

**STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**

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

**in the 2016-2017 academic session held on Thursday 13TH October 2016 held in Room 103, Hamilton House, Greenwich campus.**

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| **Present:** |  |
| Judith Burnett (Chair), PVC, ACH | Colin Allen DSE, BUS |
| Corinne Delage DSE, FACH | Nikki Makinwa, QM |
| Virginia Malone, HLS | Mike McGibbon DSE FES |
| Christopher Philpott DSE,FEH | John Schless, CEO SUUG |
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| **In Attendance:** |  |
| Pauline McFarlane, SAS | Sara Ragab, AD,SAS |
| Lynne Savage (Secretary), SAS | Greg Sporton, FACH |
| Katarina Thomson, PAS | Vivian Van Lent, SUUG |
| Simon Walker, EDU |  |
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| **Apologies:** |  |
| Sally Alsford, EDU | Will Calver, PD |
| Martin Compton, FM | Christine Couper, DSP, PAS |
| Scarlett Dempsey, SUUG | Michael Flanagan, DEF |
| Richard Mendez,ECS | Anne Poulson, COO |
| David Watson, FACH |  |

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| **SEC16.01**  **Actions Arising** | **MINUTES AND ACTIONS ARISING**  The Chair noted that SEC could co-opt members, as required, and asked the members to co-opt **Richard Mendez,** Head of Employability and Careers Service.  No objections were received and the appointment was **carried.**  The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7th July 2016 were **approved.**  Notes of the extra SEC meeting, *SEC16.P003 SEC Special - extra meeting* *held on 7th September,* were also circulated for information. The Chair felt the meeting had been well received, and another informal meeting would be held later in the term.  *SEC15.59 Student Engagement Framework*  Pres SUUG presented two papers *SEC15.P069 Matrix SEC consultation, and SEC15.P070 Student Consultation Implementation plan.*  These papers had been send to Academic Council, for information.  This **closed** the agenda item.  *SEC15.60 ISB – Student Lunches*  Information and contact details for HOST had been circulated to SEC.  This **closed** the agenda item.  *SEC15.61 Student Engagement Framework*   1. Employability – *Improving Employment outcomes:extra/co-curricular activities* – paper to be approved via Chairs Action and submitted to Academic Council by PVC Bus.   (*NB: - this has now been done)*  This **closed** the agenda item.   1. New Arrivals, Transitions and Welcome Back Policy - Final draft had been submitted to Academic Council.   This **closed** the agenda item.  *SEC 15.63 Under 18’s Policy*  Link to relevant training had been circulated to SEC/  SEC had asked Academic Council to endorse the policy. Academic council continued to debate the policy.  This **closed** the agenda item. |
| **SEC16.02** | **University Student Survey (USS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)**  **Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) results**  **National Student Survey (NSS) Results**  PAS presented a paper *SEC16.P009 University Student Survey (USS)* and *Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)* and *SEC16.P010 NSS Short* *Report from PAS.*  PAS then gave a presentation with an overview of the results for all three surveys:  **USS** – this survey was for 1st year Undergraduates, and included the UK engagement survey (UKES). It was not comfortable reading, overall satisfaction had generally stayed steady, but it was lower than the NSS, and lower than the sector, except in the areas of learning & resources, and first year experience. These figures meant there was a risk of lower NSS scores in the future, as this cohort moved through the University.  The USS survey contained a UKES section, which was all about student engagement, and contained interesting data relating to learning skills. It was important, as the UKES was part of the Government Teaching Excellent Framework (TEF) plans.  **PTES** – PAS presented an example graph, showing satisfaction was steady or had fallen, to 79% overall, with an improvement in Dissertations and major projects. Compared to the sector, UoG were slightly lower in all areas, and the gap had widened. However the University was more in line with other London Universities.  **DHLE** – PAS explained that the full report was available on Business Objects, and now the sector results had been released by HESA, PAS would write a report to compare them.  The example graph showed that the graduates *in work* group was rising, along with *further study*, and *other*, and that the *unemployed* group had decreased substantially. Obviously the interest was in graduate outcomes, and there was some discussion about the definition of graduate jobs. The figures were looking much better, for full time students, although other groups were not so clear.  DSE BUS asked who were included in the “other” group, and was advised that it included Foundation degree, HND and direct entry students.  **NSS** – PAS presented an example graph. The overall satisfaction rate was static at 83%, with most areas having fallen. The university were below the sector with the exception of Placements, Feedback and Social opportunities. The university had been below the sector for 2 years.  CEO SUUG asked if the Student Union questions included Medway students, and was advised they did. He felt this was not helpful. PAS explained that the full results could be analysed by campus.  