

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday 29 May 2024 – 2.00pm to 4.00pm, Board Room, Talbot Campus

Attendees

Committee Members

Professor Keith Phalp (Pro Vice Chancellor - Education and Quality (Chair); Dr Shelley Thompson (Pro Vice Chancellor - Student Experience (Deputy Chair); Jules Forrest (Head of Academic Quality) (Secretary); Jacky Mack (Academic Registrar); Rosalind Ashcroft (Head of Academic Operations); Professor Lois Farquharson (Executive Dean – BUBS); Professor Sara White (Deputy Dean - FHSS); Dr Carly Stewart (Deputy Dean - FST); Norah Deka (SU Vice-President - Education) SUBU; Professor Sabeur Zoheir (Member of the Professoriate); Professor Philip Sewell (Director Of Apprenticeships & Skills); Dr Gelareh Roushan (Head of Fusion Learning Innovation and Enhancement (FLIE); Dr Julia Taylor (Head of the Doctoral College); Rohit Pakalapati (Student Representative – BUBS); Alex Caton-Bradley (Student Representative - FST)

In Attendance

Alex Jacobs [Agenda Item 5.2]; Dr Jo Thurston [Agenda Item 5.3]; Ann Barnes [Agenda Item 6.1]; Jack Guymer [Agenda Item 7.1]

Apologies

Professor Ann Luce (Deputy Dean - FMC); Professor Katharine Cox (Member of the Professoriate); Kerry-Ann Randle (Representative for vacant Student Services Director role); Dr Philip Ryland (Associate Dean Student Experience BUBS)

Meeting Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Information
Clerk

Apologies were noted as above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Information
Chair

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 Accuracy: Education Committee of 14 April 2024

Decision
Chair

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

3.2 Summary: e-Education Committee – 17 to 24 April 2024

The e-Education Committee Summary was approved.

3.3 Actions Log/Matters Arising

Actions Log

All of the actions were closed with the exception of those listed below:

Action 5.0 – SUBU Student Representatives Feedback Report: Action Ongoing: The SU VP Education would include an extra slide detailing any changes in the next report submitted to the Education Committee in June 2024.

Action 7.2 – Exceptional Circumstances Task and Finish Group Recommendations: Action Ongoing: A paper would be submitted to the next Education Committee meeting or e-meeting (dependant on timing).

Action 7.3 – Assessment Design and Generative AI: Action Ongoing: The item would be added to the agenda for discussion as a future Education Committee meeting.

Action 6.2 – Reflections on NSS/PTES/PRES/Graduate Outcomes: Action Ongoing: A paper would be submitted to the June 2024 Education Committee if it was available to share for further discussion.

Action 4.5 – Annual Report: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: Action Ongoing: The Head of Academic Quality would consider whether any sections of the report needed to be submitted to the Education Committee.

4. FOR RATIFICATION

4.1 Chair's Action – MSc Sport Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship

For Ratification
Chair

Decision: The Committee **ratified** the Chair's Action approval.

5. FOR DISCUSSION

5.1 Chair's Business

For Information
Chair

The Chair advised of recent discussions at University Executive Team (UET) meetings where there had been pockets of high failure rates for some units, in particular Foundation year units which had been flagged to Executive Deans and Heads of Departments.

The University Board had recently spent some time reviewing the BU2025 strategy and discussing future work in terms of changes to education, graduate attributes and the move to the competency approach, which was well received.

5.2 Graduate Attributes/Competencies

For Discussion
A Jacobs/Dr S Thompson

An overview of the previous discussions at the March Education Committee meeting was provided regarding the setting of achievable attributes and objectives that could be embedded in work over the coming months in order to take the project forward.

A set of proposed attributes had been produced in collaboration with Faculties and employers' market information available. Within each area, the proposed attributes for BU graduates had been categorised into 'Skills and Abilities' and 'Mindsets and Attitudes'. The three models of implementation were noted as: Model 1 – Standalone Modules/Units; Model 2 – Embedding with the curriculum and Model 3 – Self-managed. This work would be used as a vehicle to empower students to enhance their understanding and articulate their gains for their future.

