CONFIRMED

Education Committee

Wed 24 January 2024, 14:00 - 16:00

OVC Board Room, Poole House, Talbot Campus

Attendees

Board members

Professor Keith Phalp (Chair and Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Quality),
Dr Shelley Thompson (Deputy Chair and Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience), Jules Forrest (Secretary and Head of Academic Quality),
Jacky Mack (Academic Registrar), Professor Lois Farquharson (Executive Dean, BUBS), Professor Sara White (Deputy Dean (FHSS)),
Dr Carly Stewart (Deputy Dean (FST)), Professor Ann Luce (Chair of FMC FASEC), Professor Katharine Cox (Member of the Professoriate),
Professor Sabeur Zoheir (Member of the Professoriate), Rosalind Ashcroft (Head of Academic Operations),
Norah Deka (Vice-President (Education) of the Students' Union (SUBU)),
Kerry-Ann Randle (Representative for vacant Student Services Director role), Alex Caton-Bradley (Student Representative (FST)),
Rohit Pakalapati (Student Representative (BUBS))

Observers

Anna Burgess (Clerk and Academic Quality Officer), Liam Sheridan (PRIME Manager (Academic Planning & Insight) - attended for 4.1),
Ann Barnes (Access And Participation Analyst - attended for item 4.1 and 4.2), Jack Guymer (Academic Quality Policy And Project Manager - attended for item 5.1), Stephen Rigotti (Academic Quality Team Leader - attended for item 5.1)

Apologies

Dr Fiona Knight (Head of the Doctoral College), Dr Philip Ryland (Associate Dean Student Experience (BUBS)),
Professor Philip Sewell (Director of Apprenticeships and Skills), Dr Gelareh Roushan (Head of Fusion Learning Innovation and Enhancement (FLIE))

Meeting minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Noted as listed above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Chair

None

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1. Accuracy: Education Committee: 5 December 2023

For Approval

Chair

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

3.2. Summary: e-Education Committee 13-20 December 2023

For Approval

Chair

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

3.3. Matters Arising/ Actions Log

Various

05.12.2023 3.4 Actions Log 18.10. Item 6.2 Further to update from Head of FLIE, there was discussion re: PREP and agreement that PREP to be discussed at a future Education Committee
Item on the agenda. **Action closed.**

05.12.2023 5 SU VP Report. The FHSS DDE requested that the data be reviewed on page 19 pf the BoardBook re data for BSc (Hons) Adult Nursing
SUBU VP Education had checked the data and advised that the numbers were not from individual students but based on the numbers of students the Student Representatives had noted in SiMon. The Student Voice team had checked the comments. **Action closed.**

05.12.2023 6.1.4 Assessment Analysis by Faculty. It was agreed that this should be discussed further at a future Education Committee.
The committee discussed that there were actions taking place within the facilities and these would be reflected in the updates to the AMER plans. The AMER updates would be reviewed by future Education Committee meetings. **Action closed.**

18.10.2023 6.1 Faculty Update: Responding to Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI).
There were ongoing discussions about Generative AI and the Library team (as part of the Academic Skills hub) were involved in developing guidance and information for students. It had been agreed that information relating to AI would be channeled through the Think Tank before being considered by Education Committee. Some information had gone out to specific students on when using AI was appropriate. More detailed guidance was needed for staff and students about referencing, assignment briefs and what constituted an academic offence regarding the unsanctioned use of AI. It was felt that some messages for students were confusing because they had been told AI was not allowed, but their assignment cover sheets asked them about the use of AI. It was requested that the ALS service be involved in discussions. The library team would prepare a paper for submission to the next Education Committee in February.
Action ongoing.

18.10.2023 6.2 Reflections on NSS/ PTES/PRES/Graduate Outcomes. It was summarised that there was an appetite for re-visiting PREP and how that procedure is used at BU. The Head of FLIE to consider PREP in light of these discussions.
Action ongoing.

03.07.2023 4.2 Assessment Review Progress Update. 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 ongoing.

03.07.2023 5.5.10 ARPP Update: 9A Peer Reflection on Education Practice. 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. Secretary to add this as future discussion item to take place in 2023/24
Item on the agenda. **Action closed.**

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
Once the report was received the Chair and Secretary would consider whether it should be presented to Education Committee. **Action Ongoing**

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.
Item on the agenda. **Action closed.**

4. FOR DISCUSSION

4.1. Chair's Business

Discussion

Chair

4.1.1. Assessment

The Chair asked members whether the Committee should consider a proposal to remove the need to pass both elements of assessment for a unit. It was noted that this could have a positive impact on continuation rates for students.