PAS also explained that going forward the TEF would use the NSS results, and break them down by gender/age/ethnicity etc. and it would be useful for members to start to get used to analysing these statistics. Overall the figures showed that women, and mature students were more satisfied than their peers, and black students were more satisfied than other ethnicities. These figures would become more important.  CEO SUUG and DSE FES viewed that there were very different issues between Greenwich and Medway campuses, and it would be useful going forward to try and extrapolate the results accordingly. They agreed that huge efforts had been made, and the results did not seem to reflect that. CEO SUUG said that he had met with PAS, and commissioned work which will look at measuring the data differently.  PAS explained that the groupings were as used by HESA.  DSE FEH asked where the PRES results went, and was advised they went to Javier Bonet’s committee (?)  The Chair thanked PAS for the presentation, and agreed there was a lot of data there for members to consider. She summarised that work could be done with SUUG re the Greenwich/Medway demographics, and that in any event SEC received separate campus reports. Faculties would need to consider USS results, via DLT’s and programme leaders, and DSE’s would take the results to Faculty SEC meetings. The PTES survey results still looked terrible – there had been no specific focus on this and it would be good to have a targeted response by SEC.  The Chair also mentioned that within the SEC papers was a report *SEC16.P011 NSS Interim Report October 2016 SEC* for information. More detailed results would be considered in November. She said there was a need for a workshop to look at what was working well, and what the improvement plans would look like. It worked well when staff attended meetings from other faculties. Chair would arrange for her office to schedule the meeting.  HLS stated that they had already done an analysis, broken down by faculty and department, which she would send to the DLT’s and DSE’s for their areas, and include a note on how issues were being addressed.  DSE FES said it would be useful for all course leaders to be shown the questions that the students were going to be asked.  **ACTION:** SUUG to work with PAS on demographics of the surveys.  **ACTION:** Chair to draft an email, to be approved by DSE’s, to send to faculties regarding PTES.  **ACTION**: Chair to speak to Susan Lea regarding PTES focus group.  **ACTION**: Chair to schedule meeting to discuss further actions. |
| **SEC16.03** | **Inappropriate comments in Surveys**  PAS presented a paper *SEC16.P012 Proposal for policy on Inappropriate comments v2.*  DSE FACH explained that this came from a suggestion that a policy was needed to cover internal surveys where occasional defamatory remarks or threats to staff were made, but a balance was required between confidentiality and what needed to be shared. SEC discussed the way their areas dealt with these comments and accusations.  DSE FEH said the proposal came out of comment made in EVASYS, and felt this proposal was quite specific and clarified what would happen.  The Chair agreed they were trying to address the need to follow up some of the derogatory comments made. Students might need help, or laws may have been broken. This policy allowed that information to be obtained, via the University’s Gatekeeper.  AD SAS pointed out a couple of amendments to the document – Student Welfare should read “Student Wellbeing”, and Student Affairs should read “Student & Academic Services”.  SEC **approved** the policy, once the amendments had been made.  **ACTION:** Amended policy to be sent to Academic Council for information. |
| **SEC16.04** | **Improving the Student Experience through Unitu**  Professor Greg Sporton, HoD, CPDA presented a *paper SEC16.P008 improving the Student Experience through Unitu.*  He talked through a presentation, previously delivered last year, which outlined the Unitu pilot study. He explained that Unitu was a digital platform that enabled students to raise and vote on areas concerning their learning, and provide feedback on their programme and department to university staff. It should not be used alone, but in conjunction with HoD discussions, course evaluations, TESTA etc.  He went on to demonstrate the system, showing how there was a “private” area for students to raise topics, named or anonymously, which could then be escalated by student representatives for staff viewing, discussion and action, where appropriate. In response to queries he said the students had proved to be “self-policing”, weeding out inappropriate, excessive and spurious comments.  The system showed which staff had viewed the system.  He showed some examples of the types of issues which had either been resolved, or where satisfactory answers had been given to show why a problem could not be solved.  Issues were separated into 4 categories – Problems, issues, praise and open questions, and could be analysed.  He felt strongly that it was a speedy way of highlighting issues, giving immediate responses.  In response to questions he confirmed that the group who had used Unitu had scored highly in the NSS, and a group which hadn’t had scored very low, so he felt that use of Unitu could only be beneficial to survey outcomes.  