UET Meeting

Tue 25 April 2023, 10:00 - 13:00

Committee Room, Poole House

Attendees

Board members
John Vinney, Jim Andrews, Keith Phalp, Karen Parker, Susie Reynell (Finance Director)

Attendees
Jane Forster

Meeting minutes

1. Minutes and Matters arising from the previous meeting held on 18 April 2023

JV welcomed KPa to her first meeting.

- It was noted that the relevant section of the minutes should be shared with TR and AH relating to the research workstream. The minutes were approved.
- JA reported that Admissions Group has been closed. Work is ongoing on the new confirmation and clearing group.
- KPh gave updates on some actions which will be added to the tracker.
- SR noted that the financial regulations had been approved at ARG. Further changes may driven by FRC may be reviewed by ARG in June.

ACTIONS:

- SR to bring proposals on the financial regulations back to UET for discussion.

- We will also look at planning timelines across the year together.

🗎 UET action list download 18th April 23.pdf
🗎 Minutes_UET Meeting_180423.pdf

2. UET Team Leadership

*Discussion
Colleen Harding (For Whole Meeting)*

We had a positive discussion about team dynamics, leadership and behaviours, and the opportunity to set up a positive approach during this transitional period.

3. Finance discussion

Susie Reynell

3.1. Cash flow update

*Information
Susie Reynell*

Cash flow is positive. ███████████████████████████ .

3.2. Bids for approval

*Approval
Susie Reynell*

Approved.
🗎 Narrative for UET meeting 25.04.2023.pdf

3.3. March management accounts

*Discussion
Susie Reynell*

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🗎 FRC Management Accounts March 2023 draft v2.pdf

3.4. Business planning and budget

Income is close to being finalised, validating student numbers. Staffing as we expected correctly - 2% across the board. In TRAC people are spending more than 400 hours on research. Is this well understood and are people are aware of it and will they try and meet it.   These sorts of expectations are not always understood, they can be a problem for small teams.

ACTION:
- What are the issues and how are we going to communicate it? SR is arranging ULT engagement meetings.
- JA says there is not clarity about student numbers being used across BU for planning - SR to clarify that with all the stakeholders.

4. Break

5. Student Experience and Continuation priority workstreams

Shelley Thompson, Jo Thurston, Mandi Barron, Einar Thorsen (Invited)

This is an opportunity to hear from 5 of the workstream leads about their thinking on the workstreams and how to take them forward. They are all interconnected with each other and with other things so helpful to join them up.
Reflections at the end of this item:
- KPa noted that we need to engage positively and early with the TUs on matters that involve organisational change.
- SR noted that we reflect in a few different places a challenge with strategic direction not being clear - we need to recognise those areas and deal with them.
- SR noted the interesting distinction between engagement and collaboration - explaining change positively not always asking for views.
- CH -we asked what people needed and positive reinforcement, agreement in principle. Plenty of connecting.
- Follow up is important. Positive and supportive and empowering.

ACTIONS: workstream leaders asked to bring back proposals for endorsement as required as they go through and clarify longer and shorter term actions. There is an opportunity on 30th May but short proposals can be approved before that as required.

5.1. Access to learning and resources

Discussion
Shelley Thompson

ST - lots of ongoing work on the streams - Brightspace, comms and lecture capture. JW will work on this stream to as the comms are very linked.

Lecture capture - need to agree a destination - opt out? ST has looked at about 100 policies across the sector - a fair amount of opt in but it is supported by policies on student recording to support student requirements or to replace note taking. Possibility for a survey on barriers but we know what the barriers are across the sector. For example if we agree we want opt out by September 2024 - give us time to work through the requirements, guidance etc. Needs to be staff engagement but make some decisions about direction first, consult on what we want to do.

Brightspace, too loose. Lots of possibilities but need strategic guidance about how it should be used. More substantial and measurable impact, using existing tools - simplify and implement.

