**Student Voice Committee CONFIRMED**

**Notes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11th December 2013, 2 – 4pm – EBC 203**

**Present:** Barbara Dyer (BD) (Chair), Gillian Bunting (GB) (Clerk),Neil Ford (NF), Mark Ridolfo (MR), Amanda Stevens (AS), Andrea Lacey (AL), Cathy Symonds (CS), Darrell Felton (DF), Paula Peckham (PP), Joff Cooke (JC), Matt Wall (MW), Liam Sheridan (LS), Ricky Rogers (RR), Andrew Main (AM), Fiona Cownie (FC), Ross Hill (RH), Jane de Vekey (JdV), John Gusman (JG).

**1. Welcome / Introduction**

**2. Apologies:** Annie Hall, Kelly Goodwin, Zoe Bice, Elizabeth Powis, Katy Fisher

**3. Minutes and Matters Arising from notes of 20th November 2013 – Confirmed**.

**3.1 Minute 3.1 -** LS reported a response rate for PTES of 10.7%, from 208 participants; this low level of engagement was in contrast to a big promotion push, this could be put down to SES & NSS running at the same time. But the size of the survey could also be a factor with 85 questions over 14 sections. The major benefit of the survey is that we can benchmark against 96 other institutions. Conclusions were that the general direction of BU is similar to the sector average, with applying theory to practice rated as above average, and Library & Space/Estates issues doing well. LS advised the nature of the question could elicit the pattern of the answer and it is beneficial to be able to compare with the sector average. LS will provide more info via Bristol Online Surveys website, it was suggested one School member could have access to the site in order to provide an in-depth look at the results. LS advised the need to approve 2013 comments to ensure they are ready for analysis, it was queried how will this work? What will we be doing with results? We also need to confirm the survey closing date. FK suggested co-ordinating a meeting to consider who is appropriate to look at the comments, which require approval before they are analysed. **Action – FK to set up a meeting with LS & BD. FK to check PRES comments, still TBC for PTES, JC offered SUBU’s help if needed. Completed.**

**3.2 Minute 3.2** - AM reported difficulty in finding any printed copies of the leaflet originally produced by Janet Hanson. He has managed to find a PDF version which he is intending to send to print for DEC students. Members requested the PDF to be circulated within the committee so other Schools can also take advantage of this. It was suggested that handing this out to students along with feedback or assignment marking would be more beneficial. SUBU advised they are looking to do similar version of this leaflet for ‘group work’. **Action – AM/RR(NS). Completed.**

* 1. **Minute 4.3 -** BD suggested a pilot to run until end of year in order to determine how well ‘You Said This Happened’ works. It was agreed for SECs to input regular data for their School and to provide content for the Student Update which will have a dedicated section & link directly to myBU. This could also be pushed out via SUBU Reps, in turn SUBU will provide SECs with feedback on a monthly basis. **Action – SECs/SRCs/GB/SUBU – to be reviewed in March - JG to pick up from SB & lead on this action.**

**3.4** **Minute 5.2 -** There is some concern over the number of PhD students teaching at BU (60%) which can impact on student experience. Particularly as students may be used to teach or demonstrate without receiving their formal PGR training, although this is BU policy and part of the Code of Practice. The Graduate School runs the ‘Introduction to Learning & Teaching’ twice a year, but there is often more demand from PhD students. FK advised she is looking to discuss this with the Deans. Students reported a low level of teaching support, but there is also a concern over competence of timely completion. Overall most students are happy with their experience at BU. **Action – it was noted ST had fallen off the respondent’s slide – FK to amend paper. Completed.**

* 1. **Minute 6.2 - Mid-cycle Unit Feedback (BD)**

At September ESEC it was agreed for Schools to move to a consistent model for 2013/14, SVC has been tasked by ESEC with coordinating and monitoring this development, therefore, BD suggested that in the first instance it would be helpful for us to summarise what Schools are currently doing. A later focus would be to set up a sub group to examine what is a standardised approach might look like in collaboration with a member of EDQ, the outcome of which will feed into paper: 5B - Student Engagement and Feedback: Policy and Procedure. **Action – BD to report to ESEC & invite expressions of interest for subgroup – Volunteers BD, MR, CS, FC, RR, JC, AM to meet after Christmas.**

