

**SENATE AND UNIVERSITY BOARD**

**STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MAY 2009**

Present: Dr B Astin (Chair)  
Mrs M Barron; Mr S Bellamy; Mr C Elder; The Rev Dr D Hart; Ms J Hanson; Ms Caroline Howlett; Mr A James; Rev Canon Dr B Merrington; Mr N Richardson; Dr E Mytton; Mr F Ruffle.

Student Representatives:  
Mr D Carter (SU Postgraduate Officer); Mr J Ricci (SU President Elect); Ms J Richardson (SU International Officer).

In Attendance: Mr G Rayment (Committee Clerk)  
Mr J Francis; Mr B Squires (Item 3.1); Prof. J Vinney.

Apologies: Mrs J Dawson; Mr P Kneller; Mrs F McMillan; Mrs J Gush;  
Dr J Palfreman-Kay.

**ACTION**

**1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (25 February 2009)**

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record.

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

Minute 3.2.1: There had been no developments on the issue of accommodation for students on 30 week placements and this would be carried forward to a future meeting.

**Secretary**

Minute 3.2.2: Funding for Student volunteering activities had now been agreed.

Minute 5.8.2: The SU were working on a campaign (including the use of posters) encouraging students to avoid the unnecessary use of computer resources for non-academic-related social networking purposes.

Minute 5.9.1: The Committee discussed whether there was any risk that the IT connection problems experienced at Corfe House would be repeated at Lyme Regis House, but were assured that this was not expected to be the case, following resolution of the issues with Signpost.

Minute 7.3: The SU President had raised the issue of Semesterisation at the most recent meeting of the Senate, and had agreed that the SU would present a paper setting out their concerns to the next meeting of Senate.

**SU**

Item 3: Student Representation

Work on the project to make improvements to the information available through the Portal was continuing. SU representatives were now closely involved and were helping to identify ways to provide a greater presence for student representation.

### **3. REPORTS RECEIVED ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE**

#### **3.1 University Sports & Recreation**

3.1.1 Barry Squires (BU Sport Development Unit) gave a short presentation to the Committee on their joint project with Camps International to create a Sports Development Expedition (SDX). This gives students the opportunity to experience sports coaching in rural communities in Kenya and Tanzania. A short DVD was presented which showed a group of volunteers at work and some of the highlights of the Programme (details in accompanying paper). A number of other Universities had now joined the project and work was being undertaken to agree a Memorandum of Understanding with them, to ensure BU retained recognition and ownership of the scheme.

3.1.2 The Committee welcomed the SDX and discussed ways in which the project might be further supported. Bursaries, available from the Centre for Global Perspectives, were already being used to support students taking part (the total cost paid by each student taking part was £1,550, with bursaries of £500 being awarded in some instances). Other University Scholarships and Bursaries may be available to support some students taking part in the scheme and it was agreed to raise this at a meeting of the Fees Board.

**MB**

3.1.3 Members also discussed possible PR opportunities to help promote the scheme, including the possibility of patronage. The BBC had already expressed an interest in the project and it was agreed that members would make use of their own social networks to obtain contacts with local sports/media personalities who may be willing to help.

**Members**

#### **3.2 Graduate Employment Service**

The Committee noted this paper. The Chairman briefly summarised the positive aspects of the report despite the current economic climate. In particular, the most recent graduate employment survey showed that over 90% of BU graduates were in employment or further study. The relocation of the service to Poole House had also received very positive feedback from students.

#### **3.3 Music & Performing Arts**

The Committee noted this paper and welcomed the positive developments and activities undertaken during the year.

#### **3.4 SU Student Development & Volunteering**

The SU President presented this paper which highlighted the welcome progress made on the SUBU Leadership Programme, which would soon be linked to the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme. A strong year for volunteering activities was also reported with activities including the Student Volunteering Week, Make a Difference days, and Community Outreach activities.

