

STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**NOTES of the FOURTH meeting of the STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE
in the 2018-2019 academic session held on THURSDAY 21 MARCH 2019 in
QA075, GREENWICH MARITIME CAMPUS****Present:**

Karen Bryan, DVC (Academic) (Chair)
Christopher Bustin, HIR
Meike Imberg, Pres GSU
Mike McGibbon, DSE FES
Henry Setter, VP (Welfare), GSU

Colin Allen, DSE, BUS
Corinne Delage, DSE, FLAS
Simon Leggatt, DSE FEH
John Schless, CEO GSU
Chris Shelley, DSAS

In Attendance:

Lynne Savage, (Secretary)SAS

Rob Brown (SAS)

Simon Earp (TM)
David Puplett (ILS)
Katarina Thomson (PAS)

Sarah Hill (ARM)
Stephanie Robinson, ICO

Apologies:

Paul Butler, DILS
Michael Flanagan, DEF

Christine Couper, DSP, PAS
Iain Morrison, HMC

SEC18.27 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22 January 2019 were **approved.**

**Actions
Arising***Exam Resit Support*

DSE's had circulated the document detailing minimum exam resit support to SEC members.

Commuter Students

Chair had asked VCPO for comparative data with other London Universities, but this was not available, as commuter students could be categorised in different ways.

Brexit

At this point the Chair said she was acutely aware of the anxiety around Brexit, and the University were trying to manage that anxiety, for staff and students. The communications aimed at applicants, over the summer, would be used to update them. DSAS confirmed that the International Compliance team would be holding briefings, after 29 March, whether Brexit happened on that day or not. There would also be a set of FAQs, and the briefings would be available on Panopto.

The Chair had discussed ways to inform the London agenda with the VC – she was attending a breakfast meeting with the London Mayor next week, where he would be advised what was required by London Universities after The Mayor's office had also come to meet with the International Office and UK Recruitment.

Security Incidents

Following incidents in Stockwell Street and Dreadnought, GSU and Security were meeting to follow up actions required. They would also be discussed as part of the new Student Charter, currently being prepared.

This **closed** the agenda item.

SEC18.28 GSU PRESIDENT UPDATE

Pres GSU presented *SEC18.P027 Greenwich Students Union President Update 8/3/19*

Pres GSU outlined the main important points of the report. The NSS was ongoing – although it had been going well, there was still more to be done. Next year, a budget had been requested to enable GSU to offer further support and prepare for all NSS promotions efficiently.

Pres GSU reported on the GSU elections, and the Chair congratulated Henry Setter on his election as President. She was very happy that one of the new officers was a black female student from Medway. She felt the elections had been very successful, and apologised for her honesty in the report, criticising lack of support from some staff members. However, she thanked the leadership team for their excellent support.

The other area in the report focussed on the supply of free emergency sanitary products being available on each campus. The Chair said it was a difficult issue, as SEC did not control any funds. DSAS said that SAS would be able to work with GSU on a small pilot, providing a small supply, and seeing how many were required, cost implications etc.

The Chair thanked them both. She also said that next year the University needed to think about the timing of the NSS, and the elections, as some of the key NSS and election moments coincided.

SEC **noted** the report.

ACTION: The Chair and CEO GSU agreed to pick up the issue of timings of the NSS and SU elections over the summer months.

ACTION: GSU and DSAS to arrange an emergency sanitary products pilot.

SEC18.29 TRANSPORT PRESENTATION

Simon Earp, Transport Manager, presented *SEC18.P028 Medway Bus Services*.

He outlined the history of the bus services on each campus. There were some complicated issues on both sites. At AH and Greenwich, about 80% of the students travelling on the bus were from halls of residence, and they saw the service as part of their accommodation package. If changes were made, there might be difficulty filling the rooms at AH. At Medway, it would be a much more expensive service to run. The journey to Greenwich was over 30 miles,

and 99% of the students using it lived in private accommodation. If the University ran their own service, it would be very expensive. The bus market in London was very different to that in Medway. In London, it was controlled by TfL, and it was not easy to negotiate anything with them – they did what they did! In Medway, Arriva had the monopoly. Having discussed the service provision with Arriva, the best option had been the student discount, which was considerable, and was valid for any journeys, not just to and from the campus. As far as the route from Chatham stations was concerned, if the University were to run a bus, they would need two bigger buses, a licence would be required, and the cost could be £200,000 plus as opposed to the £40,000 which got students and staff a big discount. There had been changes at Arriva and the new Operational Manager was open to further improvements. The 190/191 bus route, from Gravesend, had been changed, which should improve reliability and address some of the main complaints. The University bus service was also out to tender, which should enable discussions around improvements, including changes to the Medway service, such as further buses during vacations.