* 1. **Minute 7.4 -** There was some debate over the late start date (3rd Feb 2014), although similar to last year, this provides more time to act on previous feedback, plus the need to avoid assessment times. Due to the short deadlines members agreed on a recommendation to ESEC to stick with established dates. Promotion is geared towards short bursts of information to reduce the feeling of a long drawn out campaign. Incentives are high value with the aim to ensure high student response rate. There was some discussion around marketing materials,which are available from IPSOS as well as BU, and whether the tick logo should be used for ‘Making your Mark’. **Action – ZB - LS confirmed IPSOS have given permission for BU to use the tick logo for the survey promotion. Completed.**
  2. **Minute 8.1 -** askBU has been in existence since 2006, but has never carried out a student survey of its services. With increasing need to report feedback/satisfaction it was proposed to add a link to the askBU auto reply email for students to complete if they choose. Members were in agreement, JC added SUBU already do this and it would be a good chance to work together to correlate information. **Action – AS/JC – AS confirmed askBU have liaised with SUBU Advice centre, the survey will go live in the New Year as a link from the askBU auto-response email. Completed.**
  3. **Minute 9.1 -** The HEA have asked for expressions of interest in running an NSSE pilot to be submitted by the deadline of 29th November 2013. SUBU have some reservations about the HEA pilot, but are willing to support it in order to allow feedback. Anita Diaz from CEL had offered to act as the HEA link; however, JC reported that she will be working out of the office for the next month. The survey will not include level H students and needs to be benchmarkable, it was also emphasised that it is not a satisfaction survey, but geared towards student engagement. Some members’ concerns were that this might add to survey fatigue and clash with end of semester surveys. However, the consensus view of the Committee was favourable towards BU joining the pilot. BD to consult TMB for approval to action an expression of interest with the HEA. **Action – BD - see agenda point 5.**
  4. **Minute 11.1 -** MR requested deletion of the term ‘programme specific’ from the ToR Purpose section, and to make an amendment to the bottom section to say “minutes, notes & extracts”; members agreed. **Action – MR/KG. MR to amend document & advise GB when action complete.**

* 1. **Minute 11.2 -** BS have introduced students chairing the Student Experience Forums, this had a positive outcome, and is good experience for students as they will feel more involved. It was acknowledged School Reps training is a good grounding for this. The point was raised that notes from SEFs related to SVC should be coming to the committee; if there is anything relevant this should be added to the agenda. SUBU confirmed the Fortnightly Education Council includes SEF notes & offered to bring copies to SVC. The line of reporting was discussed as confirmation is required as to whether the notes should go via SAB or SVC; Members agreed the notes should be submitted to both SAB & SVC. **Action – SECs to submit SEF notes to SAB & any relevant notes to SVC - see agenda point 7.**
  2. **Minute 13.1 -** SUBU successfully delivered 40 reports to Framework and Programme meetings, but require earlier notification of meeting dates. The problem lies in early November (or before) meeting dates. For SUBU to compile the reports they need early warning as there are time restrictions due to Rep training. **Action –** **MW to formalise with AAMs** **– MW liaising with AAMs to confirm dates over Christmas.**
  3. **Minute 13.4 -** The Arrivals survey received 940 responses; the report has gone to UET. **Action – JC to submit to next SVC meeting – see agenda point 6.3.**

***Items for discussion/decision***

**4. NSS Planning Task Group Update (AM)**

**4.1** ThePowerPoint presentation consists of 14 slides, providing a brief, refined message

which uses the 5 faces, including neutral, but the emphasis is on explaining the meaning and raising student awareness, instead of trying to influence the voting.

**4.2** The NSS working group took the decision to use the planned campaign, while acknowledging the possibility of risks that IPSOS or HEFCE might not approve. JV was made aware of these risks.

