Bournemouth University

Confirmed

# EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**Monday 28 April 2025 – 2.00pm - 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), Grace Ehiosun (SU Vice-President – Education – SUBU), Professor Lois Farquharson (Executive Dean – BUBS), Dr Fiona Knight (Head of the Doctoral College), Professor Ann Luce (Deputy Dean - FMC), Jacky Mack (Academic Registrar), Catrin Morris (FST Student Representative), Kerry-Ann Randle (Representative for vacant Student Services Director role), Dr Gelareh Roushan (Head of Fusion Learning Innovation and Enhancement (FLIE), Professor Philip Sewell (Director Of Apprenticeships and Skills), Dr Carly Stewart (Deputy Dean - FST), Professor Sara White (Deputy Dean - FHSS), Professor Sabeur Zoheir (Member of the Professoriate)

**In Attendance**

Ros Ashcroft (Head of Academic Operations), Jack Guymer (Academic Quality Policy And Project Manager)

**Apologies**

Esther Isaiah (SU President - SUBU), Professor Lee Miles (Deputy Dean – BUBS), Dr Philip Ryland (Associate Dean Student Experience BUBS), Dr Kate Terkanian (Member of Senate)

### Meeting Minutes

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**1. APOLOGIES** — **Information** Clerk

Apologies were noted as above.

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**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** — **Information** Chair

There were no declarations of interest.

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**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

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3.1 Accuracy: Education Committee minutes of 29 January 2025 and 27 February 2025

The minutes were approved as an accurate record. **Approved**

3.2 Accuracy: e-Education Committee summary of 14 February 2025 and 1 April 2025

The e-meeting summaries were approved as an accurate record. **Approved**

3.3 Matters Arising/Actions Log

Updates were provided to each of the outstanding actions:

Action 6.4.1b – Student Outcomes – Foundation Years Data: The theme would be discussed at a future Education Committee meeting – **Action Ongoing**

Action 3.1.1 – AI, Academic Offences and Assessment Design: The Chair had approved the membership of the Academic Integrity Working Group; however it had been agreed that the group would not be formally re-established until the new academic year, following the outcome of the consultation and restructure, as key roles will likely be impacted. The informal group has been meeting to consider updates to the Academic Offence Policy and Procedure will continue to meet as planned. **Action closed.**

<u>Action 3.1.4b – Progression points process for students</u> – The Head of Academic Operations would continue to work on the mapping of key processes that can lead to students exiting their programme, i.e. *3K Academic Attendance and Engagement*, *11H Fitness to Practice*, *11J Support to Study*, etc. **Action Ongoing**

## 4. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair advised the University Executive Team (UET) had been reflecting on the University's governance processes and how information and data was managed through the committee structure. There had been a concern that the focus on data provided to committees was not receiving sufficient analysis or actionable insights being identified which required proactive steps to address gaps that required further action. Moving forward, committees would introduce a structured system to clearly track actions raised at meetings to address any further work required or address any issues identified in data.

A review of Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) was ongoing which had included Faculty Education Committee (FEC) meetings reviewing PSRB data for accuracy. A new policy and procedure was being developed in line with the ongoing work to ensure that ownership and responsibility for PSRB activity was clearly outlined and that the data relating to accreditation/professional registration and would be shared with Education Committee for consideration through regular reports.

The Office for Students (OfS) new condition of registration E6 stated the requirements for institutions to protect students from harassment and sexual misconduct. In line with the requirements, the University was preparing for policies to be put in place to advise how any incidents would be dealt with and the steps in place to protect students. A paper would be submitted to the next UET meeting on 6 May 2025 for consideration. There had also been a review of training opportunities as all students would be required to undertake misconduct training in the 2025/26 academic year. These issues had been raised at the SUBU Summit where student safety had been discussed. Further information would be shared with the Committee in due course before proceeding to Senate.

## 5. FOR RATIFICATION

### 5.1 QAEG Member Nomination Form – Deborah Taylor, BUBS

**For Ratification**
Chair

The Committee ratified the approval of Deborah Taylor as a QAEG member. **Ratified**

### 5.2 BA Criminology Foundation Year Programme Development Proposal Form

**For Ratification**
Chair

The Committee ratified the approval of the BA Criminology Foundation Year programme. **Ratified**

## 6. SUBU UPDATE

2,419 SimOn comments were received between December 2024 and February 2025 which was lower than the number of comments received at the same point last year. 80% of the comments received were from undergraduate students who were less positive than the previous year. The main positive themes from both undergraduate and postgraduate students were focused on BU Student Services, library resources, teaching staff and SUBU. Negative feedback received was primarily around course content and delivery, exams/ assessment and feedback, timetable and teaching staff.

Speak Week had taken place between 24 March and 30 April 2025 across both campuses. The focus was on the services provided to students, how students were developed and how SUBU listened to and represented students during their time at BU. A total of 703 responses were received by the end of the first seven days of Speak Week.

The Director Of Apprenticeships and Skills asked that future SUBU SimOn reports to include a separate category for Apprentices as this information was required for Ofsted. The SU VP Education agreed to include this information moving forward.

