

Draft:	22-Feb-2016
Approved for circulation:	29-Feb-2016
Confirmed by Committee without amendments	4-May-2016

Education Committee

Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Wednesday, 10 February 2016**

Duration of meeting: **14:00 to 16:30**

Location: **HW-S3.03**

Attendance

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Sean Mackney	Senior Management Team	Chair
Ruth Gunstone	Student Services	Ex-officio
Julie Irwin	Learning and Teaching	Ex-officio
Steve Hoole	Learning and Teaching	Ex-officio
Carol Pook	Society and Health	Nominated
Nic Fryer	Design, Media and Management	Nominated
Rebecca Rochon	Society and Health	Nominated
Ciaran O'Keeffe	Society and Health	Nominated
Ian Chisholm-Bunting	Society and Health	Nominated
Jenny Wade	Students' Union	Ex-officio
Ed Roe	Students' Union	Nominated
Liz Bell	Academic Quality	Secretary
Kirstie Ward	Academic Quality	Minute Secretary
Ellie Smith	Academic Quality	Invited/ Observer
Miriam Moir	Academic Quality	Invited/ Observer

Apologies

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Frazer Mackenzie	Design, Media and Management	Nominated
Julia Williams	Society and Health	Nominated
Martha Wiekens	Design, Media and Management	Nominated
Maurice Gledhill	Design, Media and Management	Nominated
Amin Choudhury	Students' Union	Nominated

Absent

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Phil Wood	Design, Media and Management	Nominated

Welcome

16.01 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

Declaration of conflicts of interest

16.02 No conflicts were declared.

Minutes of the previous meeting

16.03 There were two sets of minutes to approve. As one set pertained to the joint meeting for the annual monitoring processes (SURE) with the Quality & Standards Committee, the decisions were made as follows

- a) The minutes of the Education Committee held on 18 November 2015 were approved as an accurate record.
- b) The minutes of the joint SURE meeting held on 25 November 2015 were approved as an accurate record, subject to the agreement of the Quality & Standards Committee.

Status of actions from the previous meeting

16.04 The action sheet from the Education Committee held on 18 November 2015 was noted. Actions were updated as follows:

- Minute 15.04 – Completed.

16.05 The action sheet from the joint SURE meeting held on 25 November 2015 was noted, pending agreement and update at the next Quality & Standards Committee.

Matters arising

16.06 There were no matters arising.

Chair's Actions

16.07 There were no Chair's Actions to report.

Committee Terms of Reference and Membership (Papers available on Blackboard)

16.08 Nic Fryer was welcomed as a member of the committee, replacing Lorna Dean Gibbs who had been invited to attend the remaining meetings as an observer.

Chair's Report (Verbal)

16.09 The Chair introduced himself to the committee and gave a brief outline of his roles prior to joining Buckinghamshire New University in January 2016. He stated that he had joined Bucks New University as it is a modern university and that he believed in its potential to change for the better the lives of our graduates.

Shaping an Education Strategy

16.10 The Chair outlined the format of the meeting, this would include table discussions on key themes outlined in the thematic guidelines provided to the committee in advance of the meeting (EDU16.01), brought together in a final plenary discussion. After this the committee would consider the final item on the agenda (WBL/Placement policy,

EDU16.06). The committee was informed that the discussion would feed into the University's education strategy (2016-2021).

16.11 It was highlighted to the committee that the sector and Bucks New University in particular, was experiencing great challenge, which would continue with implementation of the government green paper (EDU16.02). The Chair stated that he believed the main drivers in the policy around private providers would provide a particular challenge to the institution. However, the green paper also provided opportunities due to the nature of the institution, with professional partnerships and an employer-focused programme offering.

16.12 The Chair outlined what he considered were the key challenges for Bucks New University:

- a) Minimal research activity
- b) Low rank position in the NSS
- c) Attrition rates too high
- d) Graduate employment levels low in comparison to the sector

He also stated that he had received comments that there was not a challenging educational environment within the institution.

16.13 The Chair stated that the positive attributes of the institution, are that Bucks New University:

- a) is an established university
- b) has a growing research base
- c) offers professional education (programmes aligned to specific professional expertise)

16.14 Members had discussions in groups on perceived challenges and opportunities, and then fed back to the whole group. The table below summarises the areas considered.

Challenges	Opportunities
Current reputation	Tie in with publishers
Lack of pride in the institution (students and staff)	Niche courses – with large numbers
More providers in the market	Simulation techniques
New providers	TEF & Student Choice – valuing what we do and are good at
Nursing bursaries ending	Capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship
DHLE to be part of TEF 'scoring'	Partners/ employer links
Not robust in amending/ fixing problems	New Senior Management Team – opportunities for fresh view, leadership, strategic plan
Too slow or not effective in closing the loop	Willingness to improve
Lack of accountability/ personal responsibility	Learning gain for students
High attrition rates	Better utilisation of facilities

Challenges	Opportunities
Initiative fatigue	MOOCS
Current management structure	
Managing social media	
Bucks-centric recruitment practices at school level	
Delivering what we have promised – CMA compliance	
Introduction of GPA	

16.15 The groups then went on to discuss the 9 themes identified within the guidance provided in advance to the meeting (EDU16.01). Areas identified are summarised below.

