
Minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2014 at 2.00pm in the Board Room

Present:

Prof T McIntyre-Bhatty (Chair)	Deputy Vice Chancellor
Dr S Eccles (Deputy Chair)	Head of Education, Media School (MS)
Ms D Sparrowhawk (Secretary)	Academic Administration Manager (HSC)
Ms M Frampton (Clerk)	Policy and Committees Officer (AS)
Ms M Barron	Head of Student Support Services (SSS)
Dr F Cownie	School Student Experience Champion, Media School (MS)
Dr A Diaz	Student Engagement & Co-creation Theme Leader (CEL)
Dr B Dyer	School Student Experience Champion (HSC) & Chair of Student Voice Committee
Associate Prof G Esteban	Member of the Professoriate, Faculty of Science & Technology (SciTech)
Prof V Hundley	Member of the Professoriate, School of Health & Social Care (HSC)
Mr A James	General Manager of the Students' Union (SUBU)
Mr S Jones	Head of Facilities Management
Ms J Mack	Head of Academic Services (AS)
Dr A Main	School Student Experience Champion, Faculty of Science & Technology (SciTech)
Ms E Mayo-Ward	Vice President (Education) of the Students' Union (SUBU)
Ms J Quest	Senate Representative
Prof K Phalp	Deputy Dean (Education), Faculty of Science & Technology (SciTech)
Mr R Pope	Vice President (Welfare), Students' Union (SUBU)
Mr M Ridolfo	School Student Experience Champion, Business School (BS)
Prof E Rosser	Deputy Dean (Education), School of Health and Social Care (HSC)
Dr G Roushan	Acting Deputy Dean (Education) (BS) and Chair of the Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy Forum
Ms C Schendel-Wilson	SU President 2014/15, Students' Union (SUBU)
Dr C Shiel	Associate Professor (SciTech)
Ms C Symonds	Head of Quality and Academic Partnerships (AS)
Mr J Ward	Director of IT Services

Student Representatives:

Ms S McGrane	BU Undergraduate Student
Mr J Oliveira	BU Undergraduate Student (International)
Mr K Fraser	Partner Institution Student

In attendance:

Ms S Clarke	Head of Service Excellence (OVC)
Ms A Fernandez	Director of Marketing & Communications (M&C)
Ms S Gates	Internal Communications Manager (M&C)
Mr R Hydon	School Director of Operations (ST)
Mr R Pottle	Head of PRIME

Apologies:

Apologies had been received from:

Mr J Cooke	Head of Student Engagement (SUBU)
Ms A Lacey	Student Rep Champion (HSC)
Mr S Laird	Director of Estates
Canon Dr B Merrington	University Chaplain
Dr S Minocha	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement)
Prof J Parker	Member of the Professoriate, School of Health & Social Care (HSC)
Dr P Ryland	Deputy Dean (Education), School of Tourism (ST)
Prof T Zhang	Head of the Graduate School (GS)

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The Chair welcomed the group to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies were noted as above.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 23 May 2014**

2.1 Accuracy

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

Dr Diaz asked whether the Student Voice Committee (SVC) could discuss and review the overall impact of the introduction of Student Charters and which elements or sections were most or least effective at School level. Dr Dyer confirmed she would discuss this proposal further with the SVC and report back to the Committee.

Action: BD

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 Minute 3.4 – Academic Advisor Research Feedback

The Committee would like to see further evaluation of the information gathered, conclusions and recommendations. Further work had been carried out to identify current practice across the Schools and recommendations regarding the way forward would be provided to the Committee in due course.

Action Closed: This action was now closed due to other events within the University and would now be superseded.

2.2.2 Minute 3.1 – Debate Item

Members were reminded to submit any suggestions for future debate items to the ESEC Clerk.

Action Completed: The ESEC Clerk reminded ESEC members to advise of any suggestions for future debate items.

2.2.3 Minute 3.1.1 – Annual Review: Education and Student Experience Plans (ESEPs)

Members agreed the ESEP had some overlap with the School Quality Report (SQR) Action Plan, although the SQR was more focused on issues of quality and standards. As the intention was to refine and focus the ESEP in future, it was likely that such duplication could be significantly reduced. Ms Symonds agreed to look through the SQR requirements to ensure information was clear regarding the differentiation between the ESEP and SQR Action Plan.

Action Completed: Additional advice has been added to the SQR template to ensure that there was appropriate differentiation between the two documents. The amended template had been circulated to Schools/Faculty and Partners.