DSE FES said the service from Chatham station was the persistent area of complaint, so he hoped the planned changes would help with that.

VP (Welfare) GSU said that transport was the number one issue with Medway students, and it probably wouldn't go away.

The Chair thanked TM for his report and advised that SEC had wanted to understand the issues and were reassured that a dialogue was taking place. She asked that SEC be kept informed.

The Library Manager, for ILS, also asked if anything could be done to reduce the barriers around getting tickets, and was advised that changes were planned, including the Greenwich Gateway card becoming a “smart” ticket, and tickets being available in more places than at present.

SEC **noted** the report.

SEC18.30 STUDENT WELLBEING SERVICE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Robert Brown, Student Wellbeing Manager presented *SEC18.P029 Student Wellbeing Service Executive Summary Annual Report 2017/18*.

RB highlighted the main points of the report, and the key challenges and successes of the service. The biggest issues were around anxiety and depression – many more cases were coming forward, which required careful managing. He explained the difference between the counselling service and the mental health service – the counselling service was psychological support, but mental health was more practical. Another challenge was that NHS specialist mental health support was very restrictive, so the University was having to pick up the pieces. The average waiting time for an appointment was 22 calendar days, which was not ideal, but better than the NHS. The mental health team continued to be proactive – delivering workshops etc. Unfortunately, although they were always 100% fully booked, sometimes only 50% turned up. He also reported that following concerns raised at SEC, the agency which dealt with D&D issues had been changed. The Chair thanked him for the report, which was very informative.

VP(Welfare)GSU said a review was taking place into Greenwich Inclusion plans, so it would be good for them to link up. DSE FLAS said there was a

new online system for the inclusion plans, and some training had taken place. The Chair said that GSU needed to be involved in that.

DSE FEH said that all staff were now going to be involved in mental health awareness training – he wondered how optimistic RB was that partnerships could be developed – there was more demand being identified. RB said this was all being considered.

DSAS advised that under the Student Wellbeing plan, a bid had been put in to work with 2 NHS trusts, to try and identify a way to triage students better. The bid was for OfS funding. The Chair commented this was a good development. If this was not received the plan would proceed anyway – but the NHS were launching a 10-year plan to commit to support young people better. DSE FES asked if there was a difference in the waiting times between campuses and was advised that everyone who came forward was offered the first available appointment regardless of campus. DSE FES said this was good news and thought that maybe students might need reminding that classes could be missed for appointments.

DSE FES also said the vacant D&D role at Medway was cause for concern, but RB said there had been 3 unsuccessful attempts to recruit. The Wellbeing service were looking at a new model for the role – maybe staff rotating between campuses.

DSE BUS asked when a student at G would get an appointment if they requested it today and was advised it would be week commencing 10 June. RB said they were also trying to change the system, as at present only 3 people could do assessments, but changes were planned so that up to 6 would be able to assess.

The DSAS said that was part of the new Wellbeing Strategy, and any good ideas were being fed in. The assessments were risk based – being an assessment of need.

DSE FLAS thought it was important to get the message across, once an assessment was made students needed to see a counsellor soon. DSAS said that also coming was the Big White Wall

Chair asked ICO for Marketing & Comms to help with getting the message out to Personal Tutors and students.

The Chair thanked MSW for the report and asked if SEC could have an update next year. She thanked the Wellbeing Service for their work, which was appreciated.

SEC **noted** the report.

SEC18.31 GSU POLICY CHANGES

VP(Welfare) GSU presented *SEC18.P030 Policy Recommendations Paper* and explained that it was a snapshot in time, back in November 2018, and the situation was constantly changing. Continuous work was being undertaken on campaigns and issues, and he wanted to show how the GSU got involved.

The GSU wanted the opportunity to influence policy. The Chair confirmed it was important that GSU be involved on any policy review, and it was good practise that their input was embedded in systems. The ARM felt it important to mention that although Academic Registry consult GSU there are occasions where changes have to be effected to abide by regulations laid down by external bodies, such as OIA and other sector stakeholders. At present the Extenuating Circumstances guidance was being updated, and the GSU were being consulted.

SEC **noted** the report.

