

**STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**

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

**in the 2013-2014 academic session held on Friday 28 March, 2pm, S309,**

**Mary Seacole Building, Avery Hill Campus**

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| **Present:** |  |
| Judith Burnett (Chair), PVC, ACH | Colin Allen, DSE, BUS |
| Sally Alsford, EDU | Alex Brooks, President SUUG |
| Christine Couper, Director, PAS | Corine Delage, DSE, ACH |
| Jenny Greenfield, CEO, SUUG | Eleanor Kehoe, Deputy Director, OSA |
| Ginny Malone, ILS | Mike McGibbon, DSE, ES |
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| **In Attendance:** |  |
| Will Calver, Widening Participation Manager | Sarah Hills, Officer |
| Pauline McFarlane, Head of Student Wellbeing | Chris Philpott, DPVC, EH |
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| **Apologies:** |  |
| Karen Cleaver, HoD, EH | Christopher Powner, Director, FM |

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| **SEC13.22**  **Actions Arising** | **MINUTES AND ACTIONS ARISING**  The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.  *Minute SEC13.9: Minutes and Actions Arising*  *Minute SEC13.10: National Student Survey (NSS)*   1. *Results (PAS)*   *Departments/services to feedback on one action taken last year which worked. ACTION: members to provide in writing their chosen successful action for collating into a central document to be disseminated to faculties, services and relevant departments* - actioned, report noted.  *Issues around social opportunity for students, FSECs to briefly survey clubs and societies. ACTION: Information Services Manager to provide members with paper on clubs and societies from recently attended International Student conference* – a formal paper had been accepted for publication in a professional journal but was not yet published, the ILS manger will refer members to the issue once published.  *FSECs and services to reflect upon issues around gender difference and expectations and feedback to January meeting. ACTION: report back from BUS re focus groups meetings with students at next SEC* - actioned, report noted.  *Minute SEC13.11: Student Journey*   1. *Follow That Student*   *Assessment & Feedback Policy - FSECs confirmed that implementation of the policy is ongoing. ACTION: members to provide a brief report to next meeting* - see main agenda item 13.26  *Minute SEC13.12: Personal Tutoring Policy*   1. *FSECs to verify that University Personal Tutoring Policy being fully implemented. ACTION: DSEs to consider recommendations raised in the ACH paper and establish or enhance feedback mechanisms as appropriate* - Faculties confirmed that recommendations are being considered and implemented where appropriate.   *Minute SEC13.14: Student Complaints Annual Report*  *ACTION: Faculties and services to provide report to March SEC re systems in place or consideration of informal complaints* - see main agenda item 13.30 |
| **SEC13.23** | **Alcohol & Drugs Policy**  The Head of Student Wellbeing outlined the context and aims of the policy, developed for intended implementation from the 2014-15 academic session. SEC were advised that the policy has been developed to support students rather than being a punitive solution when issues are identified.  SEC welcomed the policy and, following discussion, recommended some minor amendments:   1. addition of the SUUG to section 6.1 as a source of support and guidance 2. clarification in section 6.1.4 regarding how attendance monitoring will be undertaken 3. completion and approval of the Fitness to Study policy noted in section 6.1.6 4. addition of the Fitness to Practise regulations to section 6.1.6   Subject to the above amendments, SEC **approved** the policy for implementation in the 2014-15 academic year and **recommended** its adoption to Academic council. |
| **SEC13.24** | **Strategy for Access and Student Success (SASS) Agreement 2015-16**  The Widening Participation Manager outlined the purpose behind access agreements and the current work of the Strategy for Access and Student Success (SASS) working group chaired by the DVC (Academic Development), which formally reports to SEC.  SEC was informed that the national widening participation strategy due from the Office of Fair Access and HEFCE had been delayed, consequently the anticipated deadline for the request for institutions to produce a SASS for the 2015-16 academic year had been pushed back, with the University now expected to produce an Access Agreement (currently being drafted for approval by the SASS working party) in a timely manner.  SEC were informed that an audit is to be undertaken to include the development of an action plan for Faculties to take forward. Funding distribution will be discussed at the next meeting of the SASS working group, although this is unlikely to result in any significant increase in funding for Faculties, however the allocation of funding and its use will be made more transparent.  Concern was raised regarding the removal of the Access to Learning fund, particularly in relation to future funding for disabled student assessments.  **ACTION:** SASS working group to meet in April and feedback to the May meeting of SEC  SEC **noted** the update and thanked the Widening Participation Manager. |
