenticeship provision, admissions, feedback, and attendance monitoring. The new policies and the changes to existing policies, templates, and forms were submitted in the committee pack for consideration. Changes included details of the changes needed because of becoming an End Point Assessment Organisation and what it means for BU. The papers had been to the Apprenticeships Board for detailed scrutiny.

J Forrest

5.4.1. ARPP Update 3P Policy and Procedure: Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

5.4.2. New Policy and Procedure: Apprenticeship Provision Feedback

5.4.3. New Policy and Procedure: Engagement and Attendance for Apprenticeship

5.4.4. ARPP Update 3B: Admissions Policy Apprenticeships

5.4.5. Apprenticeships End Point Assessment Guidance and Documents Template

5.4.6. Apprenticeships Programme Approval and Review Updates to templates and process

Decision: The papers were **approved** for onward circulation to Senate

5.5. ACADEMIC REGULATIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE UPDATES

For Approval

A Jacobs

5.5.1. ARPP Update 4K Placements: Policy and Procedure

Minor changes were proposed to update terminology in ARPP 4K. The updates reflected process changes because the management of placements has gone into SITS due to changes from Erasmus to Turing funding.

Decision: The paper was **approved** for onward circulation to Senate

5.5.2. ARPP Update: Student Welfare Policy

For Approval

A Jacobs

Changes to the policy were to bring it up to date on developments in student welfare. They now had a team of duty officers as points of contact for welfare issues, there were details of the new Safeguarding policy and updated details on information sharing protocol.

Decision: The paper was **approved** for onward circulation to Senate

5.5.3. ARPP Update 3K: Introduction of new Engagement & Attendance Policy & Procedure to replace the existing 3K

For Approval

R Ashcroft

A new ARPP3K had been developed to replace the existing Engagement Monitoring and Withdrawal procedure with an Engagement and Attendance Policy and Procedure. The policy would be student-facing and applied to all students including those in postgraduate research, postgraduate taught, and undergraduate studies. The policy explains that the University will monitor engagement and attendance in a variety of ways. Work was underway on how attendance data could be routinely captured and fed into the JISC analytics system and an active response to the data would need to be developed. Many members of the committee had been involved in the development of the policy and work was ongoing on the review of the procedures section. The Chair recognised that engagement and attendance data was an area the committee may need to return to in future meetings.

Decision: The paper was **approved** for onward circulation to Senate

5.5.4. ARPP Update 3N Enrolment: Amendments to the Enrolment Procedure

For
Endorsement

R Ashcroft

It was proposed that 3N was changed from a policy to a policy and procedure. There were minor changes needed to reflect how the Student Lifecycle team managed enrolment and more changes were proposed to clarify the University's position on late starts. There had previously been a grace period that allowed students to start late without question, but it was felt that this was an inconsistent message. The students were largely international students who did not obtain their visas and make other necessary arrangements in time. Starting late had an operational impact and missing induction and early course activities could impact achievement. Although faculties would still be able to accept students later, the updates to the policy would mean that the external facing information for students would be that we wanted them to attend from the start.

The committee questioned the layout of the document if it is to be called a policy. To be consistent with all the University ARPPs it needed to have the policy wording explicitly split out, so the reader knows which were the policy statements. The Head of Academic Operations and Academic Registrar would review the layout after the meeting.

ACTION - Head of Academic Operations and Academic Registrar

Decision: The paper was **approved** for onward circulation to Senate subject to the changes to the layout of the policy section.

5.5.5. ARPP Update 3R and 4A: Amendments to policies to take account of the new Management of Published Course Information Policy and Procedure

As a result of the University's Consumer Protection Action plan it was agreed to develop a new corporate policy on the management and publication of course information. The policy was required to ensure published information is accurate and available throughout the recruitment cycle. It was necessary to make changes to ARPPs 3R and 4A to reflect this new corporate policy. Changes included updates to terminology, and to reflect the changes in University governance and decision-making structures. It was also proposed to change the title of 3R to include a reference to Programme Update Decisions.

Decision: The paper was **approved** for onward circulation to Senate

5.5.6. ARPP Update 5B: Amendments to the Student and Engagement Feedback: Policy and Procedure

The Student Voice Priority Workstream was proposing to make changes to the ARPP 5B procedures section to suspend the My Course Feedback and My Unit Feedback surveys for the 2023/24 academic year. Additional changes were needed around the section on anonymous feedback and the changes needed to reflect the apprenticeship requirements. It was highlighted that there was a mistake in section 4.4 of tracked change ARPP which had been mistakenly changed and would remain as a process with guidance from SUBU.