**4.3** The survey is due to open on 3rd February 2014, marketing materials will be available the week before. SECs are to decide whether the presentations to Schools will be done by SUBU or the Schools themselves, this will need to be organised internally. AM will confirm if the PowerPoint will be available earlier, it was also discussed that a myBU message could go out earlier to prime students.

**4.2** JC offered for SUBU to re-enforce the importance of voting either satisfied or not-

satisfied to students.

**5. NSSE HEA Pilot Update (BD)**

**5.1** BD advised that BU have received acknowledgement of a non-binding expression of interest from the HEA, with final confirmation from BU needed by 15th January 2014. There is no cost to run the survey for the stage 2 pilot, however, a range of information is required in order for the HEA to arrange a license with Indiana University, who own the copyright to NSSE. BU will need to sign a formal agreement with the HEA before we are able to begin the administration of the survey.

**5.2** There are 2 options; either to use an internal survey and to import the questions, or the HEA’s NSSE template, using a pre-designed template in Bristol Online Surveys. There are 15 core questions and a selection of add-ons available for us to select from. Members agreed for the pilot year to go with the BOS, BU will promote the survey and analyse the data, which is automatically forwarded to the HEA. There was a discussion around the fact that the data is only available in October and how useful this would be so late into term. It was thought the survey would still be worthwhile.

**5.3** Members discussed the number of students to be surveyed which should include Levels C & I, and potentially Level H top up to be confirmed due to the timing of the survey. It was agreed for the survey to run as late as possible, SUBU advised the best period to run a survey is mid May to the end of June as it increases participation. It was suggested that Summer Ball tickets could be used as an incentive to complete the survey. The SUBU student engagement Term 3 survey will only run with a working group to avoid students completing extra surveys. It was recommended to run the survey for 3 weeks. Promotion & deployment to be confirmed by sub group, but it was agreed this should not to be tied in with NSS promotion. Sub group volunteers SUBU, AM, BD. **Action – NSS Subgroup.**

**6. SUBU reports**

* 1. **SUBU Student Reps Report from Term 1 2013/14 (paper) (JG/MW)**
     1. In order to increase the democratic value of Student Reps SUBU are looking to formalise the election process. A statement of fair play needs to be completed by the Schools, this has been more successful in some schools than others, the aim is to make students more accountable & track the types of students running in elections.
     2. On the whole the Student Rep scheme has been successful, with SUBU running more essential training than previous years, over 700 Reps have been trained, including partner institutions. SUBU are challenging Reps who are not engaging with the role and if necessary replacing those Reps. School Reps were successfully elected and will be involved in the Student Education Council.
  2. **SUBU Student Opinion/Engagement Pilot Survey Feedback Term 3 2012/13 (paper) (JC/JdV)**
     1. Approximately 32 reports were being processed on a termly basis, but the feedback was that this was not useful and reports need to be at programme level. This has had a huge impact on SUBU’s workload with the number of reports increasing to over 300.
     2. The accuracy in reporting is 55% due to recruiting and training Reps in October, due to term times this canot be done any earlier. SUBU are liaising with the AAMs for programme and framework meeting dates and are working on improving this process for next year. They are now able to use the material condensed by Nicky Pretty which is a massive improvement and helps on resources.
     3. Qualitative comments can be used to provide specific reports and is now a much quicker process. The reporting functionality process will also be improved for next year.
     4. Reps have reported anomalies between the data and the responses, SUBU are happy to investigate if given specific examples.
     5. CS added that AAMs in the School of Tourism were experiencing problems with communicating dates, which will be discussed at SAB. The Media School and Business School also reported concerns about meeting dates not being received in time. HSC raised concerns about reports not being received on time. It was acknowledged that the framework and programme meetings are linked to the committee structures plus the new CAS calendar has also impacted on planning.
     6. SUBU acknowledged their system is in the early stages, but have the ability to improve the system into something much more sustainable, and are aiming for it to be manageable within 3-5 years. They are in talks with NUS Union Cloud about using improved technology and systems.
     7. There were discussions around the SUBU principles; it was agreed that working together with BU feedback will improve processes.
     8. Members debated the number of SUBU surveys; the Arrivals & Engagement surveys are driven by BU requiring the information, JG added that students appreciate their feedback being used to good effect.
     9. SUBU papers for the next SVC meeting will cover what areas students like to comment on; benchmarking grids have been developed to clarify the characteristics of experience.
  3. **Overview of the SUBU and BU Student Support Services Arrivals Survey for 2013 (paper) (JC/JdV)** 
     1. PP pointed out that HSC had positive responses while they do not have two week induction period; although the report was pitched at continuing with the two week induction.
     2. JC responded with SUBU’s plans for promoting a more effective induction which could be spread over the first term and include academic areas.
     3. Concerns were raised over the survey start date which impacted on student experience; staff are under increased pressure over the summer, plus students are taking resits too close to the start of the induction period. It was agreed there is a need for a definite gap between the end and start of the academic year. SUBU need to ensure BU staff can support the induction. RH added the feedback from the internal ApSci induction survey was overwhelmingly in support of the two week induction. There was a discussion around SUBU tapering the induction, but due to space restrictions this could be problematic, but is worth investigating. **Action – JC.**