It was noted that to implement this change, units would have to be updated to ensure that all Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) were designed so they could be met by all elements, if there are more than one per unit. The group discussed that there were other HEIs that followed this principle and it appeared to be a direction of travel across the sector. If the change was introduced there would be workload implications for changing the unit documentation and SITS curriculum build.

It was noted when the 6C Principles of Assessment Design Policy was introduced, the guidance was for most units to have two elements of assessment and for ILOs not to be “double-assessed”. The policy was introduced to manage assessment workloads to ensure that units were not over-assessed. In the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences many units only had one element of assessment and PSRB rules meant that students had to pass every ILO.

Committee members raised the issue of reassessment and the timescales for resubmissions if students had to wait for the decision of an Assessment Board. In-year Retrieval had been introduced for level 0 and level 4 students to allow a second attempt at a more timely interval within the academic year. The committee discussed whether it might be possible to introduce this for other levels (5, 6 and 7) but raised the issues of staff workloads and student expectations. Teaching staff may not be able to deliver a 3- week turnaround for marking if students were given immediate reassessments in-year.

4.1.2. Assessment Boards

BU staff had attended a presentation from Wolverhampton University who had shared their decision to move away from progression/assessment boards and the Chair posed the question to the committee as to whether this may be something BU might want to consider in the future. Wolverhampton had removed the need for progression boards by automating their SITS system and only held ‘Award’ boards at the end of the student’s degree programme. A high-level summary of the Wolverhampton process was that marks were inputted into SITS, tutors had a chance to preview them and then the marks were released to students. It was highlighted that other HEIs were looking at how to make boards more efficient and this could help with workload at all levels. It was noted that issues could arise where there were resits/repeats and it would not be possible to have discretionary-based decisions in the regulations if they were codified and applied systematically.

4.1.3. Office for Students (OfS) engagement visit

The OfS had completed an engagement visit to BU on the morning of the 24th January 2024. The OfS had said they were impressed with the level of student engagement and the Chair thanked all those who were involved in the visit. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience would be arranging a follow-up meeting with the students who had met with the OfS to discuss the issues they raised. Students were keen for timetables to be released earlier. It was highlighted that this was being considered, but that there were operational issues, such as the late confirmation of final student numbers (due to Clearing or late enrolment for some PGT programmes), which impacted the ability to release timetables earlier. It was noted improving the student experience regarding timetables was a priority for the University, and there was an intention to have clearer and more transparent communications where there was uncertainty or change to timetables.

The OfS had published a number of Quality Assessment reports, some relating to business and management courses and specific universities. Committee members were encouraged to look at the reports to see the range of areas the OfS was considering as part of their ‘boots on the ground’ review of quality and standards across the sector.

4.2. Student Outcomes Data

For Discussion

Liam Sheridan

The PRIME Manager (Academic Planning & Insight) had prepared a paper with the Student Outcomes Data for 2022/23. It included comparisons to the published data in the OfS B3 Student Outcomes dashboard where it was available. It was highlighted that numbers looked lower because it used to be presented against HESA performance indicators and the OfS markers were more lenient.

The committee noted that where the data was showing the aggregate figures for BU, it did not show risks at the subject level. It was reported that the OfS had identified a number of priority areas including first degrees with integrated Foundation years, Partnerships and Business and Management subjects.

Committee members sought clarification that data around ethnic origin at undergraduate level was based on home, rather than international status. It was also clarified that where students had been withdrawn due to non-payment of fees this was included in the OfS completion rates, they did not differentiate those who did not complete due to academic reasons from those students who had been withdrawn for financial reasons.

The Head of Academic Quality queried why the report reflected a three-year aggregate, rather than a four-year aggregate, which would allow better alignment to the OfS measures for B3. By not reflecting OfS measures there was a concern institutional oversight in relation to key risk areas may not be obvious. It was also queried how the later B3 report due to be considered by this committee in May 2024 aligned to this report, and whether classification data should be included in the Degree Outcomes Report, so that this report could focus purely on the B3 measures in alignment with OfS reporting (continuation, completion and progression).

