

**STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**

**NOTES of the FIFTH meeting of the STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**

**in the 2015-2016 academic session held on Tuesday 17th May 2016 at QA075 Greenwich Campus**

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| **Present:** |  |
| Judith Burnett (Chair), PVC, ACH | Colin Allen DSE, BUS |
| Sally Alsford, EDU | Christine Couper, DSP, PAS |
| Corinne Delage DSE, FACH | Michael Flanagan, DEF |
| Harry Hodges, Pres SUUG | Virginia Malone, ILS |
| Mike McGibbon DSE FES | Christopher Philpott DSE, FH |
| Sara Ragab, AD,SAS | John Schless, SUUG |
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| **In Attendance:** |  |
| Scarlett Dempsey, SUUG | Nikki Makinwa, QM |
| Pauline McFarlane, SAS | Lynne Savage (Secretary), SAS |
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| **Apologies:** |  |
| Will Calver, PD | Anne Poulson, COO |
| Katarina Thomson, PAS |  |

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| **SEC15.41**  **Actions Arising** | **MINUTES AND ACTIONS ARISING**  The minutes of SEC held on 24th March 2016 were **agreed** as a true record, and **approved.**  The Chair welcomed the new SUUG CEO John Schless to the meeting, and introductions were made.  *SEC15.35 University Student Survey (USS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) – proposals for 2016 surveys*  Discussions had taken place, and Survey Timetable for 2016/2017 was on the agenda.  *SEC15.39 Experience of BME students*  Presentation delivered by FACH intern had been circulated to SEC members for information.  This **closed** the agenda item. |
| **SEC15.42** | **Student Engagement Framework**   1. Student Voice   Pres.SUUG produced two papers *SEC15.P050 Student Consultation Matrix – for approval* and *SEC15.P051 Item for debate.*  He thanked everyone who had been involved in the consultations for the consultation matrix. He explained that the idea was to embed student consultation in the University decision making process, and outline the levels of impact. The document also contained the general principles and some guidance. He was asking for SEC to approve the matrix, and decide who and how it would be implemented.  The DEF asked when the document had gone to the Student Voice meeting and was assured that this was the final version, the framework having been discussed at Student Voice meetings, and previous drafts had been brought to SEC. The Chair confirmed that the SEF “task and finish” groups had been given specific tasks, and that their final proposals had been brought back to SEC, where there was representation from all areas – a good cross section. However, she confirmed there was still time to look at the detail before it was presented to Academic Council.  The DEF said he would make some suggestions as to the content, which Pres.SUUG agreed he would be open to.  The Chair emphasised that as with the outputs from the other SEF groups, this was the first stage, and implementation would follow, after it had been agreed by AC.  DSE FES agreed that if the matrix was used as a regulatory document it might prove problematic, the Chair explained that it had never been seen as that, more as a set of principles and mechanisms to ensure greater effectiveness to facilitating the student voice.  DSP welcomed the matrix, and felt it was good practise. PAS also welcomed the matrix while noting that it was often necessary to adhere to a legal framework which meant that certain actions were necessary, and welcomed that students needed to be aware of that. The Pres. SUUG confirmed that the student body recognised this.  The Chair welcomed the matrix, explaining that it came out of a commitment made 2 years ago to the Student Body through the Student Union where the principles of mutual consultation were agreed. She felt the document was useful in that it showed the Student perception of what would make a major impact, and would develop awareness amongst staff both of the need to engage fully with the student body and the range of ways in which it could be done. The matrix showed the structure of consultation, and systematic ways in which this could be achieved.  Pres.SUUG agreed it was exactly as had been outlined, and that he now needed to know who would be the Faculty and Directorate champions. The meeting discussed various ways to facilitate this - by Faculty, or campus specific etc. and how best to secure support.  ISM felt the Matrix was most impressive and once it had been passed, everyone would be aware of the principles. For example, she would share it with the ILS managers.  The Chair asked the SEC members to advise Pres.SUUG of any changes to the document, and felt SUUG should send out the proposals and ask each Faculty and Directorate who they wanted, and how they wanted, to implement it. She thanked Pres.SUUG for the work that had been done.  SEC **noted** the document.  SEC **endorsed** the Matrix.  **ACTION:**   1. SEC members to take the document back to their Faculty or Directorate for information and to secure champions and support; and to report back to Pres. SUUG how the matrix would be implemented 2. Following amendments, final document to be taken to Academic Council. |
