

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2012 at 1400 hours in the Boardroom

Present:

Prof T McIntyre-Bhatty (Chair)	Deputy Vice Chancellor [present from item 3.3 onwards]
Dr S Eccles (Deputy Chair)	Head of Education, The Media School (MS) [chaired up until agenda item 4]
Ms M Barron (Secretary)	Head of Student Services
Mr R Chater (Clerk)	Quality and Enhancement Officer
Ms L Bryant	President
Ms J Dawson	Observer nominated by the Chair of the Board
Dr B Dyer	School Student Experience Champion, School of Health and Social Care (HSC)
Ms T Hixson	Academic Administration Manager, The Media School (MS)
Mr A Ireland	Chair of Student Voice Committee (SVC)
Mr A James	General Manager of the Students' Union (SU)
Ms J Jenkin	Director of Student and Academic Services (SAS)
Ms J Mack	Academic Partnerships Manager
Ms M Mayer	Observer nominated by the Chair of the Board
Dr K McGhee	School Student Experience Champion, School of Applied Sciences (ApSci)
Prof J Parker	Member of the Professoriate, School of Health and Social Care (HSC)
Mr M Ridolfo	School Student Experience Champion, The Business School (BS)
Mr P Ryland	Deputy Dean (Education), School of Tourism (ST)
Mr M Simpson	Vice President (Education) of the Students' Union (SU)
Ms C Symonds	School Student Experience Champion, School of Tourism
Ms J Taylor	Educational Development and Quality Manager
Dr X Velay	Deputy Dean (Education), School of Design, Engineering and Computing (DEC)
Prof T Zhang	Head of the Graduate School

In attendance:

Mr S Webster (SW)	Business Analyst, Estates and IT Services (EIS)
-------------------	---

*Actions:

AI	Mr A Ireland
DD(E)s	Deputy Deans (Education)
EDQ	Educational Development and Quality
ESEC	ESEC members
JJ	Ms J Jenkin
MB	Ms M Barron
SW	Mr S Webster
TMB	Prof T McIntyre-Bhatty

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from:

Ms F Cownie	School Student Experience Champion, The Media School
Dr R Hill	Associate Dean (Education), School of Applied Sciences
Dr S Leahy-Harland	Observer (Student Experience Programme Manager)
Dr A Main	School Student Experience Champion, School of Design, Engineering and Computing
Mr C Matthews	Deputy Dean (Education), School of Health and Social Care
Canon Dr B Merrington	University Chaplain
Prof D Patton	Member of the Professoriate, The Business School
Ms J Quest	Senate Member
Associate Prof C Shiel	Director of the Centre for Global Perspectives
Dr G Willcocks	Deputy Dean (Education), The Business School

Action*

2. Minutes of the previous meeting (30 May 2012)

2.1 Accuracy

2.1.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting, except for section 3.2.1 which should read 'Some Schools also consider peer review of assignment briefs'. Also for section 5.1 the addition of the following: '5.1.5. A concern was raised regarding a proposal the University was currently exploring for an international pathways partnership to provide pre-sessional programmes. It was noted that this proposal was currently being considered through Academic Standards Committee.

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 *Update on Student Development Award (issues referred from EEC 6-7-11 and ESEC 16-11-12)*
This was discussed under item 3.5.

2.2.2 Minute 2.2.1

Resolved: Senate to consider what the implications of all Schools adopting this approach [adapting the MS charter for their own use] would be; in particular with respect to the development of a university wide charter.

2.2.2.1 This approach had been reported to, and agreed by, Senate. Members discussed how best to monitor the success of this approach and it was agreed that charters would be reviewed and updated annually and submitted to ESEC.

2.2.2.2 **Resolved:** The Committee to annually review School's Student Charters. Schools to provide their charters along with a commentary to ESEC in July 2013.

DD(E)s

2.2.2.3 The Committee considered how the new charters should be implemented and communicated to students and it was agreed that an implementation plan should be produced.

2.2.2.4 **Resolved:** The Head of Students Services to liaise with the Student Communications Manager in order to produce and implement a plan with M&C/Schools for communicating the new charters to students.

MB

2.2.3 Minute 2.2.4

Resolved: Discussions on the future arrangements for mid-cycle feedback had been deferred. The matter would be deliberated further at the Student Voice Committee (SVC) and recommendations submitted to the next meeting in July.