2.2.4 Minute 3.3 – Key Performance Indicators/Performance Indicators

It was questioned whether BU should start to develop student engagement KPIs to support our good practice, as demonstrated by QAA commendation. Evidence would be provided by the Student Engagement Survey around academic engagement as well as the information gathered around the students' holistic experience. It was noted that this topic was due to be developed by the Student Voice Committee (SVC) with the assistance of the Centre for Excellence in Learning (CEL). Dr Dyer agreed to take this information forward and work with SVC with the support of SUBU.

Action Completed: Members agreed that there would be value in measuring various student engagement components e.g. extra-curricular activity as proposed by the group, and that this may be achieved through the SDA and/or HEAR as outlined in 3.1. Members of CEL and SUBU were currently exploring software solutions through the SRS/SITS Working Group to facilitate electronic recording of wide student engagement activity.

- 2.2.5 Minute 3.4 – Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy Forum (TELSF) Update
Dr Roushan advised that the minutes of the last TELSf meeting of 14 May 2014 would be emailed to members to provide a summary of the review of the TELSf, and the minutes would be included within the next set of ESEC meeting in September 2014.

Action Completed: The TELSf minutes of 14 May 2014 were emailed to ESEC members on 28 May 2014 and were included in the set of meeting papers for the ESEC meeting on 23 September 2014.

- 2.2.6 Minute 5.1 – SUBU President's Report
DDEs were required to circulate the SUBU President's Report within Schools/Faculty for information.
Action Completed: All DDEs circulated the SUBU President's Report within their School/Faculty.

- 2.2.7 Minute 5.1 – SUBU President's Report
The SUBU President agreed to add DDEs to the distribution list for future circulation of the SUBU President's Report. In order to more widely share the information, the report would also be added to the BU Staff Intranet in future.
Action Ongoing: The process of adding the SUBU President's Report to staff intranet was ongoing. Members agreed that the report did not need to be circulated to DDEs separately as the report was included with the ESEC meeting papers. DDEs would continue to disseminate the SUBU President's report within the academic community.

2.3 Terms of Reference and Membership List

The Terms of Reference and Membership List were **approved** by the Committee.

It was noted that Mr Cooke's job title had changed to Head of Student Engagement.

It was noted that Dr Roushan's job title had changed to Acting Deputy Dean of Education (BS).

3 **PART 1: FOR DISCUSSION**

3.1 NSS Results/Annual Review of PREP/ESEPs

3.1.1 NSS Results

A full report had been circulated with the agenda.

The overall satisfaction score for BU had remained at 80%, with the sector average remaining static at 86%. A total of 22 courses had an overall improved satisfaction score; however the same number had shown a decline in their score. If the five lowest scoring courses were removed from the equation, the BU overall score would have increased to 83% which would have been a significant improvement. However, a number of areas that had been targeted in previous cycles had not improved and some actions had not been fully carried through/implemented from previous ESEP discussions. These issues, such as effective mid-cycle unit feedback and resultant dialogue, and academic advisor support now need to be embedded. It was noted that it was imperative that BU not simply incrementally enhance, since the results would therefore not be likely to be significantly different, and that all colleagues needed to consider step-change in practices to ensure an outstanding and personalised student experience.

The area of Assessment and Feedback had shown a decline of 4% to 65% which was behind the sector average. Organisation and Management had also shown a decline of 2% to 73%, and this area was now 5% behind the sector average. The areas of Learning and Resources and Academic Support had both increased for the fourth consecutive year and BU was now level with the sector average of 85% and 81% respectively. The Partner Colleges' satisfaction rate remained at 83%, with the highest performing Partner College being Yeovil College at 95%. The lowest performing Partner College was Wiltshire College at 79%.

Initial reflection on the NSS results confirmed earlier discussions at ESEC meetings regarding Assessment and Feedback. However it was agreed that action needed to be taken to improve this situation. Most Schools had highlighted assessment and feedback in their ESEP submissions for the coming year and some were disappointed that the previous foci of PREP had not provided a gain. PREP activity should be reviewed for 2014/15 in order to ensure that the activities are appropriately focused and can enhance good educational practice. There was other mixed evidence of past success, for example, there appears an unhelpful coincidence between higher use of e-feedback and a decrease in ratings regarding detailed comments on assessment. It was also not clear that assessment strategies had been fully optimised for semester delivery (where that was now the format of delivery). In addition, qualitative comments from students in the NSS had indicated that sometimes assessment deadlines had been moved, and that feedback on work was not prompt. It was therefore remiss that three week turnaround was not mentioned/targeted in all ESEPs.

It was noted that many appeals and complaints over the past ten years had been centred around feedback and marks received from lecturers, staff members not returning calls/emails, students not being advised of cancelled lectures and the bunching of assignments. Members agreed these should be seen as 'quick win' issues that could improve students' experiences considerably.