Elections for student reps had also taken place via Unitu, again, more speedily than without.  The system had led to more awareness by all staff of the problems students were experiencing.  They were talking to developers to add further enhancements to the system.  It was felt to be an important tool, helping the department to hear and listen to the “Student Voice”.  DSE FEH commented that the University had set great store by EVASYS, and were trying to raise response rates – how did Unitu affect that? DSE FACH responded that EVASYS addressed different types of questions, but that there was a possibility that using two systems might render one redundant eventually.  QM felt that students who were happy their issues were being dealt with might be more inclined to respond to all surveys.  The Chair felt it was very interesting, thanked Greg Sporton for attending, and hoped that other departments might take it up.  SEC **noted** the proposal. |
| **SEC16.05** | **Disabled Student Funding Complaints Procedure**  Head of Student Wellbeing tabled two papers *SEC16.P005 New Policy for* *approval* and *SEC16.P006 Amendment to Student Complaints Procedure*  HoSW explained that following changes in the process for allocating DSA to students, University staff would be involved in making more decisions, and recommendations about DSA. Inevitably, this would lead to complaints, and therefore a new complaints policy. This policy, in turn, led to slight amendments within the Student Complaints Procedure. Her department would need to work more closely with students and with Faculties. The SU had been consulted about the policy. She outlined the procedure, and the changes, and asked the committee to endorse the Disabled Student Funding Complaints Procedure, and the amendments to the Student Complaint’s Procedure, so they could go to the next Academic Council.  The Chair asked the SUUG if they were happy with the policy, who agreed they were, subject to some minor amendments being made. The Chair asked them to discuss those points with the HoSW and email her the final version to agree by Chairs Action, and be submitted to Academic Council.  SEC **endorsed** and ratified the Disabled Student Funding Complaints Procedure  SEC **endorsed** the revised Student Complaints Procedure.  **ACTION:** Submit final Disabled Student Funding Complaints Procedure to Academic Council.  **ACTION**: Submit revised Student Complaints Procedure to Academic Council. |
| **SEC16.06** | **Changes to Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA)**  HoSW presented two papers *SEC16.P007 DSA changes and Implications for the University of Greenwich* and *SEC16.P007a presentation slides*  HoSW gave an overview of what DSA is, and the numbers of UoG students in receipt of it. SUUG and DSE FEH queried the detail behind the numbers, which HoSW explained. HoSW gave the meeting an idea of what the University will now have to provide. The University would also now be regulated by the DSA. DSA would make decisions regarding suppliers of services, and the university would have to obtain two quotes, and probably use the cheapest. She felt there was a potential adverse impact on students.  Changes were needed in the way Student Wellbeing worked – liaising with colleagues, produced detailed funding proposals, participating in Disabled Student complaints, sourcing equipment and supporting students to access DSA exceptional case process. For the first time they would need to think about the cost to the University.  HoSW outlined the main support available for “reasonable adjustments”, in terms of human resources and equipment.  There were issues emerging in the sector, on how this would impact on students. Universities were developing new posts, including advisers on assistive technologies.  HLS confirmed that on Open Day there had been numerous queries concerning help.  HoSW said that the University would be competing with other universities, and in the long term would need to decide how best to deal with this.  The Chair commented she was interested to see the numbers involved, and that a lot of students did not necessarily declare their disability.  HoSW agreed this was the case, and that Wellbeing only found out through other avenues e.g. counselling sessions, or at exam times. She felt that UoG needed to manage student’s expectations when they were moving from UG to PG programmes, as they might expect the same level of support and not get it.  HLS commented that Pronupto, the lecture capture tool, was potentially very helpful to these students.  DSE FES felt there were still training issues for staff, and for students, around the area of Mental Health awareness. He wondered if Student Wellbeing could come out to schools to deliver session on emerging support  AD SAS (SS) commented that there needed to be a bigger conversation on emerging issues and how to refer them. SEC members agreed.  Chair thanked HoSW for her presentation, and asked if the full document had been circulated? HoSW said various different documents had been prepared for different audiences.  SEC **noted** the changes.  **ACTION**: Send DSA changes and Implications for the University of Greenwich document to Academic Council, for Information. |
| **SEC16.07** | **Internal audit report on Student Experience – Personal Tutoring**  The Chair tabled a paper *SEC16.P004 Internal audit report on Student Experience.*  Chair explained the report was for information, and that it was so far, so good, in respect of the audit. It was intended to embed the findings in the Personal Tutor Management system – although she understood this had a few problems. She asked members to draw any issues to the attention of David Mutti, and to keep her in the loop. Under the internal audit regime, in January they would audit the Start of the year, and Transitions process.  SEC **noted** the report. |
| **SEC16.08** | **First Week and Welcome Back**  The Chair asked members for a quick round up of how first week had been, for their area?  DSE BUS felt it had gone very smoothly, with the exception of signposting, the levels had not been acceptable.  When asked by the Chair to clarify what he meant, he said there were not enough signs, or Freshers helpers to point people in the right direction.  CEO SUUG said they had limitations within their budget.  DSE FACH said the International Welcome Programme had gone well.  HLS commented that the main problem, for returning students, were the password changes, which had been very frustrating.  DSE FES said the International Welcome at Medway had also gone well, and particularly thanked Katie Jenkins, from ICA, for her hard work on this. The 1st week timetable had been conducted over 3 days, which also worked well, despite limitations caused by lack of Student Hub. Rooming issues had been a problem, mainly caused by the larger than anticipated numbers on the Extended degree programmes. This was echoed by the other DSE’s. He also said there had been a lack of staffing from SU and SAS, which the AD SAS (SS) said they would need to pick up on next year.  SU commented that Freshers had been really good, with a bigger turn out, and older students attending. They had a 3rd marquee, and the students had been very positive. There had been an issue with timetabling, and the change of rooms e.g. for the Islamic Society, and signage etc.  DSE FES said that overall things had gone well, although more still needed to be done for year 2 and 3 students. This year’s new “Early Start” event had proved really successful – an event commissioned by the Transitions (STJ) task and finish group.  AD SAS (SC) said that arrivals weekend had gone well, also the International Welcome Programme. Staff had coped well with the unexpected numbers of extended degree students. The Commuter Welcome event had also been successful.  CEO SUUG felt they had done a lot on a small budget.  The Chair thanked them for their feedback and felt it was important to keep the momentum going on the good practise. She felt it might be an idea to have another SEC special meeting to see how things were continuing. She again reminded the committee that this would all be internally audited in January. |
| **SEC16.09** | **Any Other Business**  **National Mixed Methodology Learning Gain Project Briefing**  Simon Walker, for EDU, briefed the meeting about a new HEFCE funded project, which the University was participating in. The project, which the VC had signed off, came out of recommendations for the TEF, who would use it to track different aspects of “learning gain”.  The project would involve an email being sent to UG students, asking them to participate in an assessment, and further assessments over the following few years, using an online survey question methodology. Students were able to opt out at any time. Benefits to the students included an individual report on their progress after each assessment. Benefits to the University included access to the data on the progress of our students.  Members had some concerns, and some suggestions about how best to approach the students, and to use the data. Unfortunately the email was due to be sent imminently, so there was little chance to influence how it was worded, or managed.  In response to a question, EDU confirmed the invited students would all be under 21, as @ 30th September 2016 – this was not the Universities choice, but was aligned with HESA data, and with the TEF data.  HLS asked to see the emails, and the questions, so they could offer support if required.  The Chair felt it was important for Personal Tutors to know what was being sent out, too. She was worried about the impact on students. She also felt the email should be part of the University Communications plan, and urged EDU to contact the Head of Communications & Recruitment, Robert Mayor.  The Chair thanked EDU for attending the meeting, and giving SEC an overview. She commented that although it was too late to influence anything, SEC would be willing to help in any way they could.  **ACTION**: EDU to ensure members, Heads of Department, and personal tutors, were aware of the contents of the email being sent to students. |
|  | **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**   1. Flow of minutes from Faculty Student Experience Committees   No minutes were received.   1. Workflow of items for future meetings 2016/2017 2. New Arrivals, Transitions and Welcome Back Policy 3. Automated Withdrawals Annual Report |
|  | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  Tuesday 29th November 2016, at 2.00 pm, in QA075, Greenwich campus. |

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