

STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

NOTES of the THIRD meeting of the STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE in the 2018-2019 academic session held on TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2019 in Blake 028, Medway Campus

Present:

Karen Bryan, DVC (Academic) (Chair)
Paul Butler, DILS
Corinne Delage, DSE, FLAS
Meike Imberg, Pres GSU
Mike McGibbon, DSE FES
John Schless, CEO GSU

Colin Allen, DSE, BUS
Christine Couper, DSP, PAS
Michael Flanagan, DEF
Simon Leggatt, DSE FEH
Iain Morrison, HMC
Chris Shelley, DSAS

In Attendance:

Lynne Savage, (Secretary)SAS

Stephanie Robinson, ICO

Apologies:

Christopher Bustin, HIR

Henry Setter, VP (Welfare),GSU

SEC18.19 MINUTES AND ACTIONS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27TH November were **approved**.

Actions Arising

DSE's had met to discuss the minimum requirement for exam resit support, and had taken a recommendation to LQSC. The document would be updated, following LQSC recommendations, and circulated to SEC for information.

ACTION: DSE's to circulate recommendations for exam resit support to SEC after LQSC approval.

DEF and Pres GSU to bring report back to March SEC around developments at Avery Hill.

SEC18.P016 Relationship between travel times to college and engagement/satisfaction.

DSAS and DE&F were consulting on estate changes, including those at Avery Hill. The needs of all students, including the needs of commuter students were being considered. DEF felt that they needed to address how they consulted – at present, they took the views of the GSU and Faculties, but it may be that direct consultations with students should take place. DSAS agreed that all factors needed to be considered.

This **closed** the agenda item.

Chair had tabled the report *SEC18.P011 GSU Advice Strategy* at Provost's Group for information, which they had found most helpful.

DoSP confirmed that the pilot areas for the qualitative data survey which would take place would be Accounting and Finance (FBUS) and Science (FES). A report will come back to SEC in due course.

DSE's confirmed their staff had been briefed with regard to the GSS survey.

Chair advised SEC that the University had been given advice from the Office of Students around completion rates and results from the NSS survey. The University had to be careful how we used any information. DoPS explained that as it came under the umbrella "National Statistics" we had to be careful what information we shared in advance of national publicity. Their latest advice had been added to the guidance available to staff. Caution was advised, particularly on social media, but the DoSP reiterated that we already have careful checks on data release within our systems.

This **closed** the agenda item.

GSU VP (Welfare) had prepared a paper *SEC18.P020 Student Parents Feedback*, from the SU Parent Group giving their views on children in learning space. This would be considered by DSAS, who was preparing *Code of Practice – Young Persons & Children on University premises*. Policy and report to come to March SEC. KB also agreed to circulate to the Provost Group. KB thanked HS for preparing the paper.

SEC **noted** the report.

Transport

DEF had discussed transport from Chatham station with Transport manager. The Transport manager had prepared a very detailed report, which the DEF would summarise and circulate to SEC. He also suggested a 10 minute presentation to March SEC as it contained some very interesting information, with various options. Transport contracts were coming up for renewal, and the University needed to go through a procurement process, so this would be a useful exercise.

The Chair commented that several issues had been raised, including the fact that transport between Avery Hill and Greenwich was free, while charges were incurred at Medway, although there is a substantial discount for students. DEF confirmed the presentation would deal with this.

The Chair also asked DSE FES if there had been any improvements on local buses, but was advised that there was not.

Pres GSU said there were other issues around transport, e.g. where classes overran, or timetables changed, so students missed the University bus. The Chair asked DSE's to reinforce the message to their staff that any failure to stick to schedules could have transport implications.

ACTION: DEF to summarise Transport Managers report and circulate to SEC.

ACTION: Secretary to add "Transport presentation" to March SEC agenda.

ACTION: DSE's to reinforce need to stick to schedule to academic staff, and the implications where they don't.

Death of a Student Procedure

DSE BUS and DSAS had met to discuss a recent case, which seemed to take too long to implement. They had concluded that the procedure was fine, but some slight amendments needed to be made to the actions required.

This **closed** the agenda item.