The Media School reported that there may be a need for increased investment in administrative support for Organisation and Management, especially when student numbers were increasing. Members were reminded that the Student Journey Project (SJP) was still in progress, which will look at this area.

It was highlighted that there was still the need for job descriptions and responsibility matrices for Programme Co-ordinators/Leaders it was proving difficult to recruit to these positions, due to perceived lack of institutional recognition. The BS would like assistance from Human Resources/Organisational Development to develop job descriptions that are complementary to those of Framework Leaders.

Members noted that it would be useful to further understand students' perceptions about Organisation and Management, so that areas of concern could be addressed within their School/Faculty. One area already identified is that changes to timetables are not always communicated efficiently or effectively to students. Members agreed on the importance of keeping students as up-to-date as possible regarding all areas of their courses and confirming such through online methods of communication.

It was also noted that the logistics of timetabling across the institution is still not ideal. For HSC this is a particular issue as 40% of their students are mature students with childcare/carer obligations, and the need for timetables to be issued as early as possible was very important to prospective students. There was some concern that other HEIs seem to provide their timetables as early as May but that BU issues timetables only a week in advance. This was seen as particularly detrimental to students in HSC.

It was agreed that Estates should look into this issue further, although it was accepted that there remain some problems with regards to Schools/Faculty and academics not providing information in time, as well as confirmation and clearing creating uncertainty in terms of final student numbers and cohort sizes.

Action: SJ to talk to HSC in particular (and other Schools/Faculty) about this issue

It was noted that within HSC efforts had been made to improve the information provided to students for their assignments briefs. HSC Unit Leads ask colleagues from other groups to check that the instructions are clear and comprehensive prior to issuing them to students so that any necessary amendments can be made. This year, HSC have introduced 'co-creation' assignment guidance, whereby second year students are asked to feed back on their experiences of first year assignment briefing so that areas of good practice can be identified and shared, and improvements made to the writing and presentation of the briefs in future.

Dr Roushan informed members that communication and managing student expectations were key issues and suggested that staff development activities, drawing on expertise from Service Excellence and the Centre for Excellence in Learning (CEL), could help in supporting and sharing good practice amongst academics. Consideration should be given to accommodating the needs and experiences of longer serving academics versus those who were new to teaching.

In summary, and in reference to outcomes from the ULT/Heads of Department Away Day, members agreed that academic staff should be encouraged and supported in developing a fully collegiate relationship with students via a continuous dialogue that included more individual contact time, care, attention and feedback to students through a range of different media.. This could be facilitated through Academic Advisor sessions and it was noted that all should learn from HSC's successful Academic Advisor system. As professional educators, it is important that academic staff support every student in achieving their full potential whilst at BU and provide educational experiences that both challenge and excite them.

3.1.2 Annual Review of PREP

This item was discussed within the section above.

3.1.3 Education & Student Experience Plans (ESEPs)

Within the ESEPs submitted by Schools/Faculty and Professional Services, members agreed each ESEP had been reflective and thoughtful and had clearly targeted specific actions. Sharing ESEPs was a useful exercise to identify differences and to share good practice.

Key issues were highlighted:

- Most Schools had focused on specific programmes and/or areas for improvement and had made the ESEP more concise. This programme specific focus was required in all ESEPs given the NSS results.
- Many actions from previous ESEPs were now recognised as good practice and embedded as 'business as usual'.
- Schools had identified different approaches to assessment and feedback to encourage more innovative ideas and practices.
- As staff were starting to discuss the issue of Assessment and Feedback, it was suggested a small Working Group could be set up to discuss innovation and share good practice in this area. The Chair of ESEC would be part of the new Working Group and would be in contact with those who raised issues at the meeting in order that their concerns could be taken forward. Dr Roushan would arrange a date for the Working Group for DDEs.
Action: GR
- A query was raised on whether colleagues had ideas on making the feedback on Turnitin for online assignments more user-friendly for students. This could be an area for discussion by the Working Group as above.
- Members agreed that students need to know how they performed according to the criteria set and what they could do better for their next assignment.
- It was not clear that each School/Faculty had identified a student experience budget to support enhancement student learning experiences and that this should be considered.

The discussion regarding ESEPs and the sharing of information should help to inform members' plans for action and improvement over the next twelve months and Schools should continue working towards the creation of first class student experiences.