The University aspired to achieve TEF Silver in 2027. Key to achieving gold in TEF is consistency and coherence in student experience and student outcomes, including educational gain.

For TEF 2023, the University stated it intended to use a range of measures to assess education gains. The features were noted as being very high quality, in particular, educational gains through Fusion learning principles, providing students with a high proportion of accredited programmes and providing a high level of placements.

The University was very clear of its aspirations and future intentions, and for TEF 2027, a good level of progress should have been made with regards to embedding this approach. Discussions would be taking place as work moved to competencies. The new Fusion Learning Approach would support consistently outstanding student experience and this would link to graduate competencies. The combination of the Fusion Learning Approach and Graduate Competencies would help the University to demonstrate consistent education gain for students and provide a stronger position for the University for TEF 2027.

Members noted that much had been learned from Apprenticeship programmes as they had been written to focus on the requirements of employment and the methodologies in which Apprenticeship programmes were applied with meeting skills and behaviours. This knowledge could be used to assist with moving forward and the learning would be linked with other areas such as the Access and Participation Plan (APP). Graduate Competencies were a method of bringing together skills and mindsets for students' futures which needed to be aligned to labour market needs with a potential for competency approach to articulate education gain. Moving forward, clarity around Fusion Learning was required and a requirement to include modern technology.

The short to medium term actions would include reconfiguring the Graduate Skills programme in line with the new competencies framework. Intervention Strategy 6: Employability would be written into the APP and this would provide a focus on skills gained through barriers faced or issues that students have overcome. A 'soft launch' of competencies would be introduced and piloted initially with programmes/departments, trialling embedding through assessment, learning outcomes, personal tutoring, placement support as well as piloting a framework for capturing gains from extra-curricular activities e.g. SUBU clubs/societies, sport and volunteering, and a clear language would be required to cover all activities.

A review of placements would take place to consider whether the University had the appropriate approach to placements as placement numbers were reducing. A flexible placement model may be considered to allow students to engage in various ways throughout the life of their degree, notwithstanding PSRB requirements. Members agreed that the language needed to be consistent and clear and a review of the language used on University's website would be required.

Longer term actions would include a review of policy 2B Programme Structure and Curriculum Design Characteristics, in particular Section 5 – Programme Design Principles, and Section 6 – External Frames of Reference. References to the open curriculum and placements would be removed and cross referenced with other documentation, and graduate competencies would be added as links to external frames of references in the context of B Conditions.

The pilot scheme would be a future discussion item for the committee to hear lessons learned and to discuss any changes needed as a result of the pilot scheme while the regulations are reviewed.

The presentation slides would be circulated to Education Committee members.

5.3 Student Voices 2024 and Beyond: A complete review of student voice

For Discussion
J Thurston

Following on from the previous 'Enhancing the Student Voice' work carried out by Professor Mike Silk and the introduction of the Student Voice Priority Workstream' in April 2023, the project highlighted the need for the University to humanise its approach to listening and responding to Student Voices and to encourage conversations, build communities and collaboration. The actions not completed due to the pandemic were revisited to ensure all actions remained current.

The first action focused on the SUBU reports submitted to various Committees. Members were asked whether the University provided a sufficient level of support for students to put forward agenda items for staff-student forums and allow for student-led discussion items. The FHSS Deputy Dean advised that this approach had had limited success in FHSS. It was reported that whilst students felt confident to raise items within the Any Other Business section of the agenda, however it was noted that students could not afford the time to set the agenda. The SU VP Education advised that students sometimes found attendance at these meetings intimidating but were sometimes happy to prepare a paper for SUBU staff to review before submission. This could be an area that could be shared with Student Reps who could contribute to agenda setting meetings/agenda items as students were unclear of the responsibilities/content of various University meetings. The FST Deputy Dean suggested introducing a similar scheme used for new University Board Members where new Board Members were allocated a mentor to guide new members through the processes for each meeting which worked well.