This was discussed under Item 3.6

2.2.4 Minute 3.1.5

Resolved: It was agreed that all Schools follow the proposed assignment receipting process for the 2012-13 academic year. Performance of the process to be monitored by Schools and to be reviewed by the Committee in the summer of 2013.

2.2.4.1 It was reported that AAMs were progressing the solution agreed at the previous meeting whereby students submitting work in hard copy as part of the pilot would be given the option of submitting to a School drop box such that a receipt would be issued. The AAMs had expressed reservations about the value of the proposed solution and clarity of the process and considered it could cause confusion amongst students leading to appeals and complaints. As a result, a standard message had been agreed by the AAMs and this would be published on myBU, as part of the unit guides or as part of the coursework submission process.

2.2.5 Minute 3.2.2.5

Resolved: it was agreed that the indicative assessment workload would not be changed from 5,000 words. Instead EDQ would review the wording of the policy and procedure to make it more clear what flexibility was afforded to tutors in setting assessment.

2.2.5.1 Completed.

2.2.6 Minute 3.3.8

Resolved: it was agreed that the issues raised in the reports be considered by Schools and Professional Services more widely through School Academic Boards and Professional Service fora.

Action*

2.2.6.1 Completed.

2.2.7 Minute 5.1.2

ACTION: a revised Students' Union President's Report to be submitted for the record.

2.2.7.1 Completed.

3. Items for discussion

3.1 Fusion Seminar and Conference Series

Received: Fusion Seminar and Conference Series Report

3.1.1 The EDQ Manager summarised the contents of the paper. The annual Education and Enhancement Conference had been replaced in 2011-12 by a series of seminars and half-day conferences focusing on the 'fusion' strategic theme. It was reported that staff had much appreciated this year's series of events.

3.1.2 The paper proposed recommendations for the 2012-13 year. The intention would be to run a series of events, similar to the previous in format, with a couple of events badged as 'fusion', supplemented by a mix of short seminars and other types of engagement, such as staff development workshops.

3.1.3 It was also proposed that the series be organised into separate strands in order to avoid confusion. The main strands would be Education Enhancement, Research and Professional Practice. The Education Enhancement series would include workshops focussing on teaching styles and assessment practice. The Committee noted the success of this year's series and welcomed the proposed changes for the forthcoming year.

3.1.4 **Resolved:** the recommendations in the paper for the 2012/13 conference/seminar series were endorsed and would be implemented, managed by EDQ.

3.2 Peer Reflection On Education Practice (PREP)

3.2.1 DD(E)s were invited to provide the Committee with an update on their School's engagement with PREP for the 2011-12 academic year and their plans for 2012-13.

3.2.2 DEC has undertaken a series of initiatives relating to enhancing staff sharing of expertise in teaching and learning during 2011/12 under the guidance of their Learning & Teaching Fellow and the DDE. DEC will continue and enhance PREP activities for the coming year.

3.2.3 HSC had focussed its PREP on the quality of assessment briefs and assessment feedback. This approach would be continued and extended in the forthcoming year, with the possibility of additional activity that would look at internationalisation.

3.2.4 In ST the majority of staff had engaged with PREP in 2011-12 and individuals had been able to choose to focus their activity in any aspect of teaching, learning or assessment. For 2012-13 the School planned to base activity on the theme of assessment processes to include peer review of assessment briefs, exam papers and quality of assessment feedback.

3.2.5 The Business School had run a series of development sessions covering such topics as lecturing skills and voice coaching. A bespoke programme on mentoring was planned for 2012-13. The School would also be re-introducing an examination paper review board to review all examination papers pre-finalisation. A series of light touch workshops would be delivered for new members of staff. To ensure that the voice coaching workshops would continue in the next academic year an external member of staff would be sought to help facilitate the sessions.

3.2.6 ApSci had held a workshop on providing electronic assessment feedback. The School had reviewed assessment feedback to identify and disseminate best practice.