SEC18.20 GSU Chairs Item – GSU President Update

Pres GSU presented *SEC18.P021 GSU President Update-16/01/2019*

The report highlighted First Term successes, democratic changes, academic representation and Term 2 priorities for GSU. Pres GSU said the GSU now had 5400 + members, and showed that the academic communities had been the right thing to focus on. Democratic changes had taken place, with more to come. In future, following elections, there would be a President, plus officers with open remits. Student Council was taking place today, and for the first time students had voted on what should be included on the agenda. The GSU had assessed their priorities, but it was good to have them confirmed by students. Academic representation was still a bit of a challenge, the timetabling of some meetings (e.g. during exam week) meant it was difficult for officers to attend. She wondered if more thought could be given to scheduling the meetings. The Chair said that the new timetable was to be agreed at Academic Council tomorrow, which would give them an opportunity to agree when Student Representative meetings should take place. She asked the DSE's to consider this when signing off the timetable. CEO GSU agreed to send suggested dates to SEC.

The paper highlighted the main priorities for each of the officers. GSU VP Welfare had written a paper recommending several policy changes and would bring it to next SEC.

The Chair asked about the use of Dreadnought – was there evidence of Avery Hill students using the building? CEO GSU said there was some evidence, but more was needed if it was to be seen as a “whole university” building. A data request regarding door use data had gone in to ILS, and it would be analysed at the end of the year. If the data showed students had a tendency to come at specific times, plans could be revised. DILS was taking some data to LQSC, an evaluation had been done of use of the mezzanine floor, and it was being used when students didn't have lessons. CEO GSU were also noting usage.

DEF commented that the lessons learned at Dreadnought were being taken into consideration when planning developments at Avery Hill (AH). Some of the spaces were not flexible, so at AH technology was being planned so that staff and students would know when a room was booked, if not, it could be used as a teaching or meeting room. If it worked, it would be considered for use elsewhere.

CEO GSU said that having reviewed room usage at Dreadnought, they had added a third bookable room. He also reported that there would have been an election prior to the March SEC, so they would be able to report back. Pres GSU outlined some provisional plans they had, to hold a Charity Boxing event in Dreadnought – it would be something very different. GSU, PR and Comms and E&F are liaising to ensure that this is well organised with all necessary Health and safety issues attended to.

SEC **noted** the report.

ACTION: KB to write to DLT's regarding timing of student representation meetings and the need to avoid exam periods.

ACTION: GSU VP Welfare to bring paper recommending policy changes to March SEC.

ACTION: CEO GSU to bring election report to March SEC.

SEC18.21 NSS plan implementation – progress report

The Chair requested the members give a verbal update on the implementation of plans following the last NSS.

DSE FES reported that DLT's had been asked for examples of the work being done. In Engineering the main priority was stabilisation after the restructure. In Science the key issues were stabilisation and consistency.

DSE BUS said that everything was in place – he considered there was one problem group, which he was trying to address.

DSE FLAS advised that the short term plans were on target, with progress on the longer term issues. Personal tutors may prove to be a problem area – which could have an impact on the survey.

DSE FEH had held meetings, and there was one area where previous issues may be continuing. It had been decided in the plan to focus on what could be changed quickly, but a number of staff had left and they had a new Programme leader.

DSAS said an internal plan had been produced, and actions were on track.

DILS said they were launching a new Skills Development hub at Greenwich, and they were putting money into subject specific areas.

DEF reported that there had been queries around AH, so they were concentrating on the communications around what was happening there, giving out positive stories.

The Chair thanked them and encouraged them to keep to timeframes and to manage student expectations.

SEC **noted** the verbal reports

SEC18.22 NSS plan for 2019 – communications plan

ICO MC presented *SEC18.P022 NSS & GSS Communications Plan, and guidance notes*. She explained that it was growing all the time!

The Chair thanked Stephanie, the DSE's and the DLT's for their hard work, which had already started to deliver results. She wanted the Faculties to be clear that GSU presence was encouraged. BUS had already completed many surveys.

DSE emphasised the importance of training for Faculty reps as there had been some negative experiences in the past.

The Chair said that this year there was a tighter group of people, who were very keen and had been trained. The deadline for requests for GSU support for Faculties was today, and GSU may not be able to support late requests. CEO GSU said that NSS support planning had been added to the proposed budget for next academic year. It was difficult to cover everything, as NSS happened during the election time.