#### **3.5 Approval of Changes to Student Regulations**

3.5.1 Mandi Barron (Assistant Registrar, Student Policy and Support) introduced these papers. Over time it had become clear that the complaints and disciplinary procedures in respect of students studying at partner colleges were problematic and needed to be revised. Difficulties included issues of jurisdiction, the fact that partner colleges were not currently represented on panels taking formal complaint hearings, and the need to streamline partner colleges' disciplinary procedures. The papers presented to the Committee set out proposed new policies and procedures in respect of Bournemouth & Poole College (BPC). BPC

had already indicated that, in principle, they were content with the revised documents and it was proposed, subject to Student Experience Committee approval, that the college would be asked to give their own formal approval. A programme would then be instigated to similarly amend the policies and procedures in respect of all other partner colleges.

3.5.2 Members were invited to comment. It was noted that, as much of the text of the revised policies was taken directly from the existing University policies, any agreement to change these elements would necessitate the need to change BU's own policies. Detailed comments are set out below:

3.5.3 Student Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Page 1 Para 1.5: It was clarified that the question of what constituted a vexatious or malicious complaint would be a matter of judgement for the University officers handling the complaint. This text was directly transcribed from the existing BU policy and had rarely been applied in practice.

Page 3 Para 2.1.8: Amend '...channelled through the student representative system (administered through the Students' Union)...' with '...dealt with through the Students' Union at Bournemouth University (SUBU)...'

Throughout: Ensure that, where appropriate, references to the Students' Union specify that it is the Students' Union at *Bournemouth University* (SUBU).

3.5.4 Student Disciplinary Procedure

Para 2.2. There was some concern at the use of the term '...or elsewhere.', but it was clarified that this was necessary as some misconduct could take place outside BU Property, but where the matter still fell within BU jurisdiction. For Example, SU premises are not officially University property.

Para 4.2. It was clarified these prohibitions may prevent a student from accessing the SU Student Advice Centre, however, it was felt necessary to retain this option, for example should it be necessary to protect students or staff from an individual's behaviour.

Para 4.2. Concern was also expressed more broadly as to whether these prohibitions might conflict with the SU's principles, for example of democratically elected officers. It was agreed that the SU General Manager would consider further and provided suggestions for alternate wording.

AJ

Para 6.1. It was clarified that the option to deal with matters '...summarily without recourse to a disciplinary panel' was designed to benefit students in cases where such a panel might prove unduly stressful and time consuming in instances of minor misconduct. This action could only be taken with the full agreement of the student.

Para 7.3. Amend to '...a representative of the Students' Union at *Bournemouth University*.'

Para 8.3 (Penalties). It was agreed to delete c) and e) and add '...or damage' to the end of d).

Para 10.9: It was agreed to add a time limit for action, prefaced by 'Normally' to reflect the fact that it may not always be possible to guarantee a time period e.g. in cases where there is police involvement.

### 3.5.5 Admission Appeals Procedure

This document had been revised to allow the option for cases to be reviewed in the first instance without recourse to a formal hearing. No amendments were proposed by the Committee at the meeting. Members were asked to submit any further comments on these documents within one week and agreed that the Chair would sign them off on behalf of the Committee.

**Members/MB**

### 3.6 **Centre for Global Perspectives**

This paper was taken as read.

### 3.7 **International Student Barometer Survey**

3.7.1 Caroline Howlett gave a presentation on the high level summary results of the Autumn 2008 International Student Barometer Survey (conducted twice yearly over a 3 year period). The report showing more detailed results is available on request. The survey seeks the views of international students on a range of factors according to 'How Important' they are considered to be and 'How Satisfied' the students are with them. It also allows benchmarking against the national results across a number of HEIs. 388 responses were received for the latest BU survey, which comprised a sufficiently significant response rate. This wave was the last of the current 3 year cycle, but consideration would be given to undertaking such a survey again in 2 or 3 years time.