**Action 24/6a: The SU VP Education would ensure Apprenticeships information was included in the report moving forward**

The Chair noted the concerns regarding negative student feedback, particularly regarding assessment turnaround times, despite significant efforts to improve the process. Whilst there had been a significant amount of work carried out to make improvements, this work was not visible or well-communicated to students, leading to student frustration and the perception from students that feedback on assessed work was not being followed up. Moving forward, clearer communication needed to be shared with students to ensure students were aware their feedback was being acknowledged and addressed to reassure students of any progress made with concerns raised. Members suggested providing students with regular updates, summaries or a feedback tracking dashboard which could be decided by Faculties.

Although feedback from students was recorded in a Student Voice Log, it was reported that many students were not aware that the Student Voice Log was available to view and it was agreed communications to students should be improved in partnership with student reps. The SU VP Education noted that the key challenge was to ensure students received regular updates of any issues discussed in Staff:Student Forums and there should not be a reliance on student reps to share the information. The introduction of a structured communication process would help to keep students fully informed. The Deputy Dean (FST) and the student representative (FST) agreed to meet after the meeting to discuss the particular issues identified in the Department of Psychology.

**Action 24/6b: The Deputy Dean (FST) and student representative (FST) would meet to discuss the issues identified in the Department of Psychology**

The Chair noted that the communication of student feedback actioned by staff members had been discussed by the committee many times historically. The student representative (FST) advised that following discussions with fellow students it had been noted that students would like to be able to contribute to the decision-making process regarding how changes were dealt with and progressed. Students had also advised there had also been issues raised that had not been recorded accurately. Moving forward, in order to improve feedback to students, it was suggested the Marketing & Communications department be included in resolving issues and reporting issues back to students and to possibly provide a central repository for students to review student feedback and view the responses/updates provided.

Members agreed that clear communication was very important and it was the responsibility of all staff to communicate feedback on all issues raised. In everyday situations, there was a formal process to follow, however there were many emails and informal conversations taking place after lectures and staff were doing the best to collate all issues/feedback raised. It was suggested that community spaces were all being used very differently, and it was agreed that consistency should be introduced to ensure discussions took place at Student Voice Committee meetings to review all student staff forum logs and themes across the University which in turn would be responded to in student newsletters on Brightspace.

## 7. FOR APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT

### 7.1 ARPP 9A Reflection on Education Practice (REP): Policy and Procedure

**For Approval**
Dr G Roushan

Updates to ARPP *9A Reflection on Education Practice: Policy and Procedure* had been made following on from suggestions made by Education Committee members to help simplify the process. The main focus of REP updates was around teaching observation which had also been reviewed by Deputy Deans, Deputy Chair of Education Committee and the Chair of Education Committee. ARPP 9A would also include the implementation and mobilisation of teaching observation as well as including more activity with line managers' action, peer observers and observees as part of conversations moving forward and ensuring all staff were fully supported. The next step would be to review a detailed version of the policy and bring the policy in line with apprenticeships in order to avoid a two tiered approach moving forward. Members were agreed they were content with the policy wording.

The Head of Academic Quality agreed the policy was much clearer following the recent updates, however there was no reference in the policy purpose with regards to enhancing teaching quality. The Director of Apprenticeships and Skills advised this information was initially included however Ofsted believed that if learners felt they were learning and when being observed it was clear that the learner was learning, this was deemed to be good quality education. The policy was also focusing on collegiality and helping staff to enhance their teaching and learning practices. The Director of Apprenticeships and Skills advised that the policy would be reviewed to include some wording around teaching quality.

**Action 24/7.1a: The Director of Apprenticeships and Skills would update the policy to include wording around teaching quality**

Section 2.1 of ARPP 9A should read ‘it is the responsibility of Academic Quality to ensure that this policy and procedure is kept up to date’.

**Action 24/7.1b: The Director of Apprenticeships and Skills/Head of FLIE would update the policy as suggested**

The Head of Academic Quality advised that reporting from ARPP 9A would be useful for compliance of Condition B1 and Condition B4. The Head of FLIE advised that dashboards were in the process of being prepared and would be made available for line managers in order that actions for line managers and items for enhancement could be noted by Academic Quality and Education Committee. The Committee heard that Ofsted would need to see ownership of outcomes and continuous improvement being monitored regularly by Apprenticeship Board. Actions would be identified in the Self-Assessment Report in order that the University could provide evidence to Ofsted of the excellent quality of education.

The Chair recommended that a Reflection on Practice Annual Report be submitted to the Committee which provided key relevant information. The content and timeliness of the report could be finessed as discussions took place around the introduction of dashboards.

The Head of Academic Quality advised that the wording in section 5.7 required more clarity regarding the intention. The Director of Apprenticeships and Skills advised the intention was for the Apprenticeships Team to have experience in carrying out Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) of apprenticeships and support those involved in observations to understand the requirements of Ofsted’s Education Inspection Framework and how that relates to assessing the quality of teaching for apprenticeships. The Head of Academic Quality queried who would be providing the training for observers. It was reported that this was still to be confirmed and would be discussed further outside of the meeting.