| **SEC13.25** | **QAA Institutional Review**  The Chair updated SEC on the QAA Institutional Review, particularly in relation to developing policies and standards in relation to the seven indicators outlined in  Chapter B5: Student Engagement. A preliminary mapping exercise has been undertaken by the PVC (Architecture, Computing & Humanities) and senior managers, the next stage will be to refine and cross-check the results through action-orientated discussion meetings with a wider range of staff and to take forwards the issues arising particularly with members of the SEC. It was noted that this Chapter, like others, cross-refer and a joined-up approach would be necessary.  A key element to arise from the mapping exercise is the requirement for the University to development a clearly set out, formal Student Engagement policy. A working group that will report to SEC has been established, the first meeting of which takes place on 31 March 2014.  **ACTION:** SEC members are requested to provide any additional feedback on the mapping exercise to the PVC, and to become members of the sub-group.  SEC **noted** the report. |
| **SEC13.26** | **‘Follow that Student!’ update**     1. Update  * The Chair gave an overview of the interim report on the ‘Follow That Student!’ project. A full report will be provided to the July meeting of SEC, however there are some issues which require addressing at this point in the academic year. * **ACTION:** DSEs/faculty representatives to disseminate the report to faculties for immediate attention. * Recommendation 1: SEC agreed that the ‘Day 1 Week 1’ group take formal and sole leadership on defining the information set for all new students. * **ACTION:** ‘Day 1 Week 1’ group to report to July meeting of SEC * Recommendation 2: SEC members discussed issues around assessment deadlines and planning. It was felt that the new academic calendar has had an impact on deadline planning. Further discussion needs to take place regarding assessment packages that maintain rigour whilst allowing flexibility. However it was noted that programme teams may be able to better avoid bunching. * SEC noted concerns regarding the effectiveness of the ‘6 week period’, in regard to both the level of engagement from students and the viability of effective monitoring. * **ACTION:** The Chair to feedback concerns to Academic Council * Recommendation 3, members were requested to ensure that the requested discussions take place. * Recommendation 4, SEC noted that this action is already being undertaken within the Faculties from a previous SEC action point, with formal reports due to the July meeting of SEC. A small budget has been provided by PVCs to facilitate as appropriate, SUUG requested that sabbatical officers be involved in discussions regarding the distribution of individual Faculty funds. * Further discussion regarding club/society membership took place. Key points of discussion included: * emphasis needs to be on linking to the wider benefits of membership * incentivising is key, the Faculty of Engineering & Science are developing an ‘Employability Passport’ following the Business Faculty’s model * greater diversification for more niche groups to link to individual group needs * SUUG have noted for the need for development of non-traditional clubs and societies, and welcome ideas and suggestions from faculties and departments * students on professional programmes have minimal engagement with clubs and societies, SUUG welcome discussion with representatives from this group * The Director of Planning & Statistics suggested further development around the questions in the University Student Survey to elicit a more useful response in relation to the social environment.   **ACTION:** PAS and SUUG to discuss further   * Recommendation 5: SEC noted the links to New Arrivals planning. The Director of PAS informed SEC the International Student Barometer results showed a general overall improvement of 4-5%. Whilst a full report will be presented to a later meeting of SEC, members requested access to currently available information.   **ACTION:** Director of PAS to make outcome of International Student Barometer available to SEC members  SEC **noted** the report and **approved** the recommendations therein.  The PVC explained that the third interception point in the Follow That Student project will occur during the assessment and feedback period after Easter.   1. Assessment & Feedback Policy – update from members  * SEC received a paper detailing the current status of implementation of the Assessment & Feedback Policy. The SUUG informed SEC that, as part of a campaign around Assessment & Feedback, they have developed an ‘easy to read’ checklist to assist students with understanding their feedback and how they can follow up on feedback given.   **ACTION:** SUUG to provide a copy of the checklist to members for information  SEC **noted** the report. |