A second action had focused on the creation of a sub-section of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Group and the suggestion to introduce a consultative group of students who would be paid to be consulted around decision-making and providing an evaluation of student voice-initiated interventions. This action had been discussed with the Head of Student Voice and Policy in SUBU. The consultation group would be open to Student Ambassadors, PAL Leaders and Student Reps, with Heads of Department and Programme Leaders also being involved in these meetings.

The SU VP Education advised the Committee that students would prefer meetings to be considered as part of the timetabling process as the main reason for students not attending meetings was due to timetable clashes. Inviting students through their calendars would provide students with time to prepare for meetings in advance. Members also heard that students had provided feedback to advise they would like to be given the option to hold more Student-Staff Forums. The FHSS Associate Dean Student Experience (ADSE) advised of the re-introduction of the end of semester reviews where highlights of feedback that had been responded to were shared with students as well as looking forward to the next semester.

The Director of Apprenticeships and Skills reminded the Committee of the feedback data required for apprenticeship programmes and suggested a subjective statement be added to SimOn where topics could be introduced that were open for discussion. This information could also be reviewed as part of the UAMR data set. The Head of Careers and Employability advised that data available to the University was only useful if it was accurate as the data would only measure the students who replied, and those who generally replied were the students who were engaged.

The FHSS Associate Dean Student Engagement questioned whether the role of ADSE needed to be explored further, how issues should be addressed and whether Faculty Executive Teams should have sight of Staff - Student Forum minutes at each meeting, or whether Faculty Executive Teams would prefer the ADSE to prepare a list of themes resulting from Staff-Student Forums instead. If Staff-Student Forums were working satisfactorily, the students be hearing the work carried out in response to student feedback.

5.4 Generative Academic Integrity Quiz

For Approval
Dr G Roushan

The Head of Fusion Learning Innovation and Enhancement (FLIE) had been working with the Head of Library Services to create a quiz for staff and students at each level of study to ensure students were engaged with academic integrity. The data would be stored for reporting regulatory requirements to the Office for Students (OfS). The feedback had been provided at the previous Education Committee e-meeting has been submitted to the AI Think Tank for further discussion. The proposed staff/student quiz was provided for further comment and feedback and for launch next year and would be embedded into inductions. The FHSS Deputy Dean recommended the quiz was piloted with students initially, but also suggested an interactive quiz be introduced as good practice rather than a mandatory requirement. Members agreed the quiz may be helpful to students who had committed an academic offence.

In order that students were equipped to tackle assignments with integrity and to prevent any unintentional compromising of academic integrity including undisclosed use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in assessed work, workshops had been taking place where students were reviewing Assignment Brief templates and providing feedback. The Head of Fusion Learning Innovation and Enhancement (FLIE) would bring the results from these workshops would back to Education Committee for further discussion at the next appropriate meeting. In addition, work had been ongoing with framing information for students to clearly understand how they were able to use Artificial Intelligence and to provide examples so students could use Artificial Intelligence appropriately. Exeter University had recently introduced an awareness session for students to attend who had committed an academic offence which would be further considered by the University as an effective session for students to understand academic offences/Artificial Intelligence.

The prototype staff Artificial Intelligence tool could allow the user to work through bite size information interactively. The data collected from the quizzes would allow for filtering as required. The Chair agreed the quiz and the toolkit were clearly very helpful, although there was some uncertainty whether the quiz should be mandatory. The Head of FLIE would continue to work with the Head of Library Services on the Academic Integrity quiz and further discussion would take place at future Education Committee meetings.

The Committee approved the Generative Artificial Intelligence – Academic Integrity Student quiz for staff use, however the quiz would only be launched for students as a pilot scheme.

ACTION – Head of Fusion Learning Innovation and Enhancement (FLIE)

Decision: The Committee **approved** the quiz for staff use.
The Committee **approved** the quiz as a pilot scheme for students.