The committee questioned the rationale for changing the policy when it had not been decided what would be implemented to replace the existing surveys. The workstream had not yet agreed on the feedback mechanisms that would be trialed in 2023/24 because they were waiting for committee approval of the removal of the existing surveys. Legal Services had recommended the policy is changed at this stage because it was more than a change of wording. The changes set out the framework through which the pilot of the new feedback methods could be measured against. The existing policy stated that there would be a single unit and course survey which did not allow for flexibility.

The changes to the anonymous feedback section of the 5B were required because the different forms of feedback being trialed may mean anonymity was not possible and it was not possible to apprentice feedback to be anonymous.

The committee questioned whether there would be comparative data from any new feedback mechanisms. It was suggested that information might be included in UAMRs so that it could be reviewed at Unit Boards and could also be used in AMER programme action plans. In the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences unit feedback was used for NMC regulations. It had been used in some staff pay progression discussions, but committee members highlighted that this data was meant to be for the enhancement of the student voice and experience

The workstream was asked to set out a detailed proposal for the 2023/24 feedback trial including minimum levels of feedback that would apply across all units. It was agreed that this would be created as an Appendix to the policy and submitted to ASEC for approval by e-circulation over the summer.

ACTION – Student Voice Priority Workstream lead

Decision: The paper was **approved in principle** for onward circulation to Senate, subject to an appendix with the details of the feedback for 2023/24 being submitted to ASEC for e-circulation.

5.5.7. ARPP Updates 4B: Programme and Unit Modifications: Policy

The proposed changes are to add details to the policy about who can exceptionally approve variances to the student consent threshold for modifications where less than 50% of affected students have responded to the request. It is suggested that the Faculty Executive Dean undertakes the role as a senior academic who is well-placed to judge any risks from an academic perspective and can be considered impartial because they do not sit on FASEC. Other updates to the policy are to more explicitly reference how the policy is supportive of the OfS framework condition B1 and refer to the latest CMA guidance for HE providers. The committee asked that the wording be changed to the Faculty Executive Dean or their representative to avoid having a single point of failure.

Decision: The paper was **approved** for onward circulation to Senate subject to the update in the wording.

5.5.8. ARPP Update: 6J Exceptional Circumstances Policy and Procedure

For Approval

J Guymmer

The proposed changes were to clarify that references to self-certification so that it states it is 5 working days and is consistent across all faculties. The Education Service Managers had agreed to the changes and all student-facing guidance would be updated to reflect the policy amendment.

Decision: The paper was **approved** for onward circulation to Senate

5.5.9. ARPP Update: 8A Code of Practice for Research Degrees

For Approval

Dr J Taylor/ Dr F Knight

The Doctoral College were looking to complete the annual update of the Code of Practice, this included changing the layout to make the individual roles and responsibilities clearer. There was also more clarity for the international students and their UKVI details. The proposed changes had been approved by the Research Degree Committee in June 2023.

Decision: The paper was **approved** for onward circulation to Senate

5.5.10. ARPP Update: 9A Peer Reflection on Education Practice

For Approval

Dr G Roushan

The policy was reviewed and references to peer observation in the classroom had been added in. Comments from the UCU had been incorporated and additional work had been taking place around PREP for apprenticeships. It had been suggested that there may need to be a separate apprenticeships PREP policy developed in the future. The committee raised that future consideration may need to take place about whether teaching observation was also linked to education practice development, considering how development needs were identified and raised with FLIE, or how good practice was shared and whether the policy made it clear as a separate activity. It was suggested that this could be a future ASEC discussion area.

ACTION – Secretary to add this as future discussion item to take place in 2023/24

Decision: The paper was **approved** for onward circulation to Senate

5.6. Programme Development Proposals

5.6.1. PDP Computer Animation (FMC)

For Approval

Dr M Gray

The Faculty of Media and Communication were proposing to combine their three existing Computer Animation courses into a new BA (Hons) Computer Animation and Visual Effects programme. This would allow students to have an overview in their first year and then choose their options for the second and third year with their career path in mind.

Decision: The proposal was **approved**.

5.7. External Examiner Appointments and Examination Teams for Research Degrees

For Approval

J Forrest

Decision: The paper was **approved**

6. FOR NOTE

6.1. 6A: Standard Assessment Regulations. 6L: Assessment Board Decision Making Procedure

J Forrest

The paper was **noted**

6.2. 9B: Quality Assurance and Enhancement Group (QAEG) Procedure

The paper was **noted**

J Forrest

6.3. Pending External Examiner Appointments

The paper was **noted**

Secretary

6.4. MINUTES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

6.4.1. BUBS FASEC Minutes

The minutes were **noted**

Dr S Thompson

6.4.2. FHSS FASEC Minutes

The minutes were **noted**

Prof S White

6.4.3. Apprenticeship Board Minutes

The minutes were **noted**

Prof P Sewell

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

8. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 18 October 2023, OVC Board Room