SEC18.32 WELCOME 2019

DSAS updated SEC on plans for September 2019 welcome programme. The welcome group working party had met and asked a sub group to come up with a vision statement, which had been missing. DSAS had recently circulated a paper Welcome Vision outlining the main priorities, that students were *Informed, Welcomed and Connected*. This gave the group a focus and connected academic and strategic objections. A full plan for September was being prepared.

ACTION: DSAS to bring Welcome plan for September 2019 to May SEC.

SEC18.33 SAS STRATEGY

DSAS presented *SEC18.P031 SAS Strategy map* which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He explained that SAS delivered many services and the strategy document was designed to pull these together. There were 5 overarching strategic objectives, to be reached in stages by 2022. There would be an annual report detailing priorities, and a stakeholder survey was planned.

The Chair asked SEC members to feed back by the end of next week if they had any comments. Chair also queried if the student reference group had been involved but was advised that this was more of an internal document for staff.

SEC **noted** the report.

SEC18.34 HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY – update

DSAS updated SEC on the latest initiatives under the Health and Wellbeing strategy. There had been a very successful Mental Health Day on 7th March, in conjunction with HR department, and the Student Unions. There would be a wash-up meeting to pick up any areas for improvement. This had given the University the opportunity to launch the new strategy online. The new branding “Its our Wellbeing” had also been launched. Good progress was being made, and the profile raised with the help of events, such as Matt Dawson, the rugby player, facilitating touch rugby at Avery Hill. VP GSU said it had been a good event, and the Chair said it was important that this was not a “one off” event.

DSAS also explained that wellbeing had been raised as one of the issues in the Staff engagement survey, so staff wellbeing was being given a high priority, not just once a year. Staff and Students were also being encouraged to arrange their own events.

SEC **noted** the update.

ACTION: The Chair asked CEO GSU to cross refer with the wellbeing strategy when planning the next phase of their Academic Communities plans.

SEC18.35 THIRD TERM ACTIVITIES

DSE's presented *SEC18.P032 Term 3 Pilot: Faculty Details for 2019*

Each DSE gave further information around their planned programme.

DSE FES said the programme had been submitted and students had been particularly pleased to see so much laboratory work included. Employability and Careers service were also involved.

DSE FEH presented his brochure, people could book on to the programme via Eventbrite. All rooms and facilitators had been booked, and he hoped students would attend.

DSE BUS said their programme was aimed at one department, with approximately 680 students. It was a 6-day programme, which added to what they had been doing in term time. It was designed to get people to attend, have fun, and therefore come back! If it worked, it would be rolled out to other programmes.

DSE FLAS said they had a detailed programme, which included mindfulness and employability sessions. All rooms were booked, and the programme had been advertised. It was aimed at Level 4/5, and in some cases Level 6/7 – approx. 500-600 students. Although they planned to put it on student timetables, it couldn't be on their individual timetable, as it was connected to their programme not their module.

Pres GSU asked if there were any flyers etc. so that GSU could assist in publicising the events. DSE BUS said there was already a communications plan.

The Chair said it was important to evaluate the programme afterwards and would ask the new Impact Adviser Jonathan Gascoigne to contact the DSE's to co-ordinate the evaluation. She thanked them for all their hard work and hoped for good attendance.

SEC **noted** the report.

ACTION: Chair to ask Impact Adviser to contact DSE's to discuss evaluation of Third Term pilot.

SEC18.36 LATE ARRIVAL AT TAUGHT SESSIONS POLICY - draft

DSE BUS presented *SEC18.P035 Late Arrival at Taught Sessions Policy - draft*

He explained the idea came from a query raised at SEC and was driven by the feeling that late arrivals were disruptive. The draft had been discussed with other DSE's and the DLT's and was designed to be short and simple. He welcomed comments from SEC.

VP(W)GSU thanked him and said there was also a Student Charter being worked on now, which could reference this policy.

The Chair said the policy was incredibly helpful, there was much confusion around now, and different arrangements in different areas. The policy could now go to LQSC, and then to Academic Council.

SEC **approved** the policy.

ACTION: Late Arrivals at Taught Sessions policy to go to LQSC, for referral to Academic Council.

SEC18.37 RELIGION AND BELIEF POLICY

DSE BUS presented draft *SEC18.P036 Religion and Belief Policy*

He had been asked by SEC to prepare this, as no previous policy could be found. The idea was to define the Universities attitude to religious belief and to no belief. Particular concerns had been raised around timetabling, taking into account religious beliefs. He asked for questions and comments. Pres GSU said it was very helpful but thought it might be an idea to consult the Faith groups which met at a Faith Forum and get their comments.