- 3.2.7 In MS responsibility had been devolved to academic group level for choosing a PREP topic. Some academic groups had engaged well, for example one group set up a quality circle. The School's approach would be maintained for the forthcoming year, supplemented with School-wide seminars to pick up on the broader issues. **Action***
- 3.2.8 The Committee would continue to monitor and review PREP activity in Schools during 2012-13.
- 3.2.9 **Resolved:** a full report on the implementation of PREP to be submitted to the next meeting of ESEC. **EDQ**
- 3.3 Education and Student Experience Plans (ESEPs) and BU2018
Received: School Education and Student Experience Plans Approach
- 3.3.1 The EDQ Manager summarised the contents of the paper. The proposed approach outlined in the paper sought to cascade plans for education enhancement from BU's Vision and Values corporate plan into ESEPs and outline how they would be monitored.
- 3.3.2 The Committee were invited to comment on the proposal with a view to implementing ESEPs for 2012-13. It was clarified that ESEPs would replace Education Enhancement Plans from the previous year. Members raised concern that the introduction of ESEPs may result in education enhancement being lost from School Quality Reports (SQRs) and SQR action plans. The EDQ Manager explained that the purpose of the SQR was to give an annual snapshot and audit trail, whereas the ESEP was intended to be a continuous action plan that fulfilled the need to be responsive to quality enhancement, since there was a lag in the deliberative system. Members stressed the importance of ensuring that ESEPs would focus on students' experience as much as on education enhancement.
- 3.3.3 A concern was raised that the approach may lead to over reporting. It was clarified that the intention was not for reporting to detract, but that it should rationalise the process further and make it more manageable for Schools. Concern was also raised over the proposed timetable as it appeared not to account for the timing of SQR production in order to inform the ESEP. It was agreed that the approach be made as streamlined as possible to ensure an iterative loop from one cycle to the next.
- 3.3.4 **Resolved:** the proposed approach in the paper was broadly approved, subject to further rationalisation of the approach and reworking of the timetable by EDQ, in light of members' recommendations. **EDQ**
- 3.3.5 **Resolved:** a meeting with DD(E)s to be held to approve the refined approach before ESEPs are implemented by Schools for 2012/13. **EDQ/
DD(E)s**
- 3.4 Fair Access Update
Received: Fair Access Update
- 3.4.1 The Director of SAS informed the Committee that the Fair Access Agreement (FAA) had changed very little since the previous year. As the new process had not been through a full cycle yet it had not been appropriate to make substantive changes. The Committee welcomed the news that the university's FAA had been approved. It was noted that press data had been embargoed until the following day when all information would be released nationally.
- 3.5 Student Development Award Report
Received: BU Student Development Award Report
- 3.5.1 The Director of SAS summarised the contents of the paper. The report had been updated since the previous meeting and it made a number of proposals for changes which the Committee were asked to consider and to agree for implementation in 2012-13.
- 3.5.2 The Student Development Award (SDA) had been running for two years and there had been great take up from students during that time. The scheme was being scaled up incrementally with a further 100 places to be made available in 2012/13. However, the aim would be to make it available to all students to apply for by 2018. The last year had seen greater interest and

engagement from employers and this would be built on. There were no PSRB links as yet and in the meantime it would be beneficial to work with associated agencies.

Action*

3.5.3 Mahara had been the electronic portfolio system used to date and students' feedback on its ease of use had been very positive. Comments had been received from students that they would like to use Mahara on their degree as an academic portfolio and also because it has several useful features beyond being a portfolio.

3.5.4 In the first year of the award SAS and School administrative staff had been sought to provide one-to-one support to SDA students. Despite being available, this year's cohort had elected not to make use of this support, since resources had been more effective and students' direct engagement had been with the Student Development Co-ordinator.

3.5.5 One member commented that allowing all students to apply in the future may reduce the perceived value of the award. It was noted that not all students who registered would complete the award. Furthermore, the SU President noted that although differentiation between BU graduates would reduce as more students achieved the award, it gave them an advantage over graduates from other institutions.

3.5.6 It was noted that the SDA award ceremony event had been very good but could have been better publicised. Consideration would be given to developing promotion that would be popular with sponsors. One suggestion was to include interviews with SDA achievers in university promotional videos. The SDA team would also work with SUBU to encourage better support and attendance of the award ceremony by students.

3.5.7 It was noted that SDA take up by postgraduate students had been low due to the more limited time they had to undertake the award. The Head of the Graduate School had been investigating the possibility of creating a framework to support and enhance activity for postgraduate students. This would include a points based scheme to certify the level of student engagement. Concern was raised that it may be confusing to students to have two schemes running at same time and SAS and the Graduate School were in discussions.

