

SENATE AND UNIVERSITY BOARD

STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2007

Present: Mr M Riordan (Chair)
Mrs. M Barron, Sister M Gormley, Ms A Gutiérrez, Prof M Hadfield,
Ms J Hanson, Mr B Howard, Prof T Husband, Mr A James, Mr P Kneller,
Mr N Richardson, Ms J Winter, Ms Z Zuvcenko

Apologies: Mrs R Duggan, Rt. Rev T Thornton

In Attendance: Mrs J Beard; Mr M Hurst; Mr J Seaman; Ms S Wiles;
Mrs V Wood (Committee Clerk), Ms S Woolf (Committee Clerk)

ACTION

1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (15 NOVEMBER 2006)

The Minutes were approved as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

Page 1 - In Attendance – “*Mr M Hirst*” should have read “*Mr M Hurst*”.

Page 1 - Item 1.1.3 “*BestU*” should have read “*myBU*”.

Page 2 - Item 1.1.5 Corporate Plan:

The Corporate Plan makes no reference to teaching on Wednesday afternoons. This is to be deleted from the minute.

Page 3 - Item 3.7

The meeting was advised that this item should be amended from ‘*no immediate action was considered necessary...*’ to ‘*some action had been taken.*’

Page 5 - Item 6.3

‘*had had a negative effect*’ should read ‘*had not had a negative effect*’.

Page 6 - Item 7

‘*The introduction of NUS Cards*’ should read ‘*The introduction of NUS Extra Cards*’.

1.1 Matters Arising

1.1.1 Medical Services

The Chair advised the meeting that discussion had taken place with Angela Schofield, now Chair of Bournemouth & Poole NHS Primary Care Trust. He will also be holding talks with Debbie Fleming, Chief Executive of the PCT and interested parties to discuss sexual health on campus and the Student Counselling Service. It was also confirmed that staff induction programmes would include a reference to the Student Counselling Service.

MR

1.1.2 Dignity Diversity And Equality Report

The Secretary & Registrar stated that some issues arising from the ‘Dignity Diversity & Equality Report’ had been brought to the attention of ASC Members.

1.1.3 Students' Union President's Report

The Students' Union had experienced some difficulties over tracing students attending partner colleges and were advised that Registry would be able to find information on these students through the University's student record system.

2. REPORTS RECEIVED ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE

The following Reports were taken as read: Report on the work of the Chaplaincy, Report from the Counselling Service, Report from the International Office, Report from the University Medical Service, Report from the Student Advice Centre, Report on Student Representation, Report on Learning Support Services.

Members thanked those concerned for producing the reports. The following issues arose:

2.1 Chaplaincy

The meeting was advised that students felt the work of the Chaplaincy to be a very valuable source of information and advice. Members noted that, of the cases handled recently by the Christian Union, forty were of an academic nature.

2.2 Counselling Service

Members were informed that BU students studying at the two Partner Institutions in Bournemouth/Poole have automatic access to all available services within the university other than student counselling. In the case of the latter, which is provided by an external contractor, both had been offered the opportunity to have access to this service for their HE students in return for a proportionate payment. This had been accepted by AECC but Bournemouth & Poole College had decided to provide their own service.

The Counselling Service will be made available to both full and part-time students with an evening service provided.

The meeting was advised that the majority of students (65.1%), using the Counselling Service were mature students. Heads of Schools are to be sent the Counselling Service's report.

Sec

2.3 International Office

D Elster's presentation "*Results of the International Student Barometer*" is summarised later in this report.

2.4 University Medical Service

Ben Howard, President of the Students' Union, advised the meeting that sexual health screenings had been carried out by the Bournemouth Health Service who visited the Atrium every Tuesday. Out of a total of 245 screenings (with equal numbers of male and female students) for Chlamydia, 25 cases (10.2%) were found to be positive, which was below the national average for young people between 18-24.

The Chair advised no incidence of meningitis on the campuses had been reported.

2.5 Student Representation

Whilst Schools were experiencing problems in identifying student representatives, the Chair advised that reports given to Schools currently contain names of known student representatives and that, where such information is known, it is available via the student record system.