Comms - audit student facing aspects of the website and look at functionality and channels and also email lists reviewed with IT. Again it needs simplifying - what do we need and want to communicate and what do they want to receive (and how). They don't know where to start - too much available, where do you go. Streamline.

What do you need to support that? ST has meeting with GR and TG to discuss current use of Brightspace. Challenges in unlocking some things in some areas - some concerns. Reassurance required about recognising the good work and intentions and driver for change. Work with IT/FLIE. Not clear where the lines are. ST will meet TO. Student workspace - another thing - more complex? Do we need to pause some things, is more potential on Brightspace as invested a lot of time and energy into it. Early adopters are fine, some need support to try new things. Need to create an environment for innovation and simplify and cut out noise. We need them to do some things and that is where simplification will help.

ET noted that messages about these things need to be humanised and simplified for both staff and students.

5.2. Student Voice

JT has looked at current reality. Objectively our surveys get between 3 and 33% of students responding so there are a lot we don't know about. If we look at the time we spent on analysing these then there is a question of value. 60% of students start but don't finish. Research shows surveys don't engage marginalised groups. Need relationship building. When lose trust don't get it back - if they have a relationship, how we respond to a challenge can mend the problem.

What do we want to do - collaborate and co-create solutions, on student feedback.

Subjectively - we are always a year behind. Action planning relates to the last cohort - not the current ones. Colleagues detached, engagement is poor. We come across as needy. Misses old MUSE - paper based and filled in in meetings. Actions and impact - changes take time. Centralisation of student voice - us and them needs to become we.

Concerning- what do you want for dinner - chips and trampolines. Dream - not working with them on getting towards the dream.

Student voice is weaponised by students. Fear of being red on a spreadsheet. Can't be creative. Leading source of conflict between teaching teams and students.

Don't have trust - centre doesn't trust local delivery - fear. Student voice - asked opinion and then ignoring it. Don't recognise behaviour of students - confrontational.

Guiding principles - back to values and purpose. These help with staff and students.
Framework - how can we improve these things in the context of our values and purpose?   Collaborative partnership, using dialogue and enhancement supported by our values and purpose.

Service excellence appreciative inquiry event.

Auditing and mapping - JM is looking at that already. Academic calendar - who wants it and needs it. Working with SUBU. Recruitment of student reps in the summer is really important.

Evaluating level surveys as they come in. Review them. Amend policy 5B. Not getting meaningful things from surveys. Moratorium and go back to conversations. Need dialogue and record that instead.

MB - abolished arrivals survey. Not telling us anything. Used to be useful but not any more. 4%.

Students used to being seen. Don't feel seen in a survey. They want relational improvements. PTES is awesome, the students have a comparator from previous experience.

Some colleagues are not supporting surveys or sharing feedback.

MB said some parents at open days were shocked that no progress reports for parents. Parents and students don't understand why it is different to schools.

JA - 5B needs to be reviewed - it is in the quality cycle. We need the feedback - we need lead indicators, how do we know it is working. Board need assurance. Feedback loop is still required and issues need to be discussed via SVEC.

ET - students can be seen in other ways too, though assessment and feedback. PLs and PTs who have that relationship. Also get feedback outside academic context - in halls and via sport or societies. How do we make sure that is connected?

JT - instead of surveys do some research.

5.3. Assessment and feedback

KPh - short and medium term. Inclusivity, AI. Need a review of assessment design urgently. Short term wins - ASEC. How we run exam boards, what they are empowered to do. Rework instead of resits. More challenging at unit boards.

5.4. Continuation and completion

KPh - just need to do the personal tutors. Key thing is linking it all together. Engagement is important and the retention team work is key.

Links to analytics - can't get data quick enough. Our own systems we get data the next day. JISC is slow. Might need to look at resource to support attendance data.

First 6 weeks is crucial - engagement in teams, induction and attendance. Turning up is vital as that is the biggest factor in outcomes.

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Discussion
Keith Phalp

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5.5. Academic Calendar

MB - agreed to changes for this year - waiting for UCU. Fundamental changes might be needed - how do we get this sorted. Resit boards not finalised for this year.