The Chair agreed this was a good idea and asked that Pres GSU organise a meeting to enable this to happen.

Chair thanked DSE BUS for the good work but felt it did need student input.

ARM asked if it had been mapped against the student regulations and was advised that it could be.

Chair felt there ought to be something in there about mutual respect between all parties.

DSAS also asked that it be cross referred with the disciplinary policy.

DP felt it was unusual for a policy for a policy to cross so many other policies, although this may be unintended – perhaps it should be referred to the EDI committee?

The Chair said that group could certainly be consulted, she would talk to Gail Brindley, Director of HR, who was Chair of that group – it may be that other policies needed to be cross-referred to this one.

SEC **noted** the policy.

ACTION: DSE BUS to add a statement about “mutual respect” to the policy.

ACTION: Chair to seek advice from Chair of EDI group about the policy.

ACTION: Pres GSU to take the policy to the Faith Forum for advice.

SEC18.38 ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

DSE FLAS had requested *SEC18.P037 Attendance and Engagement Policy* be placed on the agenda, as she requested an amendment, in terms of the timeline. Staff were expected to withdraw students within 5 days, but this was sometimes tight if they needed more information from the student, or had difficulty contacting them. DSE FLAS wanted the timescales reviewed, if it met UKVI guidelines. HOI said that if we stuck to whatever policy we had in place, UKVI would be happy. The Chair said she had met with DLT's and AD SAS, and all had agreed a review would be beneficial. Chair also wanted to get GSU and the Head of International Compliance involved.

VP(W)GSU also felt the communications around the policy were not good and wanted to get M&C involved. The Chair said there were some issues around who did what, and it was quite a difficult policy to set the right tone.

DSE FES said it had been a difficult policy to police, too.

The Chair asked DSE FEH to co-ordinate a review, including GSU and the International Office, plus the AD SAS (Registry) and take the amended policy to LQSC, and then AC.

ACTION: DSE FEH to arrange working group to review Attendance and Engagement Policy and take amended version to LQSC.

SEC18.39 ACADEMIC REGISTRY STUDENT CONDUCT ANNUAL REPORT

Academic Registry Manager presented *SEC18.P038 Academic Registry Student Conduct Annual Report for 2017-18*

ARM outlined the main points of the report and was pleased to advise that numbers had fallen from the previous year, although felt that would not be the same for the current year. There had been an increase in incidents of sexual conduct and sexual violence. ARM advised that there was currently a major re-write of the disciplinary policy in progress, and that would be brought to the next SEC.

The Chair and Pres GSU thanked her for the report, and said it was very helpful.

SEC **noted** the report.

Items for Information

- Minutes of Faculty Student Experience Committees
FES 9 Jan 19; FES 6 Mar 19; FLAS 5 Dec 18
- University Provost Board Presentation – GSU elections 2019

Any Other Business

DSE FES raised concerns over the Extenuating Circumstances Policy. He felt that some students who had ongoing issues were being directed to the policy, where Fitness to Study might be more appropriate. DSE BUS agreed that in some instances it was difficult for students to get evidence of an ongoing issue, such as depression. He felt the policy needed to meet the student's needs.

The Chair agreed and wondered how SEC felt it would be best addressed. ARM advised that a working group was being put in place, and other HEI's and the OIA were being consulted, and there was a whole sector move around the issues raised. A Chair of an EC panel would be on the group, as would VP(W)GSU.

The Chair asked that the issue raised by DSE FES be considered by that working group. She felt it was also important that other students felt the policy was fair to all students. DSAS advised that it was important to realise the difference between a submission for Extenuating Circumstances, and the submission of evidence. For instance, if we have a Greenwich Inclusion Plan in place, why would a student have to submit it again, if it had previously been submitted. ARM said the review was currently planned to have a new policy in place by 2020/21, and the guidance would be updated for 2019/20. DSAS said once the principles had been agreed, they could be applied straight away, using the existing policy. The Chair asked if it would be at all possible to take the revised policy to Academic Council in October. ARM agreed to try to meet that deadline. The Chair said although it was not good practise to change a policy mid-year, this change would help everybody. Pres GSU were supportive of the proposed review.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Tuesday 14th MAY at 2.00 pm in QA 075 Greenwich Maritime Campus.
(Papers by 7th May)