3.5.8 **Resolved:** the changes proposed in the report were agreed. The Committee's recommendations for further possible enhancements, including the need to dovetail from 2013/14 the UG and new PG development scheme, to be communicated to the SDA management team.

JJ

3.6 Items Referred from the Student Voice Committee (SVC)

Received: Student Feedback: Student Engagement Survey 2012 and Mid-Cycle Unit Feedback

3.6.1 Student Engagement Survey (SES) 2012

3.6.1.1 The Chair of SVC summarised the contents of the paper. The SES targeted all levels of the student population with the exception of level H students, due to their participation in the NSS. Promotion of the SES had been minimal this year due to the focus on the NSS, hence the completion rate of 9.42% had been slightly low. SES results showed that main issues for students had been in the areas of organisational management, feedback and personal support.

3.6.1.2 At its recent meeting, SVC pulled together the key points and identified some 'quick wins'. It had identified that an important need was to ensure that BU is demonstrating to students what it does well. SVC suggested the idea of promoting a 'Confident BU'; confident about what we are doing as an institution. SVC had also highlighted the importance of setting students' expectations about the university culture pre-arrival and during induction.

3.6.1.3 SVC recommendations for eliciting quick wins within Schools included:

- Ensuring consistency within assignment briefs. Ideally across BU, but as a minimum students should see consistency of assignment briefs within their cohort.
- Ensuring that clear and specific marking criteria are included within assignment briefs and that marking should provide clear links to those criteria.
- That unit guides include a welcome introduction explaining the relevance of the unit and how it fits in with others.

3.6.1.4 The SES had identified that students were still reporting issues with the university bus service. SVC proposed that a group be convened to investigate these concerns and respond to students.

- 3.6.1.5 Another common non-academic issue for students was transparency about how the student fee was spent. SVC recommended that students be provided with a broad breakdown which showed proportionally how spending was divided. Members expressed caution on how this information would be interpreted by students. The SU President felt it would be an opportunity to highlight and encourage students to make good use of the facilities and services their fees pay for. It was also noted that students would also be able to see how increased expenditure in one area would impact on other areas. It was agreed that the information should be provided at institutional level and not broken down by School or programme, otherwise there was the possibility of inaccurate perception of inequities between courses where there was justifiable reasons for differing resource levels **Action***
- 3.6.1.6 It was noted that the informal discussion about student issues at the last SVC meeting was felt to be very valuable and it was suggested that further opportunities for cross-University discussions to share and celebrate best practice across BU would be valuable for many staff to engage with across the University. The Chair reported that the Head of Service Excellence had similarly been working towards capitalising on the benefits of collaborative working and sharing best practice more effectively.
- 3.6.1.7 **Resolved:** the Student Voice Committee's (SVC) recommendations for 'quick win' actions were agreed. The SVC Chair to circulate the details to Schools for consideration as part of their ESEPs. **AI/DD(E)s**
- 3.6.1.8 **Resolved:** the Chair to progress the recommendation concerning transportation with the Head of Facilities Management, EIS. **TMB**
- 3.6.1.9 **Resolved:** the Chair to progress the recommendation concerning transparency of costs with the Fees Board. **TMB**
- 3.6.1.10 **Resolved:** the Chair to progress the recommendation of capitalising on the benefits of collaborative working and effective sharing of best practice with the Head of Service Excellence. **TMB**
- 3.6.1.11 The paper suggested some changes to the administration of the SES. It recommended that an icon be placed on the Staff Intranet to give staff easy access to the SES results, including the qualitative data and members agreed that this would be helpful. The paper also recommended that SVC and SUBU work together to create a synergistic approach to student feedback to avoid unnecessary duplication between the SES and the new format for student representation surveys. Members noted that the two surveys currently provided information at different levels but that different questions could be asked at different times of year in order to capture the institutional and programme level picture. Concern was raised that the student rep feedback system would not work with validated programmes at partner institutions. It was agreed that in order to carry the work forward a task group would be convened. It was noted that it may be necessary to continue with the dual approach for one more cycle.
- 3.6.1.12 **Resolved:** the recommendations from SVC regarding access to SES data, use of results and future format of the survey were agreed and would be taken forward by SVC. **AI**
- 3.6.2 Mid-cycle Unit Feedback
- 3.6.2.1 SVC had been asked previously by the Committee to consider principles of consistency for unit feedback and to report back to the Committee. Views expressed by its members were drawn together into three suggested principles to cover: Frequency, Timing and Response for the Committee to consider.
- 3.6.2.2 The Committee discussed the principle of timing. The School of Tourism reported that it currently collects feedback at the end of a unit and requested flexibility in the procedure for this to continue. It was agreed that the principle be reviewed in light of this request.
- 3.6.2.3 A query was raised of what could actually be stopped or changed for a current cohort as a result of mid-cycle feedback. Members considered that more superficial changes could be made, such as to the timetable, rather than any major changes, such as to unit's content. However, it was pointed out that should students raise an issue with content, mid-cycle, this could provide a useful opportunity for a unit coordinator to re-iterate why such content is important. It was concluded that the principle was about taking a pragmatic approach to listening and responding to students within