3.2 **Debate Item: Are we creating rich, meaningful experiences for our students?**

Since her involvement with Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), Dr Roushan noted that there had tended to be a focus on the 'technology' element of TEL, often at the expense of 'learning'. The article provided to members looked at some historic debates in this regard and Dr Roushan encouraged members to consider how BU wants to connect students to the world outside of academia without isolating them.

The Committee was reminded that BU prepares students for a complex uncertain world where technology continues to evolve at a breakneck pace. Students need to be given the opportunity to think about the whole of their student experience and how they can develop themselves and draw together everything that they have learned at university.

In summary of the discussion, it was agreed that BU needed strong programme leadership and high performing academic teams that worked together effectively. This debate should inform the ESEPs and staff development during 2014/15, and ESEPs should capture members' thoughts and plans on how Schools/Faculty are dealing with these and similar issues.

3.2.1 **Technology Enhanced Learning Forum (TELSF) Update**

This agenda item had been discussed within Agenda Item 3.2.

3.3 **BU Student Development Award**

The Student Development Award (SDA) would be open to an increased number of students over the next two to five years, although some processes would need to be refined in order to hit the targets set.

96% of students felt the Award had enabled them to develop their own confidence with CV writing, application forms and preparing for interviews, which was an increase of 21%. Work would continue on these personal developments and every effort would be made to get as many students involved as possible.

Sonya Harvey was commended on the work she does with the SDA and the excellent 1:1 sessions she runs with students.

3.4 **SUBU President's Report – Focus on the coming Semester**

SUBU were currently working on a 'Top 10' list of students' concerns based on feedback received so far via the National Student Survey (NSS) and Student Opinion Survey (SOS). To date, 21,000 comments had been received and SUBU would continue to analyse these comments. The 'Top 10' list would be finalised and shared by the end of September 2014.

This year, SUBU will be piloting an initiative called '20:20 Vision teams' lead by the SU VP (Education), whereby teams of 20 students will take 20 days to interview 20 students each about key issues around their student experience. The results would inform the direction of surveys moving forward.

A number of people and services have recently been recognised locally and internationally for their work:

- Best Student Sports Club – Winner, SUBU Boat Club
- Volunteer Service of the Year – Winner, SUBU Volunteering
- Lifetime Achievement Award – Runner Up, Lexy Browning, SUBU Volunteer Co-ordinator

The SUBU President had been working with local residents, Ian Jones and James Donald to encourage BU students to play an active role in the community. Work would continue on increasing the engagement of students with the SUBU Activities Department. However in the long term, SUBU would be looking into ways of reducing the costs associated with clubs and societies.

The SUBU VP (Education) has been working on the Staff Handbook for Student Representation over the summer, which would shortly be distributed to academic staff. Work was also being carried out on the Student Rep Handbook. The name of the School Reps had changed to Senior Rep Officers (SROs), now that BU had a Faculty, and BU no longer operated a solely School-based system.

The SUBU VP (Welfare) has been working on the Mental Health Day with James Palfreman-Kaye. SUBU's Safe Space policy would be implemented imminently and would be embedded across all SUBU departments and training for staff had taken place before students returned for the 2014/15 academic year.

The SUBU VP (Lansdowne) has been working on improving how SUBU engages with students whilst on placement and has been working on securing funding to make the outside of Studland House more aesthetically pleasing, which may include seating.

It was noted that work had taken place to extend the number of extra-curricular activities which take place at Lansdowne. Further work would continue in order to improve student satisfaction.

Members agreed that BU and SUBU should celebrate the excellent work carried out by so many people and every effort should be made to share student and staff successes.

4. PART 2: FOR APPROVAL AND ENDORSEMENT

4.1 Ratification of Chair's Action: Revision to Student Disciplinary Policy

The Committee **ratified** the Chair's Action to approve the changes to 11K – *Student Disciplinary: Procedure*.

5. PART 3: FOR NOTE

5.1 Centre for Excellence in Learning Update

The paper was **noted**.

5.2 Review of Current Student Essentials "Is it fit for purpose?"

The paper was **noted**.

6 REPORTING COMMITTEES

6.1 Student Voice Committee Minutes of 14 May 2014 and 25 June 2014

The minutes were **noted**.

6.2 Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy Forum (TELSF) Minutes of 14 May 2014 and 9 September 2014

The minutes were **noted**.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 7.1 It was advised that a Working Group was to be established to discuss improvements in School/Faculty Inductions for next year's inductions.

Mr Ridolfo, Ms Barron, SUBU President and the SUBU VP (Education) agreed to be part of the Working Group. Any members who would wish to be involved in this Working Group should contact Mr Ridolfo.

Action: ALL

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 26 November 2014, 2.00pm to 4.00pm in the Board Room