| **SEC13.27** | **New Arrivals**   1. January New Arrivals Survey Report  * EDU informed SEC that the focus of this report was from the free-text comments provided by respondents. It was noted that the responses were overall positive, with little significant difference from the September survey. Notable issues included: * some significant issues with late arrivals, although this differs across faculties * registration and timetabling information * confusion about start dates * lower response regarding personal tutors in the first week  1. New Arrival Spring reporting  * This summary report is the second point in the reporting and planning cycle for faculties and offices, focussing on changes and innovations. * SEC **noted** the issues highlighted in the above reports. * **ACTION:** reports to be disseminated to faculties and offices for information  1. New Arrivals Group minutes  * SEC were informed that, to avoid duplication of effort, this group would no longer be meeting as other groups are taking the work forward.   SEC **noted** the minutes and thanked the group for the work carried out. |
| **SEC13.28** | **Resources for the Student Experience Portal pages**  The Chair advised SEC of the need to increase the resources available on the Student Experience portal page.  **ACTION:** Members are requested to submit suggestions for suitable pages and information links to the Chair for inclusion. |
| **SEC13.29** | **Student Representation in Committees**  The Chair presented a verbal update to SEC. Student representation is a crucial and integral part of the governance of the University, and it is therefore essential that, not only are student reps appointed and attend meetings, but that they are actively listened to and invited to participate in the business of meetings.  A recent mapping exercise shows some progress but the recent change in structure at the university and the need to fully staff the committees appropriately at every level, had created additional recruitment issues for the SUUG.  The SUUG President and CEO confirmed that discussions are ongoing, with some initiatives planned such as:   * increased staffing to manage the student rep system * ongoing discussion about structure of representation e.g. Sabbatical officers only for high level meetings and the need for strong representation at Faculty level Committees * the “Be the Voice” campaign to encourage participation   The SUUG requested that discussion take place in faculties around flexibility of student reps across portfolios of programmes to ease the burden on the numbers required given the very large number of rep places which SUUG needed to fill. It was noted that good progress had been made in rep recruitment however there was a long way to go.  **ACTION:** DSEs/faculty representatives to feedback to FSECs for discussion  Members suggested that the SUUG provided details of where there are currently gaps in student representation, although acknowledged that the priority is to ensure greater levels of representation in the 2014-15 academic year.  **ACTION:** SUUG to provide any available information on current gaps in representation to DSEs who would assist where possible |
| **SEC13.30** | **Informal Student Complaints**  SEC received a paper detailing the current arrangements for dealing with informal complaints within each faculty and ILS.  SEC **noted** the report.  SEC were informed that the Senior Administrative Officer (Standards), OSA is attending the Good Practice Framework for Complaints and Appeals consultation on 2 April. This will launch a sector-wide consultation on a new national framework to support universities and students unions in dealing with student complaints and appeals.  **ACTION:** Senior Admin Officer (Standards) to provide report to the May meeting of SEC |
| **SEC13.31** | **Personal Tutoring Report**  The Educational Development Unit provided SEC with a report, to be formally approved by AQU, providing some early evaluation of embedding and effectiveness of the new Personal Tutoring Policy.  Concern was expressed regarding the lack of a clear centralised policy for attendance monitoring.  SEC requested that numbers of staff attending EDU personal tutor workshops be provided to DSEs/Directors of services to ensure that all personal tutors have received suitable training. EDU were also asked to consider suitable training for non-academic staff members to enable informed assistance.  **ACTION:** The Chair to request information from Human Resources  SEC **noted** the report with thanks and requested members disseminate to FSECs. |
| **SEC13.32** | **‘You Said, We Did’**  SEC received a joint paper from UoG and SUUG proposing the development of a formalised ‘You Said, We Did’ system, for incorporation into the upcoming drafting of the University Student Engagement Policy. The main intent is to more widely demonstrate that students are being heard, staff are recognised for their contributions and that the institution recognises progress.  The Chair requested that FSECs invite department heads to report on this item at FSEC based on the two key components detailed in the proposal.  **ACTION:** DSEs/faculty representatives to feedback request to FSECs and contact the PVC with an update on their thoughts.  SEC **noted** the report and **approved** the proposal for implementation. |
| **SEC13.33** | **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**   1. Flow of minutes from Faculty Student Experience Committees  * Business 11/12/13 * Architecture, Computing & Humanities – 15/01/14 * Engineering & Science – 13/02/14   SEC **noted** the flow of minutes.   1. Workflow of items for future meetings   SEC **noted** the current workflow proposals |
|  | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  Friday 23 May, 2pm, QA075, Greenwich Campus |

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