ET - 3 principles, publish it earlier, improve experience around principles and accuracy, and improve staff experience. Quick wins and future actions - 10 options. Prioritised in the paper.

Quick wins - there is a process map. Managing handover between different points is a question for the future.

Reviewed principles - timetabling team couldn't do them this year. Implemented a couple and did a viability review of the others. Challenge is space constraints so can't push the boundaries.

Exam week - work done. JCNC and follow up meeting. Changes made in response to feedback. Apparently are now some concerns but don't know what they are. Will need to implement it.

Priority plan - implement options 1 and 2. Prioritise 3 to 8. Option 9 is the most radical - gaining actual time in publication of timetable - give ourselves a target. Would like to do that but will need additional resources and a risk evaluation - will be changes to timetables if we publish them earlier.
MB - more strategic about targets so that we don't have big changes to student numbers later on. Less reliance on resit boards - KPh looking at assessment and reassessment, semester 1 exam boards to reduce the numbers of unknowns.

Run our life to policy and not the other way around. Lots of policies are really processes - needs review generally.

What is option 2 - budgeting and plan staff numbers via business planning. Agreement in principle and timetable against dummy posts. Linked to new programme approval discussion from a governance point of view.

JA students don't understand whether they are resitting or not - comms and also impact on accommodation of late decisions. That's KPh's workstream.

What asking for today - first one is the concern (SR) - exam weeks - is that good student experience? MB says feedback is yes as not so many exams.

KPa - JCNC tomorrow. Could come to meeting and give an update - and ask for feedback. MB and ET can't attend the meeting.

JV: Commitment to all 10 in principle

ACTION: come back to UET to explain the priority order, how does it map to other things. Pilot things. Resit board change is the only change for September.

MB and ET agreed that they have agreed with this set with JM

KPh - we might change to exams at the end of modules.
📄 Academic Calendar - draft EULT paper v2.1.pdf
📄 Academic Calendar Timetable Principles_Final (1).pdf

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Discussion
Mandi Barron And Einar Thorsen

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6. Future Meetings and Items

Note: ULT meeting planner for the rest of the year is included for discussion
ACTION: A discussion about how to use the time with ULT on 7th June and prepare for that on 19th May will be held offline

CH asked about setting the context for engaging with the Deans.

ACTION: it would be good to have a structure for how we manage that slot. It builds on the business performance

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Note
Chair

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meetings. SR will share the previous agenda, we can build on that to make a framework to prompt a discussion, which we can discuss with them at that meeting. We can also ask about topical issues eg ASOS, casualisation.

📄 UET meeting planner for UET 25th April 23.pdf
📄 UET 2nd May 2023.pdf
📄 UET 9th May 23.pdf

6.1. Agenda for University Board meeting - 19th May

Deborah Wakeley

DW noted that items track through from ARG. FRC and SQS.
- 4.2 - Fees (SR) and APP (KPh with JM). Separate papers, APP first and fees paper to follow. KPh is on leave that day.
- CPD - PWC on HE finances - SR involved in pre-meeting.
- Scheme of delegation needs to be approved via UET.
- Move fundraising papers to finance and governance
- Reverse order of 5.9 and 5.10
- Climate paper needs to move out of estates - under finance and governance
- NIHR bid - may not be time for FRC review first - JV and KPh.

📄 19 May 2023 board Agenda v1.pdf

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7. Specific items for approval/note/discussion

7.1. Committee ToR updates

Status chart attached for note
Noted, including that admissions group has been closed down.
📄 committees next steps chart April 23.pdf

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8. Standing item: OfS and Government Reporting

Discussion
Chair

Reportable events update
No new ones to note.

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9. UET Team Leadership

Decision
Colleen Harding

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10. AOB

Chair

SR - proactis business case was not broad enough. Scope has increased and the cost has been increased. This will be signed off this week, the extra cost is not coming from Digital Enablers.