3.7.2 Positive results from the current wave included the formal welcome event with opportunities to meet academic staff, performance feedback, work experience opportunities, the quality of accommodation and the Students' Union. Results for meeting British students had also improved significantly on previous results.

3.7.3 Key concerns and areas for improvement were contact with the Accommodation Office, opportunities to meet people from the students' home countries and the provision of internet facilities on arrival.

3.7.4 Results also showed some concern about the availability of worship facilities and it was agreed that further details on this would be provided to the University Chaplain.

**CH**

## 4. **DIGNITY, DIVERSITY & EQUALITY (DDE) ISSUES**

4.1 Caroline Howlett (Diversity & Equality Officer) provided a verbal update to the Committee. Work was continuing on the Forum Theatre Training project which had received very positive feedback. Discussions were taking place with the SU to roll-out the programme to students as well as staff, linked to the SU Leadership Programme, from the next Spring Term. A Diversity Events calendar was being prepared linking BU events to national diversity awareness days. The bulk of these events were planned for March/April next year, including on-going partnership working with 20/10.

4.2 Attempts had been made to set-up introductory meetings with SU representatives without success and it was agreed that the SU President would follow this up. Similarly one-to-one drop-in meetings were available on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at 'the Base'. Work was also on-going on the Impact Assessment and the Annual Report.

## **5. STUDENTIFICATION**

The Chair reflected on the work which had taken place over the past year with the Winton Resident's Forum which had been a great success in improving BU Students' reputation and relationship with the local community. This was thanks largely to the SU's efforts and their local campaigns. An agreement to the joint funding of 'out of hours' Environmental Health Officer provision (to address issues of , for example, noise) with the local council was also now in place. The Chair thanked all those involved.

## **6 STUDENTS' UNION MATTERS**

The SU President presented this report and highlighted a number of points. Positives included the levels of engagement from students, for example in volunteering; work with the Graduate Employment Service on the Graduate 'Finishing School'; a high election turn-out; and the on-going work to address Studentification issues. Continuing concerns were the impact of the economic recession on SU income; the need for clearer and better communicated consistent information regarding placements; and the threat of industrial action by the UCU. It was also suggested that there was a need for further engagement with postgraduate students, for example, through summer events. The Chair thanked the out-going President for the high level of engagement during the year and the successful outcomes achieved.

## **7 PERIODIC PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

This paper was noted by the Committee, who discussed the relative value of the specific measures as an indicator of holistic Student Experience rather than simply the students' learning experience.

## **8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **8.1 Accommodation and Transport facilities for Postgraduate students**

8.1.1 Concerns were raised that postgraduate students' University accommodation contracts expired at the beginning of September – in many cases before their courses ended. This created great difficulties for students, for example international students and/or those who needed ongoing access to the University's laboratories or other facilities to complete their dissertations. Similarly it was noted that the Unilinx bus service was not available to these students during the summer vacation period.

8.1.2 It was noted that this situation had arisen because the academic timetable for postgraduate programmes was usually one calendar year. It was agreed that the Chair would raise the issue with Richard Search and Stuart Laird in respect of Accommodation and Transport respectively, and consider options to address these issues.

**Chair**

### **8.2 Diploma Supplements**

The Secretary & Registrar informed the Committee that BU had received the European 'kite mark' in respect of diploma supplements. These supplements were a more detailed form of transcript, provided to students free of charge, detailing not only the work undertaken on their respective courses, and results achieved, but also allowing for the inclusion of relevant extra-curricular activity. These were designed to be more useful sources of information for potential employers, both in the UK and across Europe.

**9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Wednesday, 25 November 2009, 2.15pm

Wednesday, 24 February 2010, 2.15pm

Wednesday, 12 May 2010, 2.15pm

Noel DG Richardson  
Secretary & Registrar  
21 May 2009

Geoffrey Rayment  
Committee Clerk  
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Approved as a true and accurate record:

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Prof J Vinney (Chair)

Date:.....