The meeting was informed that there are 476 students at present registered as Student Representatives and that a report would be sent to all Academic Administration Managers (AAM's) to identify the representatives for each School.

Sec

The Secretary & Registrar advised that this matter will also be drawn to the attention of AAT and processes revised where necessary. Those student representatives present, and appropriate representatives of the Students' Union, were invited to attend the next AAT meeting.

S&R

3. RESULTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT BAROMETER SURVEY

Danielle Elster, Head of the International Office, explained to the Members that the Prime Minister unveiled two five-year initiatives on 18 April 2006 to help secure the UK's position as a leader in international education. The second phase of the Prime Minister's 'Initiative for International Education' aims to attract an additional 100,000 overseas students to study in the UK and to encourage partnerships between universities and colleges in the UK and overseas.

Ben Howard mentioned that on Tuesday 16 April 2006, international students were invited to speak at the University of Greenwich about their experiences of studying in the UK.

I-grad has been commissioned by the Prime Minister's team to undertake surveys of international students' experiences. Similar surveys (sent by e-mail) have been conducted with I-grad at Bournemouth University. These surveys will be used as 'bench marks' to help the University understand how our students perceive their University experience and compare this with responses from other HEIs. Work is currently being undertaken with Dave Foot of Marketing.

Surveys were carried out at the end of autumn, in February, and at the end of the academic year. A comparison will be carried out between surveys and from one year to the next to identify any similarities, differences and changes in perception over time.

Throughout the UK, a total of 31,440 students were surveyed, of whom 425 were overseas students. Generally, students regarded the following as significant issues, listed in order of importance:

- Provision of internet / webcam (more important to international students)
- Good teachers and lecturers
- Good course content
- Good, safe accommodation
- Good transport links
- Visa advice
- Good financial support
- A good library

Students were mainly dissatisfied with living costs, financial support, work experience and careers' advice.

4. EMERGING THEMES FROM SCHOOLS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES STRATEGIC PLANS RELATING TO THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The meeting was informed that, whilst work was ongoing on the Strategic Plan, a number of themes were already emerging in relation to improving the students' experience at BU. The need for additional facilities has already been identified, particularly in the area of sports. Another emerging theme is the need for the University to make a substantial investment in IT, also aimed at improving facilities for, and access by, students to a range of new and improved services.

The Registry and the International & Corporate Relations' (ICR) Plans and, specifically, the *askBU* and *talkBU* schemes, were discussed. *askBU* and *talkBU* are planned to be operational by the beginning of the next academic year. *askBU* will support future students' queries and *talkBU* will handle queries from existing students. Both services will be available to students at the Lansdowne and Talbot campuses. A facility for on-line access to an FAQ service will also be provided.

5. STUDENTS' UNION MATTERS

Ben Howard, President of the Students' Union, informed the meeting that the Union's '*Investors In People*' award had been renewed for the next three years. The award had now been achieved for the past ten years.

There are currently 50 clubs in existence. Members were informed that, in a small number of cases, conflict existed between the rules of the Union relating to the need for open access to all clubs and societies and the constitutions of individual societies, particularly those with a religious motivation.

The Union's Commercial services have experienced more competition from elsewhere which has affected its operations.

The President also reported that the services of a top Radio 1 DJ had been acquired for Red Nose Comic Relief Day at The Old Fire Station. This was quite a coup.

6. THEME FOR NEXT MEETING

It was decided to discuss the following in more detail:

- The Strategic Plan;
- Voluntary work, especially in light of the 2012 Olympic Games, and the possibility that accreditation could be awarded and the student experience enhanced;
- Updates on both *askBU* and *talkBU*.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members were advised of the difficulties experienced by students over the payment of council tax and an anomaly that exists in the present system which can, in certain circumstances, penalise a student undertaking part-time study. Members noted that the Secretary & Registrar will be writing to Pam Donnellan, Chief Executive, Bournemouth Borough Council expressing concern and asking for an equitable resolution of this matter.

S&R

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 9 May 2007

Ana Gutierrez
Secretary to Student Affairs Committee
14 February 2007

Susan Woolf
Committee Clerk
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