the current cycle.

- 3.6.2.4 The Committee considered the principle of response to feedback. A query arose regarding the requirement for the responses to be posted on myBU and whether staff could be afforded the flexibility to take other approaches to disseminating this information. It was noted that the chosen method had been arrived at in response to students' reporting that they feel their feedback is not listened to. Therefore, it was important to have a consistent and visible method. The principle was about keeping students posted on what issues have been raised and responded to. This could take the form of a summary of key issues and actions. **Action***
- 3.6.2.5 **Resolved:** the Committee agreed the principles of consistency proposed in the paper for inclusion in the Student Engagement and Feedback procedure, subject to the SVC Chair reviewing the wording of principle 2 regarding the timing of unit feedback. **AI**

4 **Approval and endorsement**

- 4.1 There were no items for approval or endorsement.

5. **For note**

The following reports were received and noted:

5.1 Students' Union President's Report

Tabled: SUBU Student Representatives survey results 2011-12: qualitative feedback & data count

- 5.1.1 The SU President and SU VP Education summarised the contents of the paper. SUBU had conducted a survey of students 'How's SUBU for YOU?'. The results showed that 82% of students who had responded agreed that SUBU has had a positive impact on their life as a student. It also showed that 78% of respondents considered SUBU to have influenced positive change in the university for students. 18% of respondents were unsure whether SUBU had influenced positive change and it was felt this may be due to those students not knowing about what SUBU does. SUBU would aim to address this issue in 2012-13.
- 5.1.2 The Student Representatives results follow a similar format to the National Student Survey with a key difference being that SUBU wished to capture active definitions of disagreement to survey questions. Students were most satisfied with personal development, course quality and academic support. Students were dissatisfied with organisation and management; the key issue reported being timetabling. However, SUBU had noted that organisation and management had a low response rate and it was felt that the relevant questions may need to be restructured.
- 5.1.3 SUBU acknowledged their excellent working relationship with the School Student Experience Champions. Together they had worked to develop improvements to the student representative feedback process. SUBU intended to break down the results data by School to submit for consideration at the first School Academic Boards of the new academic year.

5.2 Institutional Review Progress Report (verbal)

- 5.2.1 The EDQ Manager informed the Committee that Catherine Symonds had stepped into role of Institutional Facilitator. The Institutional Review Working Group had held regular meetings to provide information for the Self Evaluation Document (SED). More specific timelines for production of the SED would be available in due course.

5.3 Education Excellence Programme 2011-12 Summary Report and Proposal

- 5.3.1 The contents of the report were noted.

6. **Reporting Committees**

The following reports were received and noted:

6.1 Student Voice Committee minutes.

- 6.1.1 The contents of the report were noted.

6.2 E-Learning Enhancement Forum minutes.

Action*

6.2.1 The contents of the report were noted.

6.3 Student Experience Programme status report.

6.3.1 The Committee noted the contents of the report and welcomed SW, Business Analyst from EIS who provided an update on the Technology Enhanced Learning project.

6.3.2 Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Project

SW reported that the project had stuttered a little due to the recent departure of some senior EIS staff but was now moving forward again. Its fundamental purpose was to seek out the best ways of supporting students through TEL. In order to meet this aim at an institutional level, the next step would be to engage staff to ascertain their requirements for TEL.

6.3.3 **Resolved:** EIS to convene a meeting with the remit to understand and articulate Schools' requirements for TEL in order to provide the best educational experience to the student body. ESEC members to encourage colleagues' invited to the meeting to attend and engage.

SW/ESEC

7. Any other business

7.1 No other business was raised.

8. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 14 November, 1500-1700, The Board Room.