Notes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16th October 2013, 2 – 4pm – Royal London House R208, Lansdowne

Present: Barbara Dyer (Chair) (BD), Gillian Bunting (Clerk) (GB), Fiona Cownie (FC), Andrew Main (AM), Ricky Rodgers (RR), Katy Fisher (KF), Fiona Knight (FK), Neil Ford (NF), Liam Sheridan (LS), Andrea Lacey (AL), Matt Wall (MW), Annie Hall (AH), Zoe Bice (ZB), Scott Bellamy (SB), Darryl Felton (DF), Catherine Symonds (CF), Paula Peckham (PP), Amanda Stevens (AS).

1.   Welcome / Introduction
BD welcomed all members and announced an amendment to the agenda; item 9 to follow after minutes of the previous meeting.

2.   Apologies: Ann Fernandez, Mark Ridolfo, Elizabeth Powis (Neil Ford attending in place), John Gusman, Ross Hill

3.   Minutes and matters arising from notes of 5th June 2013 - confirmed

3.1   Minute 2.5 - RL explained the new tab for myBU is designed to be a centralised hub of student feedback. There had been discussions around the name of the tab, but this name was agreed upon as it showed a proactive response to students. There are two section; one for School matters which is updated by the School Champions and the University matters section which is updated by either SUBU and/or an elected member of SVC. The student will only see the tab for their School, but there were some queries around what dual honours students' view would look like, it was agreed this needs to be looked into. **Action – RL/MS - MS provided myBU school tab stats. Further discussion is needed as to how to set up new page for joint honours, IT & Learning Technologists – see agenda item 7.**

3.2   Minute 2.11 - KG requested advice on the best approach to take for SUBU 'You're Brilliant' awards, due to some of the winners not attending lectures or Reps training. It was acknowledged that the nomination process has a weakness as it does not require a record of who makes a nomination, leaving it open to abuse. RL explained this was the first year the student category had been included and therefore it was a learning curve as to how SUBU can improve the process. Specifically around monitoring engagement and performance of Reps, who is responsible for checking attendance etc. RL will feed back to SUBU. **Action – RL/MS – completed - SUBU have reviewed the 'You're Brilliant' awards and put in place quality measures to improve the process.**

3.3   Minute 3.1 - PRES now closed FK provided report:
Closing date 16 May 2013
Target response rate 25%
Actual response rate 27.7%
Number of responses 109
Expected number of respondents 394
Initial review of responses very positive. However a full analysis of the data and a sector bench marking exercise will be carried out over the summer and a full report to be submitted to the first SVC of the New Year. **Action – FK – see agenda item 9**

3.4   Minute 3.2 - PTES - FK provided report:
Closing date 17 June
Target response rate 25%
Actual response rate (current) 8%
Reminders have been sent to all taught PG students and messages sent to all PGT framework leaders and administrators to encourage students to complete the survey.
Again, a full analysis of the data and a sector bench marking exercise will be carried out over the summer and a full report to be submitted to the first SVC of the New Year. **Action – FK – see agenda item 9**

3.5   **Minute 4.1.1** - **Discuss Assessment and Feedback: Principles of Good Practice**
AI introduced the paper, which came out of the sub-group meeting, and invited the members to discuss the series of recommendations. It was felt the BU-wide feedback template was not necessary in its current form, although ASC confirmed feedback templates will be introduced next year. The main aim is to ensure students get a fair experience between schools. MS requested for principles to be made visible to students as they do care about feedback. FC advised that current workload planning models do not allow these principles to be put into practice. It was felt the recommendations are all positive & will link into policy *6E: Assessment and Feedback and Return of Assessed Work*. Members agreed for recommendations to go to ESEC. **Action – AI - completed**

3.6   **Minute 4.1.2 -** MS suggested students should be told about assessment feedback from induction onwards, so they are aware how importance it is from the start. It was thought that the How to get the most out of your assessment feedback leaflet was not widely recognised, but it was agreed it is significant and should be included when students' get their first piece of feedback. FC added that in order to get staff buy in we also need students to take responsibility for participating in assessment feedback. There was a discussion around whether this should be included in the School Student Charters – JC advised QAA may recommend this. Members agreed to add framing line at top of paper to note students' responsibility. **Action – Members to provide suggestions for wording via email to AI - completed**

3.7   **Minute 4.2.1 -** This paper came out of a benchmarking exercise by the sub-group which aimed to identify what we mean by Student Engagement and then created Performance Indicator's around this. Opened to SVC for discussion: SUBU found the clarification of the three elements very helpful - Quality Assurance, Student Engagement in Learning and Teaching, & Wider Student Experience. FC requested Learning and teaching to be the top indicator as this is seen as the most important. **Action – AI – see agenda item 8**