The Chair thanked everyone, and hoped for a positive outcome. She emphasised that there would be a point where it became a matter for their judgement whether groups who had reached the completion threshold were encouraged to complete the survey, or not. DoSP said that advice was included in the guidance notes.

SEC **noted** the report.

SEC18.23 Welcome 2019

DSAS advised SEC that for the January Welcome, changes had been made to registration process, which was still ongoing. Early indications were that the pilot had been successful, making for a much better student experience. The results of the pilot would be discussed further at the Welcome Operational Group meeting, due next week, and lessons learned carried forward to the September welcome. A full report would be available at the next SEC. It had been realised that the operational group needed a “stated vision” and a small group would meet to decide what this should be.

The Chair asked they relate this to the Academic and Student Experience Strategy, and DoSP asked they also consider the attainment gap angle. CEO GSU said all interested parties were contributing, all feeding in to the same aim for next September.

The Chair thanked them all for their work, and asked for an update at the next SEC.

ACTION: DSAS to bring report on findings of January welcome pilot to March SEC.

SEC18.24 Third Term Activities

Chair asked DSE's to report on their plans so far, for third term activities.

DSE FEH had a draft plan in place, for week commencing 20th May. Activities included transitions assistance, dissertation planning, mindfulness, and work with ECS. Facilitators had already been signed up to deliver.

DSE FLAS had a team in place, with quite a lot already planned. The plan included social activities and preparation for the next year. They had collaborated with marketing and publicity.

DSE BUS had an action plan, with most activities geared towards employability. These included transitions work, how best to use the summer, addressing areas of weakness etc.

DSE FES reported that plans were in place, including transitions preparation, especially for level 4 to level 5, increased expectations for students moving from the 1st to 2nd year, and final year project preparation. The programme would also be for 1 week. It was also geared towards the employability agenda, and had some self-reflection training. He would be having conversations with Wellbeing to try and include a wellbeing session.

The Chair said there seemed to have been good progress, although it was a shame the programmes were for 1 week, rather than 2. However, she understood, that half term week could be difficult.

Pres GSU said there was still a challenge in terms of accommodation charges, students had to pay until the end of the year, and previously there had been no offer, worth attending for.

The Chair agreed this was still an issue, but felt that the plans would go some way to addressing this, although Faculties are putting in place other initiatives such as placement opportunities. 100% attendance probably would not happen, but the Chair hoped the students who did come would have a very positive experience, and Faculties could build on that. The offer needed to be there, with a focus on good outcomes.

The Chair thanked the DSE's and asked for more detailed plans to come to the next SEC meeting. She asked the DSE's to keep ICO MC informed of their plans, so they could be included in Student news. She also asked them to keep GSU informed, so hopefully social activities could also be arranged during the term three teaching pilot period. CEO GSU confirmed that social events would be planned.

SEC **noted** the updates.

ACTION: DSE's to bring detailed plans for Third Week activity to March SEC.

ACTION: DSE's to share plans for Third Week activity with IOC MC.

SEC18.25 Commuter Students

The Chair presented *SEC18.P023 Commuter Students* a document prepared by the VC and the VC's Policy Officer (VCPO), David Morris. The report contained a lot of information, some of which overlapped with other initiatives, so SEC decided to concentrate on the recommendations.

DSE BUS said one of the factors which could help was improving the procedure for students changing mode – the ability to have flexible learning was very important. This was very time consuming at present. The Chair commented that the procedure for withdrawal and interruption had been improved, and similar work needed to be carried out on changing mode of attendance. She asked DSAS to take this to the Registration sub-group to review.

DEF felt it would be helpful to have some comparative data with other London Universities in the report. The Chair agreed to ask the VCPO for this.

SEC looked at the recommendations in the report.

They felt it was important to ensure that student representation reflected the whole student body, and that feedback was essential. CEO GSU said it was important that academic staff knew how to handle that feedback, including negative feedback. The Chair asked the DSE's to include training for staff on this, during their June programme. DSE FEH said they had a problem with student rep engagement, mainly due to timetabling issues.