| **SEC15.43** | **OFFA Agreement - summary**  DSE FEH presented a paper *SEC15.P052 OFFA agreement – summary*  He explained that the OFFA Access Agreement had been submitted, and the document presented showed the summary sent to the VCG. There was also a workbook, containing all the figures, and a text document. They had been prepared by the SASS sub-committee. The aim of that sub-committee was to ensure all areas of the University had greater ownership of the agreement, and that the money spent was aimed at specific targeted areas and reflected the student life cycle. He felt the University had a lot to celebrate in terms of providing access – although sometimes there was a concern about potential tensions between access and whether changing tariff entry criteria would affect this, nonetheless the University intake was still very diverse.  The documents outlined the groups being targeted, the work already being undertaken, and new initiatives and areas for development. Staff would need to be accountable, in terms of the agreement, and this was accepted.  The OFFA agreement was becoming more of a living document, and a meeting planned for next week intended to start writing the 2018/2019 agreement.  Members of SEC welcomed the agreement, and discussed ways of publicising it, and for Faculties to take ownership  The Chair thanked DSE FEH and the SASS sub-committee for their work, and the good clear summary. She said the work on the agreement was about translating and connecting everything we do, every day, to the OFFA, to make sure that it is a living document.  SEC **noted** the report. |
| **SEC15.44** | **Campus updates**  DEF presented a paper *SEC15.P053 Campus works update* and highlighted the main points; Dreadnought design, Stockwell street snagging, Medway C4 student hub and the Devonport accommodation work. He outlined works to be undertaken during summer 2016 on all three campuses.  The Chair commented that she was very pleased to see most of the work was at the very front end of the student experience.  DSE FEH asked if the recent excellent work on Mansion site was now finished, and was reassured that more could be undertaken, subject to the budget. Likewise, Pres.SUUG was advised that more work could be done at The Dome, Southwood Campus, if the SU could say what was required that would be taken into account and welcomed.  DSE FACH asked if the opportunity was being taken to include gender-neutral toilets in buildings, and if there was a policy relating to this? DEF confirmed that the issue was being considered, and Pres.SUUG confirmed that the University policy allowed for gender neutral toilets to be included in any new build.  The Chair thanked DEF for his report, and noted that his was a large and busy remit.  SEC **noted** the report. |
| **SEC15.45** | **Course Evaluation Survey**  DSP presented a paper *SEC15.P054 Course Evaluation participation* *rates* and explained that it was good news – there had been an increased response rate, almost reaching what had been an unlikely stretch target of 40%, building on previous increases. DSE’s commented that significant resources and training had gone into this, which might not be sustainable, but a good step change had been achieved.  The Chair asked that they keep pushing, eventually the survey would become an integral part of staff and students’ lives and it is good to see it become so much more embedded.  DSP also presented a paper *SEC15.P055 Minutes of module evaluations working group.* This again mentioned the resources required to manage the surveys, and the technical support required. Developments were being planned, such as an automated email to those who had not yet completed it, which were welcomed.  DSE FACH asked if a policy had been agreed to deal with libellous comments. DSP said that the Bullying and Harassment policy could be implemented if necessary, and that further training – for staff and students – might reduce these.  The Chair thanked PAS for their work, and said that SEC supported the development of good feedback, which was an ongoing issue.  SEC **noted** the report. |
| **SEC15.46** | **Clubs, Societies & Associations**  The Chair presented paper *SEC15.P056 Clubs, Societies & Associations* which listed all the clubs currently running, and by Faculty and Department.  She highlighted that there had been an increase, and supported the Students Unions efforts in this regard. Some money had been allocated to each department to support this. Other activities took place, e.g. Social events and field trips, which reinforced the invitation to students to participate. These were all linked to the overall student experience.  Pres.SUUG gave out some figures, which had not yet been finalised, and said that other initiatives were being looked at, for example with students who commute.  CEO SUUG emphasised that in 2016/17 even more would be done to encourage participation, which in turn supported the employability agenda.  SUUG had recently hosted its first “Society Awards” event.  DSP wondered if some of the societies were socially insular, but was re-assured that anyone was welcome, and often the societies were involved in sharing their experiences and culture with others.  AD,SAS said that it was a good opportunity to meet students on a less formal basis and mentioned that today was International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBiT)  CEO SUUG said the SU were celebrating their successes, but wanted to support the societies to become more external. They would be involved in Open Days, for example, and taster sessions.  The Chair thanked them for all the good work and looked forward to further reports.  SEC **noted** the reports.  **ACTION:** Pres.SUUG to bring participation statistics to July SEC. |