1. **Schools’ Student Experience Forum Feedback - University Level Issues (SECs or nominee)**
   1. BD provided a hand-out summarising the feedback issues from the School Student Forums; Learning environment issues were cross University Estate problems, students are concerned that general maintenance is not being done. Members agreed to raise the issues at ESEC. **Action – BD.**
   2. Issues with buses are regularly raised, but specifically single deckers being used during peak times. SUBU can pull specific reports for bus issues due to the high response rates. Issue to be raised with Amanda Williams (Environment & Energy Manager) and liaise with Estates. **Action - SUVP Comms.**
   3. Printing issues have still not been resolved; the Journalism students reported these 3 months ago, but are still waiting for it to be fixed. A resolution has been found, however, a speedier response is needed.
   4. SOS report issues were reported at all Schools’ Student Experience Forums due to the problems with framework and programme meeting times; SUBU are open to receiving negative comments in order to resolve the issues.
   5. In ST induction feedback confirmed that the two week period suits International & PG students better than UG students due to the need to acclimatise.
   6. IT facilities issues were mainly concerned with Wi-Fi connectivity which is patchy across the Campuses. There was a discussion around the contact process as IT needs the information reported in order to investigate the issues, it was thought that Wi-Fi could be confused with mobile signal due to the aerials on campus.
   7. Library issues were due to overcrowding and lack of space. Delays in receiving submission receipts for Turnitin due to busy periods. This is not an automatic process and students should be made aware there may be delay, but that they also need to leave adequate time to submit. IT should put communications out when systems fail. DF advised this issue is across all Universities who use Turnitin. Members agreed to raise this issue to ESEC. It was also noted that when reporting issues to the IT out of hours service that it is not able to deal with myBU issues; LLS will pick this up. BD to cleanse and circulate hand-out to members for approval prior to submitting a report to ESEC. **Action – BD & NF.**

***Items for note/discussion***

**8. Members’ Items For Future Agendas**

**8.1** MR proposed for the SOS Survey link to be posted on myBU by the AD/SE (or equivalent) in order to test responses ‘on Reps behalf’, wording to be agreed with SUBU. A new SUBU section is due to go into the iBU app which will be used for various promotions. **Action - MR & JG.**

**8.2** SUBU reports to be submitted for the next meeting. **Action – JC.**

**9. AOB**

n/a

**2013/14 meetings:**

Oct 16 - R208

Nov 20 - R208

Dec 11 - EB203

Jan 29 - Committee Room, Poole House

Mar 19 - Casterbridge, Thomas Hardy Suite

May 14 - Committee Room, Poole House

Jun 25 - Committee Room, Poole House