3.8   **Minute 4.2.3 -** Members discussed PI 10 (Active reflection on assignment feedback) how much do students actually reflect on their feedback. It was agreed there is a direct correlation between attendance and grades, BD confirmed HSC are trialling QR codes to monitor attendance. It was agreed that attendance registers are important and suggested that perhaps BU needs to introduce some kind of consequence in order to improve attendance levels. SUBU's position has shifted over the last year & they are open to discussion around the matter. As it is felt that students' need to take more responsibility, as low/non-attendance can impact on other students. JC advised the policy shift is significant & agreed with MS to put together discussion point for next ESEC. **Action – JC/MS – see agenda item 8**

3.9   **Minute 4.2.4 -** AI advised discussion item for ESEC & also for Centre of Excellence and Learning to take this forward. **Action – AI – see agenda item 8**

3.10   **Minute 4.2.5 -** AM pointed out that with regards to targets it is better to use bench-marking rather than percentages, members agreed to replace the column on the KPI calculator with a 'year on year' comparison. This should reflect higher quality student engagement. It was noted that it is important to understand and confirm how we are measuring this, the timeliness, and how much resource is needed to measure. **Action - Members to email suggestions over the next two weeks, AI to amend and put together cover sheet for ESEC - completed**

3.11   **Minute 4.3.2 - Update on merging SES/SOS surveys (AI)** AI reported that TMB's view was that it seems sensible to merge the surveys, but only at levels C and I, members thought it might not be clear that the survey is aimed at all levels. **Action - AI to confirm with TMB – see agenda item 6**

3.12   **Minute 4.4.1 - Review 5B Student Engagement and Feedback (LH)** The policy is due for review, but members agreed it is important to capture the best position after ESEC in the summer**. Actions - Members to send comments to LH specifically around Forum memberships. LH to ensure the policy mirrors Mapping to B5: Student Engagement – completed**

3.13 **Minute 4.4.2 -** It was concluded that all schools run either Student Experience Forums or 'You Said, We Did' sessions, while the formats are not all the same, all of these are deemed valuable and encompass the same principles. Members agreed SEFs identify programme and framework specific issues which have not been resolved at this level. **Action – LH to amend policy - completed**

3.14 **Minute 4.4.3 -** KG provided the updated SEF ToR with revised Core membership, Secretary/Clerk changed from 'Administrator' to 'Representative', Minutes or Notes section amended. **Action – KG to circulate, members to send final comments to KG – completed**

4. **Review of Terms of Reference**

4.1 Members agreed for KG in her new role as CEL Rep will attend SVC as co-opted member when required for specific meetings.

5. **Report on NSS Results (LS)**

5.1 The NSS report showed that Organisational Management at BU has largely improved over the last 2 years, response rates are still high & it was concluded that IPSOS' techniques to ensure students' participation in the survey are working well. School results show course changes have affected the NSS results which have levelled out over the last 2 years. It was acknowledged that Partner College response rates are very small and therefore will not affect the overall picture. FC discussed concerns about Wiltshire College scores being particularly low, but this could be due to this being the first year they have participated in the NSS. SB added that Partners often do their own NSS promotion, which might not be so successful in raising students' awareness of the survey.

5.2 SB announced details of the NSS 2014 campaign which will be led by M&C Zoe Bice and Toby Horner. A subgroup is due to be formed to work on planning, presentation & approval of key messages. SB invited interest from SVC for volunteers & academic schools to attend regular working group meetings, which will also include co-opted members. FC & AM volunteered. It was suggested the survey should focus more on final year experience, as reflection on previous years may detract from the overall student experience. LS explained it is a challenge to encourage positive or negative answers and to move students away from the middle ground. AS pointed out there is currently no forum for student feedback covering Student Support Services other than the Library or IT, and asked whether one of the major surveys could include this. SB advised the NSS format only allows one free question which can be used for this purpose, but it was agreed the question needs to be specific so students can understand what is being asked. **Action – NSS subgroup**

6. **SES & SOS outcome from ESEC, plus report on SES results (LS)**

6.1 Taking into account the low response rate for SES of 3.97% LS advised the information is still believable. Members agreed that questions should relate more to 'experience' than by 'studies'. It was discussed that the low results from HSC for extra-curricular activities could be due to a variety of reasons; placement, not being on Talbot Campus, or unhappiness with SUBU. The low rating for level P results are generally due to students being not on campus. It was acknowledged that Level I results are worrying, particularly for Organisational Management and Assessment, although it was noted this is a small sample number. SES receives a lot more comments than other surveys, currently these still need to be approved before analysis can take place. AH advised level I are generally very vocal in SOS, which stems from a unique experience; realisation grades matter, thinking about placement, personal support, all of which could impact on SES survey results. It is important to think around different experience students have during different study years when considering surveys, and advised caution in dismissing generic statements about certain levels.

6.2 BD led discussion around the proposed merger of SES & SOS and reported meeting with TMB & JC to discuss the issue; TMB had suggested using NSSE rather than merging SES & SOS, the benefits of which includes using external surveys as bench-markers and keeping the current system of representation so that the student voice is heard directly through Framework/Programme Team meetings, School meetings and SEFs. Therefore, we would

use external surveys for programme review and student experience review as much as possible and direct representation and mid-cycle unit review for students' educational feedback. Various institutions have been invited to do NSSE pilots for 2014, members agreed we are restricted as to what we can ask using external surveys. The NSSE would present a significant shift towards how students are engaging instead of the student experience. AH recommended that in order to make a difference to response rates the key is to show that BU is listening and taking positive steps to improve the student experience, rather than a lot of focus on just changing a question in a survey. Instead a different style using more direct approach would appeal to students; focus more phraseology. **Action - All members agreed to discontinue SES**.