The Chair updated SEC on some work that had been done by Dean Barrow in timetabling, where they modelled the timetable with a 10.00 am start.

Unfortunately, in most cases this had an impact on the other end of the day. At Medway, where 10 am starts could be achieved, they would be. At Avery Hill, space meant it was more complicated but they would do what they could to reduce 9am starts without impacting on the end of the day. At Greenwich space was much tighter, but small changes could be made. Unfortunately a

wholesale 10.00 am start had not been possible due to the impact of extending the end of the day to later times.

The DLT's have agreed to consider the principles of the timetable and to bring a recommendation back to LQSC.

DSE BUS said that where students turned up late, academic staff did not always feel empowered to deal with it. The Chair felt that if students arrived late, and entered the room quietly, it shouldn't be a problem. Perhaps some guidance for staff was needed, following consultation with student rep forums. Pres GSU said a balance was needed, with staff and students respecting each other and fostering supportive relationships. Action: DSE BUS to find the late arrival policy and to work with the other DSE's to review it. Policy and any suggested changes to come to the next SEC meeting.

The Chair confirmed that the COO is developing a contingency plan for the 29th March, if students and staff had problems getting to University, following Brexit. DSE BUS said teaching modes needed to be considered. Other ideas were more webinars and increased use of lecture capture. DSE FES reminded SEC that some professional bodies required attendance at lectures.

DoEF suggested that we should do more to action the recommendation around transport, liaising with TfL to improve provision for students where possible. He will think about that.

DEF agreed that it was important to incorporate facilities for all students who travel long distances, including quiet study spaces, lockers, common rooms and communal kitchen facilities. Pres GSU reminded SEC of the need for students to be able to refill their water bottles.

Social events and co-curricular opportunities were being covered by academic communities.

Students who came from the local area should be seen as a tie to the local area. The Chair had discussed a possible weekend fun run with Sports and Recreation, and this may need to be revisited. CEO GSU felt it was important to try and influence the London agenda, externally, through the Mayor of London, or TfL. The Chair agreed to discuss this with the VC. DSE FLAS said Faculties also had links with local communities, e.g. local councillors, who came in to events with students.

ACTION: DSAS to review procedure for students changing mode of attendance with registration group and bring findings to SEC.

ACTION: Chair to ask VCPO for comparative data with other London Universities who had commuter students.

ACTION: Chair to discuss ways to inform London agenda with the VC.

SEC18.26 Pregnancy and Maternity Policy

SAS had submitted *SEC18.P024 Pregnancy and Maternity Policy* for information. It had already been agreed by SEC, but now contained slight clarification around Tier 4 students, extenuating circumstances, and data protection.

SEC **approved** the policy.

Items for Information

- Minutes of Faculty Student Experience Committees
FBUS 5/1218; FLAS 31/10/18; FEH 4/12/18
- Minutes of Student Survey Sub-Committee
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Any Other Business

- Pres GSU asked about the deadline for papers for SEC, as there seemed to have been confusion this time. It was agreed the deadline for the next meeting was Friday 18th March.
- DILS reported some behaviour issues in the computer labs in Dreadnought. Students congregating in bays needed to be regularly challenged. There had also been an incident in the library at Stockwell Street. He would have a conversation with GSU around values and behaviours. The Chair asked DSAS to see how far work on the Student Charter had progressed, and he agreed to chase it. The Chair also asked if things like warnings and disciplinary proceedings were being used and was assured they were. She also asked if there was an annual report on student discipline and this was confirmed too. DEF reported they were appointing a security manager who would be responsible for all 3 campuses, which should lead to improved consistency. His role would include building local relationships, for instance with the police, and communications around the role of security. DSE BUS welcomed this, as in his view sometimes security officers lacked effectiveness. DEF felt this could be due to a misunderstanding about the role of security, but the new manager would address this.

The Chair felt that an anonymised incident report about the incident in the library might give some learning points. CEO GSU said they could help if required, as they had experience about dealing with incidents in licensed premises.

ACTION: Security and GSU to bring an anonymised report on the Stockwell Street incident with any learning points highlighted to the next meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Thursday 21st March 2019 at 2.00 pm in QA 075 Greenwich Maritime Campus. (Papers by 18th March.)