It was questioned whether the report was clear enough for Faculties to use to inform an effective understanding of risk, what issues were raised within the data and subsequently what was needed in terms of AMER updates. It was suggested that it might be more accessible and easily understood by a wide group of staff to have key headlines for each Faculty rather than such a detailed technical report. Faculties questioned what should happen if there were issues raised in the data and whether there should be interventions at the Faculty or the University level. The committee discussed how programme teams could get an understanding of who the students were on their programme to be able to ensure that their specific needs were met. There were class list details in the Student Records system, but they might not be available to academics because personal information that was restricted. I was noted that the University needed to be careful about trying to profile students with protected characteristics.

Concerns were raised by committee members that the discussion of the outcomes data had not included any awareness or discussion of the specific risks for BU and questioned what the role was for Education Committee in reviewing the data. The Head of Academic Quality referred to risk areas that had not received any acknowledgment or discussion as part of this data set which included: continuation for undergraduate students, completion rates at partner institutions, continuation for BUBS students and completion for BUBS and FST, completion and continuation rates for postgraduate students which had been declining for three years and were on a downward trajectory. It was noted that some of the OfS priority categories, i.e. First Degrees with Integrated Foundation Year and partner registered students were below OfS thresholds and should be flagged as a risk. Information would be brought back to a later committee and the Chair and Secretary would arrange for a sub-group to meet to consider the approach to this data.

ACTION – Chair/Secretary

4.3. New APP Update: Data Gaps and Objectives

For Discussion

Ann Barnes

The University is required to prepare a new Access and Participation Plan (APP) by July 2024. A high-level data analysis had been completed using the OfS Access and Participation dataset as well as the PRIME Student Outcomes and Student Numbers data reports. This would be updated following the new Student Outcomes data report included in item 4.2 on this agenda. Work was ongoing to gain additional data with more specific analysis of underlying risks. For example, there was a concern around non-continuation rates where students had less than 10 timetabled contact hours, so data would be gathered to analyze this. Committee members highlighted that there were contact hours that would not show up on timetables and requested input into the analysis for this area.

Suggested objective areas for focus were:

- Access to Higher Education for low socio-economic groups.
- Improvements to Continuation and completion rates for multiple groups including low socioeconomic and some ethnicities.
- Addressing Awarding gaps for ethnicity and low socio-economic groups.
- Improvements to Progression rates for specific groups.

It was highlighted that some objectives might relate to more than one underrepresented group and the university would need to consider how these should be framed. There was a need to demonstrate how the university would evaluate the impact of all interventions and implement any actions submitted in the plan. A Student Summit was booked to take place at the end of February to gain student insight into the interventions that were already in place and planned to get ideas about what else could be done. The SU VP Education would be able to provide a verbal update from the Summit at the February Education Committee. A workshop for setting the APP objectives would be arranged outside of the Education Committee.

Decision: Low socio-economic and ethnic groups were agreed as the primary focus areas for objectives in the Access and Participation Plan.

For Discussion

4.4. Current PREP Plans from Faculty Reps

Deputy Deans

The University had paused PREP for the 2023/24 academic year and the Faculties had taken their own approaches. The Deputy Deans were asked to update the committee on the work that had been taking place in their Faculties.

4.4.1. Faculty of Health and Social Sciences (FHSS)

Each Department had been given the opportunity to decide what in what areas they would like to focus their reflective development. This had been documented in the Faculty AMER plan and updates were given at FASEC meetings. Examples included the Midwifery Department looking at inclusivity and de-colonization of the curriculum and the Medical Science and Public Health focusing on innovative delivery.

4.4.2. Bournemouth University Business School (BUBS)

The Executive Dean has spoken to the Departments, and they had all agreed to focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Assessment. There had been some workshops about AI and this had been identified as an area of interest. The Faculty were still considering the focus for the peer review processes; it was likely it would involve discussion and reflection of content rather than observation of teaching.

It was highlighted that the work on academic development should be documented and fed upwards for Department and Faculty oversight.

4.4.3. Faculty of Science and Technology (FST)

It was reported that pausing the BU policy had given the Departments the freedom to be innovative in the areas of AMER and educational development. The Faculty did not have a formal structure for peer review and were being more organic with their plans. Departments had created their own action plans so they could document their education strategy. The Deputy Dean was engaging Programme Leaders in best practice teaching seminars and they were starting to have cross-department conversations.

4.4.4. Faculty of Media and Communication (FMC)

The Faculty had launched their own PREP processes called 'Quality Enhancement in FMC'. Staff had been partnered with colleagues outside their discipline and were reviewing assessment briefs, language used and marking criteria. Colleagues had been working with Heads and Deputy Heads of Department to look at resources for marking, which was helping their 3-week turnaround figures. They had also created Task and Finish groups and would be holding an Education Conference for the groups to report on their findings. It was reported that staff were intending to publishing papers on their educational development work. The Faculty had worked on their AMER plans and had found that having inter-disciplinary conversations had helped with considerations around the quality of teaching.