| **SEC15.47** | **Annual Reports**  The DSE’s presented their annual reports *DSE FBUS SEC15.P057, DSE FACH SEC15.P058 and DSE FES SEC15.P059* and were asked to pick out one highlight from each;   1. DSE FACH emphasised the Student Voice and course evaluations work, and the establishment of the Faculty “You Said, We Did” newsletter. 2. DSE FES felt that Medway had turned a corner, and was becoming a more vibrant community, with increased social activity. A new challenge was the relationship with the Universities neighbours, with issues needing addressing. 3. DSE BUS said that much work had been done on addressing grass roots issues; new courses and programmes, working more closely with students. They wanted to get to know their students, and had worked with the CSSA society, making sure they were happy and prepared. This had resulted in an increased success rate.     The Chair thanked them all for the reports. She felt that relationships with University neighbours might be an agenda item for the future. The new role of DSE had proved to be a huge success, they had worked very hard and been able to solve problems as they arose.  SEC **noted** the reports. |
| **SEC15.48** | **International Student Barometer results**  The DSE’s had produced a joint report *SEC15.P060 Responses to the 2015* *International Student Barometer survey*, and were asked to highlight one main point.  DSE FES said that NRI had been their “stars”, with most positive results, scoring well over 90%. However, he didn’t understand why, with such positive results, the question “would you recommend the university” had only a 69% recommendation. This was echoed by the other Faculties.  DSE BUS felt the data was not presented in a useful way, and was quite difficult to interpret. Students appeared to like living in the UK, but were not made welcome here. He agreed that this needed investigating, since it could refer to wider issues with the UK context re visa and reception issues rather than the University as such.  DSE FEH said they had very few International students, but with the few they had it should be easy to form closer connections, and identify how they might be better supported.  DSE FACH felt the idea of International student reps was worth pursuing. There would be an enhancement of social activities, reminding the SEC of the actions being developed by the DSEs with regards to hospitality initiatives for international students.  The Chair thanked them for their report. She felt they should continue the good work they were doing, working towards understanding the students better. The International lunch idea, which arose at a previous SEC, would be pursued, as would the idea of Student reps. Some thought needed to be given to those students responding negatively to the “would you recommend…” question and this will continue to be a topic of ongoing actions.  SEC **noted** the report. |
| **SEC15.49** | **Faculty Withdrawals and Interruptions**  AD,SAS talked to the paper *SEC15.P061 Faculty Withdrawals and Interruptions – finance deadlines.*  She explained that this had been brought to SEC as it had been raised elsewhere that not everybody was aware of the deadline dates. She emphasised that these were available on the website, and that the new *Charging and Refund policy* had been published much earlier for 2016/2017.  The Chair said that the issue may be that PT don’t always know where to find the information, and was assured that links to relevant information were now in the Programme handbooks.  SEC **noted** the report.  **ACTION**: Link to Charging and Refund policy to be sent to FOO’s. |
| **SEC15.50** | **Pregnancy and Maternity Policy**  AD, SAS produced draft paper *SEC15.P062 Policy and guidance regarding* *student pregnancy and maternity* for discussion.  She had been asked to produce a policy, and had drafted this, based on information provided by the Equality Challenge Unit. The policy had been developed following wide consultation, and was intended to provide a working model to be referred to by staff and students. Some minor changes, relating to risk assessments, and Children & Young people being on University premises, had been made since the draft had been circulated.  She further advised that an impact assessment for the policy would be carried out, and it was gender neutral. HR had been consulted.  SEC members asked about risk assessments, and field trips, and discussed various problems they had experienced.  QM asked if it included Partner colleges, but was advised that it didn’t, as they should have their own policies in place.  DSP expressed concern that the data on pregnancy etc. was not being collected, even though it was a protected characteristic, and was therefore not being monitored. Some members felt that it was up to students to make their situation known, so that support could be provided, where necessary. AD,SAS said that data collection of this information might now be able to go back on the agenda.  Various comments were made concerning point 11 – miscarriages – and AD,SAS agreed to add to the item.  The Chair thanked her and welcomed the report, supported its development, and said that it was complex but very necessary piece of work.  SEC **endorsed** the policy.  SEC **noted** the report.  **ACTION**: Updated Policy and Guidance to be circulated. |