6. FOR DISCUSSION

6.1 New Access and Participation Plan (APP) Update

For Endorsement
A Barnes

Following on from earlier discussions at Senate meetings, a paper to provide an update on the development of the new APP to cover 2025-26 to 2028-29 was provided. The new APP would be submitted to the Office for Students (OfS) for approval by 1 October 2024. Six intervention strategies had been worked on by small teams from across the University, including student representation. An overview of the six Intervention Strategies was provided in their current state as some of the intervention strategies were more developed than others.

Colleagues from SUBU would be included in the next stage of Intervention Strategy discussions moving forward and would assist with shaping the future work for the University, which would progress through Education Committee meetings. The shape of the intervention strategies would also be submitted to Senate.

Decision: The Committee **endorsed** the new Access and Participation Plan update.

6.2 University of the Future

For Discussion
Chair

The report was noted.

7. FOR APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT

7.1 Institutional Analysis of Award Outcomes and Degree Outcome Statement

For Approval
J Forrest/ J Guymer

The committee noted the 5% decrease in the proportion of Good Honours awarded in comparison to the previous year. The Head of Academic Quality advised that PRIME had analysed the data at Faculty level there were no obvious explanation for the decline in the data. All Faculties had reviewed the Student Outcomes Data at Faculty Academic Standards and Education Committee meetings where it was noted that students' personal situations varied from year to year which affected their studies e.g. the cost of living or studying throughout the pandemic. The Chair noted one Faculty of Science and Technology programme had awarded very few first class degrees and it was suggested this data should be revisited and reinterpreted.

The Chair queried whether gaps still remained in terms of students obtaining higher classifications, of which the data was still in the process of being analysed. The main areas identified were that attainment levels for young students showed a downward trend, however for mature students the data was positive and showing an upwards trend. If a widening of the gap was identified, the University would need to address existing gaps which would be useful when preparing the next APP, as the new APP would need to understand existing gaps and creating more equitable experiences and outcomes for students.

The data for undergraduate good Honours degrees between 2018/19 and 2022/23 showed the proportion of good Honours in 2022/23 were almost identical to 2018/19 at 63%, although the average mark was different. The Deputy Dean for FHSS observed that current students were very different, had had disrupted level 3 learning experiences due to the pandemic and performance had declined in certain assessment since the pandemic. The University was putting support in place to help; however it was noted that the data did not show the realities of how students were experiencing their studies following the impact of the pandemic.

The Head of Academic Quality advised that PRIME had revisited the data, however they were unable to identify what had contributed to the decline in degree outcomes, although it was worth noting that during the pandemic action was taken to improve confidence in not having grade inflation and could also be due to more robust approaches to marking practice in line with the University's generic assessment criteria. Members noted that the 2022/23 graduates were impacted at level 3 due to the pandemic.

Decision: The Committee **endorsed** the paper for onward consideration at Senate.

8. FOR NOTE

8.1 Apprenticeship Board Minutes of 18 April 2024

The Apprenticeship Board minutes of 18 April 2024 were noted. **Noted**

8.2 BUBS FASEC Minutes of 14 March 2024 and 7 May 2024

The BUBS FASEC minutes of 14 March 2024 and 7 May 2024 were noted. **Noted**

8.3 FMC FASEC Minutes of 9 May 2024

The FMC FASEC minutes of 9 May 2024 were noted. **Noted**

8.4 FST FASEC Minutes of 13 March 2024

The FST FASEC minutes of 13 March 2024 were noted. **Noted**

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Rohit Pakalapati was attending his last meeting as BUBS Student Representative. The Committee thanked Rohit for attending Education Committee meetings and thanked Rohit for his contributions to the Committee.

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday 26 June 2024 – 10.00am to 1.00pm in OVC Board Room

- Mental Health Charter
- PREP: Plan for 2024/25 and longer-term
- University of the future

E-meeting in July 2024, Admincontrol