**Action 24/7.1c: The Head of Academic Quality and the Director of Apprenticeships and Skills would discuss training for observers outside the meeting**

Section 6.3 of the policy stated a staff member would observe the pre-arranged session for no more than 10 minutes, and it was queried whether this needed to be such a specific length of time as defined in the policy. It was reported that 10 minutes was a common approach across the sector in terms of apprenticeship provision, it was agreed that the policy did not need to specify the exact timing of this, and it would be made more flexible in the policy.

Following the suggested updates, ARPP *9A Reflection on Education Practice: Policy and Procedure* would be shared with union reps via the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee (JCNC), before being submitted to Senate for final approval. The Deputy Chair advised there was significant work to take place in order to operationalise the policy. The committee noted that it was important to have a clear policy to share with Ofsted and to provide clarity for staff.

The Committee endorsed ARPP *9A Reflection on Education Practice: Policy and Procedure* in principle for onward progression to the (JCNC).

**Endorsed**

7.2 ARPP 6J Exceptional Circumstances for Assessment Policy **For Approval**
J Forrest/J Guymer

The updates to ARPP 6J addressed the significant increase in the number of requests from students for consideration of Exceptional Circumstances and appeals and the updates included suggested amendments received from Education Committee members. The proposed changes included a review of the definition and examples of Exceptional Circumstances, a proposal to include a ‘fit-to-sit’ approach, a suggested limit on the number of extensions that students could apply for in line with the OIA’s Good Practice Framework and provided some consistency across Faculties which would also assist with consistency at Exceptional Circumstances Boards. The policy ensured a focus on student welfare and reinforced the use of Exceptional Circumstances should only be used for short-term, unforeseen circumstances. Initially, the amendments to the policy were proposed to start in September 2026 as the system updates were fundamental to the proposed changes, however this has been changed to a phased approach starting in September 2025.

With regards to ‘fit to sit’ there was data available that would allow modelling of the impact of introducing ‘fit-to-sit’; the most relevant data set is the number of students who submit an exceptional circumstance request after an assessment and then who appeal the outcome via the appeal process (ground 3). Through fit-to-sit, students would be encouraged much earlier to engage with their Programme/Unit Leader when requesting an extension. Earlier engagement with this process would benefit the University’s responses to appeals as clear guidelines would be included in the policy. Sector research had been carried out regarding ‘fit to sit’ and it was noted that communication with students needed to be very clear and sent much earlier to advise the ground 3 route when appealing was not a viable route to obtain an extension or an uncapped reassessment.

For those students with mental health issues, ALS have a record of any student with disclosed mental health issues although it was recognised that in order for the University to be as flexible as possible, there would need to be consistency across the University for the methods to accurately record mental health issues. The Committee noted that mental health issues were personal and sensitive and it was important that the system was agile and would allow each student's circumstances/request to be reviewed individually.

With regards to the phased approach, it was agreed that the proposal should be shared with the Project Management Office (PMO) who were leading on the implementation of the restructure and how this policy change could be managed alongside the other institutional changes taking place over the next few months.

**Action 24/7.2: The Head of Academic Quality/Academic Quality Policy and Project Manager would share the phased approach proposal with the Project Management Office**

This would need to be a priority project in a work stream for managing the transition between academic years.

Feedback received from the Education Committee would be shared with Senate when the policy was presented for approval. The Committee thanked the Academic Quality Policy and Project Manager and the Associate Dean Student Experience (BUBS) for the hard work in preparing the paper.

The Committee approved the policy updates and considered the implementation plan for onward approval by Senate.

**Approved**

7.3 New Portfolio Development – BSc (Hons) Midwifery Degree Apprenticeship **For Approval**
Prof P Sewell

The new BSc (Hons) Midwifery Degree Apprenticeship programme proposal had been endorsed by Faculty Education Committee on 20 March 2025 and endorsed by the Apprenticeship Board on 23 April 2025 for development. The proposal was now presented to the Committee for approval.

The Committee approved the development of the new BSc (Hons) Midwifery Degree Apprenticeship programme.

**Approved**

The Head of Academic Quality advised that the Academic Quality team had been reviewing the programme approval and review processes, and it was proposed to introduce a new institutional point of approval which was not Education Committee or Apprenticeship Board and would be a strategic group who would meet periodically to approve new programme titles, new provision and major strategic changes e.g. accelerated degrees. This proposal was due to be submitted to the University Executive Team shortly and the approval process would be clearer for all.

## 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee noted the items for discussion at the May meeting:

- Institutional Award Analysis and Degree Outcomes Statement
- Proposed changes to ARPP 6A Assessment Regulations
- Appeals and Complaints Report
- Student Engagement Framework: Reporting

Members were requested to advise the Secretary of any items to be added to the May agenda.

## 9. DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS:

e-meeting: w/c Monday 12 May 2025
Wednesday 28 May 2025
Wednesday 25 June 2025
e-meeting: w/c Monday 7 July 2025