| **SEC15.51** | **Students Giving Cause for Concern**  SWS Manager,SAS presented paper *SEC15.P063 Students Giving Cause for Concern*  The existing *Students Giving Cause for Concern* document had been amended to include guidance on radicalisation.  The Chair asked if this was in line with documents produced by other HE institutions.  SWS Manager said they had looked at other universities, and had produced something which was reasonable and proportionate – embedding the issue rather than creating a whole new policy.  The Chair asked if the referral route had been agreed, and was assured it had, the flowchart in the document should be followed  ISM said that she had participated in the JISC “prevent” training, which had proved a really good, useful, introduction to the subject.  SEC members were concerned that mental health problems were their main concern and large activity area. SWS Manager said that she was trialling some training, which might be rolled out to other staff, to give them confidence in identifying issues.  The Chair welcomed the policy, and felt sure SEC would return to it at some stage in the future through mental health initiatives which were developing in the University.  **ACTION:** Link to JISC Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent to be circulated to SEC. |
| **SEC15.52** | **ILS Annual Report**  The HLS presented the *Library Strategy* for information. She talked through her PowerPoint presentation, and explained the background behind the Strategy document. It aligned with the IT Strategic plan, and the University Strategic plan, with its four main themes;  Learning and teaching – working with academics, moving to digital resources, training on line, and the need to be mobile friendly. Study Skills staff now come under ILS – a web microsite being created. A new project RefMe was looking at online referencing. New post created – Collaborations, Compliance and Copyright Manager.  Research and scholarship – Post Grad researchers study room being created, archive being used by community. Research support to be developed.  Community and engagement – increased opening times, user groups, updated web presence. Some space issues for the future, still unclear. Open days and Community Open House days very popular.  Services, infrastructure and organisation – shared library management system (LMS) with University of Kent, Christchurch and UoG being investigated, which will aid auto renewal etc. Online payment system options being explored. Increased communications with social media and digital signage. SWS library team have been nominated for THES Outstanding Library Team award.  ISM would circulate the presentation, which contained usage statistics.  SEC **noted** the report.  **ACTION:** Presentation slides to be circulated to SEC members. |
| **SEC15.53** | **JISC learning analytics discover days – feedback**  This item was carried forward to the July SEC meeting. |
| **SEC15.54** | **Youthsight Survey – update**  PSM updated SEC on this survey. There had been a 50% greater participation rate. PAS would supply a dashboard, summarising the responses, as it was not easy to understand. It was, however, important as it was the data behind the TES statistics.  **ACTION:** PAS to circulate link to Youthsight dashboard. |
| **SEC15.55** | **Survey Timetable 2016/2017**  PSM produced paper *SEC15.P064 Survey Timetable 2016/2017* and explained that all surveys were carried out for a reason. Some were mandatory, some related to University KPI’s, or were commissioned by the VCG.  DSE FACH felt there were too many surveys, but if the surveys could not be reduced, was there room for manoeuvre with rationalising the questions? PSM was not sure if this was possible, but said the module evaluation sub-group could look at it.  The Chair felt that the surveys were now set in the University calendar, or were national, and that we did need to benchmark.  SEC **approved** the survey timetable. |
| **SEC15.56** | **Any Other Business**  PSM wanted to let the meeting know that the BME conference had been excellent – other members agreed.  The Chair thanked the outgoing President SUUG, Harry Hodges, as it was his last meeting. She said that it had been an exceptional year, his work was much appreciated, and he had made a high impact, and good progress. SEC members echoed this appreciation. |
|  | **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**   1. Flow of minutes from Faculty Student Experience Committees   Minutes were received from FES 27/4/16, FACH 17/3/16,   1. Workflow of items for future meetings 2015/2016 2. Draft workflow of items for future meetings 2016/2017 3. Wednesday afternoon derogations 4. SEC meeting dates 2016/2017 5. Library Strategy |
|  | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  Thursday 7th July 2016 in Blake 028 Medway Campus |

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| **Key to work streams:** | student voice | supporting student experience |
|  | student journey | data and resources |