6.3   MW advised the large amount of data received from SOS is hugely beneficial, Student Reps play a key role in summarising comments, if we can reduce the size of SES the merger could work well. It was acknowledged there were timing issues with SOS & problems with survey fatigue, there is still a need to reduce the number of surveys, but we need balanced feedback around what we want to know. SUBU found it challenging to provide reports for framework meetings as these were not always held regularly and so did not fit in with the survey dates. SUBU has planned to alleviate these problems from last year which will provide better feedback for 2013/14. Members discussed the options of whether to roll out the survey in between semesters or at the end of the year; how will this affect response rates, it was agreed mid semester would provide a better response rate and actively encourage interest to provide feedback. It was agreed SOS should only run twice a year in line with CAS.

7.   Report on progress for myBU student feedback tab (SB/AH)

7.1   SB summarised the feature will effectively communicate back to students what BU does as a result of student feedback. Schools currently each have their own tab to show feedback, but stats show this is not being utilised, which resulted in this new format. Content is tailored to Schools, SECs will be responsible for this area, plus a representative from SVC & SUBU, but it is yet to be agreed who will update the information for each tab. FC suggested this could include a space for academics to respond to student feedback, as BU currently does not have a platform to do this. It was discussed whether this is an effective space to do this, SB and SUBU advised this was not the right area, but that joint feedback does need to be developed and that there is an opportunity for progression with this format. **Action - It was agreed to roll over decisions to the next SVC meeting in November.**

8.   Discussion: Student Engagement Performance Indicators 7-12

8.1   ESEC advised SVC to monitor and re-work PIs 7-12, with PIs 1-6 suggested to go to CEL. BD suggested rolling this agenda point over to the next meeting. **Action - GB to circulate previous PI information.**

9.   Report on PTES (LS) & PRES results (FK)

9.1   FK provided a verbal update for PRES 2013 was the first year the Graduate School has managed both surveys, early indications for PRES show students are generally happy, response rate was 25% with no major issues, the only areas of concern are supervision and research skills. **Action - FK to produce formal report for next SVC.**

9.2   LS reported a response rate for PTES of 10.7%, from 208 participants; this low level of engagement was in contrast to a big promotion push, this could be put down to SES & NSS running at the same time. But the size of the survey could also be a factor with 85 questions over 14 sections. The major benefit of the survey is that we can benchmark against 96 other institutions. Conclusions were that the general direction of BU is similar to the sector average, with applying theory to practice rated as above average, and Library & Space/Estates issues doing well. LS advised the nature of the question could elicit the pattern of the answer and it is beneficial to be able to compare with the sector average. LS will provide more info via Bristol Online Surveys website, it was suggested one School member could have access to the site in order to provide an in-depth look at the results. LS advised the need to approve 2013 comments to ensure they are ready for analysis, it was queried how will this work? What will we be doing with results? We also need to confirm the

survey closing date. FK suggested co-ordinating a meeting to consider who is appropriate to look at the comments, which require approval before they are analysed. **Action - FK to set up a meeting with LS & BD.**

9.3   The Graduate School has signed up for PTES 2014, in order to increase response rates they are looking at how the campaign is communicated to students, planning to open earlier and promote for a longer period. SB noted each student receives a specific login for PTES via their BU email, as we depend on them using this to enter the survey which can have an effect on the number of entries. It was debated whether the survey length is off putting, we are able to tailor certain sections if they are not applicable to BU, which could be trialed for 2014 to see if this has a positive effect, it was also suggested to utilise PG administrators to prompt students to respond.

10.   Members' items for future agendas

10.1   Email information to GB in advance of future meetings; the draft agenda, which is generally sent out three weeks prior to SVC meetings, invites new items.

11.   Discussion of meeting structure

11.1   BD suggested dividing SVC meetings into items for note and items for discussion, the agenda will be amended accordingly – all members agreed**. Action - GB**

12.   Update on student feedback leaflet *How to get the most out of your assessment feedback* (AM)

12.1   AM reported difficulty in finding any printed copies of the leaflet originally produced by Janet Hanson. He has managed to find a pdf version which he is intending to send to print for DEC students. Members requested the pdf to be circulated within the committee so other Schools can also take advantage of this. It was suggested that handing this out to students along with feedback or assignment marking would be more beneficial. SUBU advised they are looking to do similar version of this leaflet for 'group work'**. Action - AM**

13.   AOB

2013/14 meetings:
Nov 20 - R208
Dec 11 - EB203
Jan 29 - Committee Room, Poole House
Mar 19 - Casterbridge, Thomas Hardy Suite
May 14 - Committee Room, Poole House
Jun 25 - Committee Room, Poole House