4.5. International Mobility and Experience at BU

For Discussion

The paper was noted.

5. FOR APPROVAL/ ENDORSEMENT

5.1. New approach to Portfolio Review, Programme Approval and Annual Monitoring

The Head of Academic Quality outlined their proposal for a new approach to Programme Approval, Review and Monitoring. Changes to external regulatory drivers meant that there had been a move away from the more traditional sector approaches, outlined in the Quality code, to a less-process based approach as outlined in the principles-based regulatory framework, in particular the B conditions. It was acknowledged that there would likely be more portfolio development across BU's provision and there was an opportunity to develop a more efficient, risk-based approach to approval and review process. The proposal would mean the removal of cyclical periodic reviews for existing programmes, a more streamlined programme approval process and a move from annual monitoring to continuous monitoring. These three core quality processes were inter-related and it was suggested that there could be more alignment between them.

There would need to be a significant consultation process with stakeholders, so the team were looking for an initial endorsement from the committee of these high-level proposals. It was intended that the Marketing and Communications (M&C) team would lead on the Portfolio review process and the Academic Quality team had scheduled a meeting for the end of January with the Executive Deans, Deputy Deans, PRIME and M&C to start the discussions.

The committee discussed how the existing programme approval and review processes meant a high volume of work for both programme and central teams. The current approach placed a significant burden on programme teams at key periods and these were not always effective i.e. sometimes there were numerous modifications being made to the programmes in the years following a review, meaning that the preview process had not achieved its aim. It was questioned whether students and independent academics would still be involved in the programme approval process and confirmed that the plan was for faculties to include these important stakeholders but at in the earlier, more focused stage of programme development and/or design. The group commented that there needed to be effective curriculum design support for staff as part of this process. Work was also underway on gaining a true cost of courses and it was hoped that this information would be available to faculties to inform portfolio decisions.

The group raised a concern about how to monitor curriculum drift and suggested that FASECs would need to oversee curriculum more closely. The proposal included the option of an 'Enhanced Review' process which could be triggered by the data or by the department wanting to re-consider their programmes. Modifications or other curriculum changes could be completed in a more timely manner and enable provision to be more responsive to employers, PSRBs or industry. In was highlighted that consideration would need to be made about CMA compliance, considering what was a major change from a student perspective and not making constant changes where these were not required.

Decision: Endorsed for development.

5.2. New Partnerships:

5.2.1. Eastwood Park

It was reported that meetings had taken place with Eastwood Park to discuss the proposed partnership. It had originally been planned as a franchise agreement, but the due diligence had revealed that the partner was not on the OfS register, so the model would need to be validated. Supplementary due diligence was being undertaken by Legal Services, Finance and Academic Quality and if no concerns were raised it was intended to bring the full proposal to the Education Committee in February or March for approval.

5.2.2. British University Vietnam

It was reported that work was underway to develop a validated partnership model with the British University Vietnam. This was the first Transnational Education partner (TNE) that the University had set up for a number of years and it was noted that HEIs operated in a different regulatory environment now. The proposal was for undergraduate Tourism and Event Management programmes initially. It was reported that British University Vietnam was establishing new partnerships with other UK Partners, including Arts University Bournemouth. Supplementary Due Diligence was underway, and it was anticipated that this would be a longer process because there were more approval stages required via the Board, and the Legal due diligence and contract work on the partnership was being outsourced.

6. FOR NOTE

6.1. Pearson Institutional Review Report 2022/ 23

For Note

Jules Forrest

Decision: Noted

6.2. Apprenticeship Board 6.12.23

For Note

Prof Philip Sewell

Decision: Noted

6.3. BUBS FASEC Minutes 28.11.23 (Unconfirmed)

For Note

Dr Philip Ryland

Decision: Noted

6.4. FHSS FASEC Minutes 23.11.23 (Unconfirmed)

For Note

Prof Sara White

Decision: Noted

6.5. FMC FASEC Minutes 22.11.23 (Unconfirmed)

For Note

Prof Ann Luce

Decision: Noted

6.6. FST FASEC Minutes 22.09/22.11.23

For Note

Dr Carly Stewart

Decision: Noted

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

8. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING