	Draft:	26-Oct-2016
	Approved for circulation:	2-Dec-2016
	Confirmed by Committee without amendments	8-Mar-2017

Education

Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Tuesday, 25 October 2016**

Duration of meeting: **2:00 PM** to **4:45 PM**

Location: **WW1.12, West Wing, High Wycombe Campus**

Attendance

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Sean Mackney	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Ex-officio (Chair)
Kirstie Ward	Academic Quality	Secretary
Ruth Gunstone	Student Services	Ex-officio
Jenny Wade	Students' Union	Ex-officio
Julie Irwin	Learning & Teaching	Ex-officio
Phil Wood	Design, Media & Management	Nominated
Carol Pook	Society & Health	Nominated
Frazer Mackenzie	Design, Media & Management	Nominated
Martha Wiekens	Design, Media & Management	Nominated
Nic Fryer	Design, Media & Management	Nominated
Ash Mistry	Design, Media & Management	Nominated
Rebecca Rochon	Society & Health	Nominated
Ciaran O'Keeffe	Society & Health	Nominated
Julia Williams	Society & Health	Nominated
Daniel Dedman	Students' Union	Nominated
Alpha Collins	Students' Union	Nominated

Apologies

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Julie Irwin	Learning & Teaching	Ex-officio
Martha Wiekens	Design, Media & Management	Ex-officio
Ian Chisholm-Bunting	Society & Health	Nominated

Absent

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
None		

Welcome / Apologies for absence

16.58   The Chair welcomed members to the first Education committee meeting of the academic year. New members were formally welcomed and introductions were made.

16.59   Apologies for absence were received. It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

16.60   No conflicts of interest were declared by the members of the committee.

Minutes of the previous meeting (4 May 2016)

16.61   The minutes of the meeting were <u>approved</u> as an accurate record.

Status of actions from the previous meeting

16.62   The Action Sheet was noted. Updates were provided as follows:

a) (Minute 16.31) This was agreed to be considered at the last meeting of 2016/2017, with a view that extensions to nomination and requests for new nominations would be made at this point.

Action: Chair and Secretary

b) (Minute 16.39) This was agreed by the committee to be completed by Chair's action.

Action: Chair and Secretary

c) (Minute 16.54) The Panel noted that no update to this item was available.

Matters Arising – Allocation of Auditors (Paper: EDU16.17)

16.63   The committee noted the allocation of auditors and were informed that each would be contacted directly by the Marcus Wood, Academic Quality Directorate, confirming the allocation and providing an electronic copy of the report.

16.64   The Committee were informed that one of the assigned auditors was leaving the institution and would need to be replaced, both as auditor and as a member of Quality & Standards committee.

Action: Secretary to inform Q&S committee Secretary

Chair's Actions taken since the previous meeting

16.65   No Chair's Actions had been taken since the last meeting.

Education Committee Terms of Reference (Paper: Terms of Reference)

16.66   The terms of reference as outlined in the paper were noted.

Education Committee Membership (Paper: Membership)

16.67   The membership as outlined in the paper was noted.

Committee Effectiveness Review 2015-2016 (Paper: EDU16.12)

16.68   The results of the Committee Effectiveness Review undertaken at the end of the academic year were considered. This had been undertaken following the revised committee structure introduced in September 2015 and would become an annual exercise. Attention was drawn to the need for more work around the following areas:

- Members' skills and experiences;

- Induction and preparation of new members;

- Committee planning for the year;

- Communication of committee business across the University.

Some actions had already been taken. In particular, a committee website had been put in place during the year to improve communication, while all committees were working on annual business schedules.

16.69   Comments from the committee indicated that:

- The results were a fair reflection of the business and running of the committee;

- Members need to ensure the discussion of the committee has meaningful outcomes and actions in respect of the institution and its partners;

- Future reviews should include views of the wider university community of the effectiveness of the committee.

Action: Secretary to raise with Senior Registrar: Governance

16.70   There was discussion of the need to engage the wider community in the business of the committee, to consult on policies and procedures, to improve and increase the engagement with working groups, and how this could be best achieved. The committee valued the bulletin introduced in the previous academic year, but considered that additional information highlighting of the impact of the items was included.

Action: Secretary to raise with Senior Registrar: Governance

16.71   The committee agreed that the Chair would investigate a more visual means of sharing the business of the committee, such as a 'podcast', with the wider university community.

Action: Chair to review and investigate

16.72   The committee discussed the induction of new members, agreeing that the timely nomination would enable appropriate action to be taken by the Secretary. It was noted that in relation to the student representatives the election process will delay these nominations and appropriate support measures should be put in place.

Action: Secretary to arrange induction process for new committee members in 2017/2018

Chair's Report to Education Committee

16.73   The Chair presented a verbal report to the committee. This focused on three areas:

- Teaching Excellence Framework;

- National Student Survey;

- Higher Education Academy survey participation.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

16.74   The Chair reported to the committee the TEF would be used as a measure of the quality of teaching across the sector and would include private providers. Based on a defined set of performance measures, the grading would have a significant impact on the sector, as achievement of each grade had financial as well as reputational implications.

16.75   The first year of the TEF would be based on institutional level measures, the second and subsequent years would be broken down to subject level. The measures are similar to that used within the annual monitoring processes such as NSS, DLHE and achievement

levels, and would be benchmarked to take into account student groups such as those classed as part of widening participation.

16.76   The committee were informed that the University would be shortly be receiving the data set from HEFCE, a response for which was required to be returned in January.

National Student Survey (NSS)

16.77   The Chair informed the committee that in the next round of the NSS, some of the questions have been changed. Whilst there had been a rigorous design process, there would be a lack of familiarity in the meaning and terminology amongst the student population which would need to be considered.

Higher Education Academy (HEA) surveys

16.78   The committee were informed that the institution would be taking part in three surveys supported by the HEA in the academic year which were the:

- Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)

- Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)

- United Kingdom Engagement Survey (UKES)

16.79   The UKES was a new survey, based on successful versions utilised in other HE sectors such as Australia and North America. The results of which would be used to plan and target specific areas for improvement.

16.80   It was confirmed that the internal module evaluations questions are to be remodelled on the new NSS questions. Also that the Business and Intelligence unit were to provide further analysis of the module evaluation data, to enable a cohort's responses to be tracked from year one through to completion, and that cohort specific targets could be configured.

16.81   The committee agreed that whilst there was a period of uncertainty related to the changes in the NSS, it was also an opportunity.

16.82   The Students' Union Vice-President, Jenny Wade (JW) confirmed that Bucks SU would not be participating in the disruption action of the NUS against the new NSS. The committee formally thanked the SU for their support in this regard.

Transforming our NSS performance (Paper: EDU16.13, EDU16.18-21)

16.83   It was highlighted to the committee that the University strategic plan included a target that all subject areas would perform in the top third of the sector by 2021. Whilst noting that some subject areas have already achieved this benchmark, the majority had not. The contextual planning paper (EDU16.13) was related to actions for 2016/2017, however, medium to long term actions needed to be considered.

16.84   The committee discussed the merits of ensuring that the meaning of the questions was conveyed to students, for example that 'feedback' was not limited to formal assessment feedback however concern was expressed that this could not be construed as 'coaching'.

16.85   Consideration was given to how members of staff should 'close the loop' and fully engage with the data garnered from student surveys. It was noted development was required to embed a culture of feedback, empowering and developing staff to be able to confidently and competently, request and respond to feedback, and also within the student body to be able to provide negative feedback, in an appropriate manner.

16.86   In order to facilitate change three areas were identified in the course of the discussion:

- Targeted staff development;

- Identification of 'agents of change' in the institution, including the student body;
- Identifying, sharing and celebrating areas of good practice.

Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE)

16.87 The committee noted that whilst the institutional level data was available, and could be reviewed in the light of previous years, sector benchmarking had yet to be completed. It was agreed that this would be a substantive agenda item once analysis was complete.

Graduate Attributes (Paper: EDU16.14)

16.88 Key items of the paper were highlighted to the committee, noting that defining the attributes of 'Bucks' graduate was a key part of the University strategy. Whilst it was agreed that many of the terms considered in the document had varying connotations different meanings, it was agreed that it should be an institutional approach, which was embedded at subject level. Consideration was given as to how to define and ensure the development of graduate attributes throughout the curriculum, to prevent it from becoming a 'tick-box' exercise.

16.89 The committee agreed that further development of the concept was required. This would include consideration of how attributes related to personal development rather than simply gaining specific skills for employment, such as developing social responsibility. It was also agreed that the matrix could be developed as a professional development tool for students in preparing for and whilst seeking employment.

16.90 In response to specific questions in the paper, the committee agreed that:

- 'Scholarship' should be updated to a more meaningful modern term;
- Digitally literacy should be maintained as a separate attribute;

16.91 It was agreed that whilst 'Bucks graduate' may be used in promotion, it should be considered a developmental tool, embedded within curricula and teaching.

16.92 The committee agreed the formation of a working group to take forward further development over the academic year, with a view that it would become part of University processes, such as validation, from September 2017. The committee agreed that updates of developments are to be presented at the next meeting of the committee (March 2017).

Action: Kath Dunn to lead working group

Online learning and teaching: review and recommendations (EDU16.15)

16.93 Rebecca Rochon introduced the paper drawing attention to particular findings of the review of provision. It was reported that it had been difficult to ascertain the extent of online programmes on offer as this was not centrally recorded. Areas of good practice had been found however, this related in the main to specific individuals or programme teams whom had developed their own programmes and expertise.

16.94 The main findings of the review were reported to be:

- There are no defined terms, or shared understanding of the meaning of Flexible and Distributed (FDL), blended or online learning within the institution.
- The University lacks processes and procedures to develop and support online learning from inception through validation, admissions/enrolment and delivery.
- Central training and support for online learning has been depleted and does not correlate with other institutions of similar size.

16.95 The committee discussed the paper at length, reporting difficulties that they had also experienced in developing and delivering online learning. The committee expressed their

considerable concern that this was a high point of risk for and had the potential to affect the reputation of the institution.

16.96   It was the view of the committee that the virtual learning platform was not sufficiently developed and stable to deliver online programmes, which had led to staff using other programmes which were not supported and unsecure. This was also reported that this has an impact of attendance-based programmes as the VLE is relied upon to deliver content and support to these students as well.

16.97   The committee accepted all the recommendations in the report, and noting that the VLE policy was out of date, agreed the development and implementation of policies and procedures to be developed over the year, for implementation by September 2017 at the latest: The areas for development were:

- Application and enrolment for online delivery programmes;

- Development/validation of programmes (to be incorporated into validation/ revalidation processes);

- Development and delivery of programme including materials and staff/student support;

- Review, monitoring and evaluation of programmes (as part of module evaluation, PRE, SURE, periodic review etc.).

Action: RB to lead working group

16.98   The committee strongly endorsed to Senior Management Team that resource in the Open4learning should be significantly expanded and that investment in online delivery platforms be provided.

Action: Chair to raise in VCSG as part of strategy around digital and e-learning

Policy Schedule (Paper: EDU16.16)

16.99   The committee reviewed the policy schedule and made specific note of the following:

a) Library Services Collections Management Policy: Overdue for review. Secretary to liaise with appropriate staff to seek up date. Expected to be received for May 2017 meeting.

Action: Secretary to seek update.

b) Peer Observation Policy: Due for review. Reviewed and updated policy expected for May 2017 meeting.

Action: Secretary to liaise with Julie Irwin.

c) Placement Learning Policy: noted for full development in 2016/2017

d) Schools and Colleges Liaison Strategy: Due for review. Secretary to liaise with appropriate staff to confirm if this is to be replaced by Outreach policy currently in development.

Action: Secretary to liaise with Marketing and Student recruitment.

e) Student Participation Support Policy, Student Representation: to be combined into new Listening and Responding policy in development.

Date of next meeting

16.100 The date of the next meeting would be the Joint SURE with Quality & Standards committee on Wednesday, 9 November 2016, to be followed by the next meeting of Education committee on Wednesday 8 March 2017.