1. Pre-Entry engagement with learners
School/college liaison scheme
Improve pre-entry engagement – monitoring expectations
Invest in existing pre-entry work including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading lists • Joining instructions
Pre-enrolment employability benchmark to enable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target offer • Enhance tailor offer • Quantify progress
Digital package for pre-entry students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measuring suitability for programme • Highlighting alternatives programme • Describing potential career paths • Test, videos and assessment included in the package

2. A course portfolio in high demand
2 year/accelerated degrees
Sandwich courses – available as part of full portfolio
Focus on large cohort sizes to give sense of belonging
Identify and act on high demand areas (IT, Healthcare, Engineering, Accountancy, Construction, HR, Marketing)
Development of 'e-version' of programmes where possible
Review of Assessment Strategy

2. A course portfolio in high demand

Cross-Faculty developments

Curriculum framework clearly stated and strictly implemented (currently too many variants)

Maintain balance between skills acquisition and academic knowledge/development

3. Securing graduate-level outcomes through activities that develop employability, employment experience, enterprise and commitment to further study

Embed across all curricula:

- Entrepreneurship
- Enterprise
- Sustainability
- Employability (live briefs, competitions, work placement, work experience)

Work experience /internships in all courses

Integrated Postgraduate Taught portfolio (linked to progression from UG)

Enhanced destinations work to ensure that it is understood how to improve graduate outcomes/ faster graduate employment

Develop Academic study/research/IT skill module to be delivered as mandatory across all programmes at level 4.

Identify and promote the Bucks 'student', 'academic', 'professional' – all of equal importance

The Bucks Award

Integration of simulation/placements/Erasmus/work experience/work-based or relates learning

4. Student engagement and partnership

24 hour campus

1 team to support work experience, work placements, bucks temps, graduate opportunities (all linked to Bucks Award)

Preparation for work part of curriculum at level 6/ final year of study

Student involvement in other areas e.g. early years provision in a crèche on campus

Challenge and excite from the start

Engagement monitoring systems and attendance policy

Review support for students that interrupt their studies to enable their return

A 'Bucks Award' which values extra-curricular activity (using LinkedIn as a vehicle)

Students to choose their own assignments e.g. write a brief then do it – and could be assessed on both

Students to be involved in course development

Live briefs

4. Student engagement and partnership

What is Bucks USP regarding course delivery – what makes our staff great/ inspiring teachers?

Attendance policy – minimum 80%?

5. Research- and professionally-informed education

Assessment menu i.e. options/volume related to credit size to:

- Ensure consistency
- Efficiently resource
- Assess appropriately

Undergraduate research placement support

Increased prominence of pedagogical research and activity

Increase HEA fellowships

Support and infrastructure for high quality teaching – how can we develop this?

Simulation strategy

6. Digital and data technologies for learning and success

Full lecture capture system working by 2017

Learning analytics to provide targeted support and aid retention

Digital learning spaces are key

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) – mandatory to lessons, pools of devices kept for students that need to borrow them

Physical learning spaces need to include technology

Online timetable for buildings/rooms and optional modules/ public interest lectures

Accessible data sets. Data that is timely and informs strategy

Enhance the digital literacy/capability of students and staff

Information available easily online and through student portal

Clare Centre innovation hub is difficult for current students to use as no IT

Careers Platform (Abintegio)

Student portal – to improve early identification, leading to better identification and progression

Building digital literacy

Transparency of IT vision

Student portal (communication and engagement management)

7. Enabling teaching excellence

Peer observation policy being updated and 'managerial' observation of teaching as part of PDR

Competence with supportive technology – VLE etc.

IT infrastructure improvements to support teaching

Encourage/support external examining roles in staff

Linking external/professional activities to PDR process

Higher Apprentice Strategy

Bucks Academic Template, with financial rewards (and recognition) for completion:

- Digitally literate
- Research output
- Teaching quality
- NSS results improvements
- Leading in other areas, not just their own

HEA qualifications and Teaching qualifications

Dynamic and inspiring teaching spaces for teaching for exciting futures

Building digital literacy

Model for balanced workload strategy

Module feedback forms from academics, forms which captures experience/improvements

Student portal

Develop our academic as teachers (not just experts), which strategic interventions and observations

8. Partnerships with providers and employers

New VLE by April 2017

Relationship with a publishing partner to provide content material by 2017

9. Developing the attributes of 'The Bucks Graduate'

Tied to industry at level 6 – more work experience

Money off course fees if students graduate and go into graduate employment in 1st month of leaving

A graduate profile tick list and financial rewards for students that attain it.

Entrepreneurial – development of business incubation unit

10. Other areas/ideas identified additionally by the committee

Need to sell ourselves, promote those aspects that we do well

Pride in the organisation and what has been achieved, celebrate success
Identify lines of responsibility and accountability
Address areas of concern
Identify Bucks USP or Bucks Brand
Is Bucks the 'vocational' university
Need to have consistent processes across institution
The University needs to be a location to visit - needs more shops, restaurants and bars
Staff buy out of the institution – along the co-operative model

WBL/Placement policy (EDU16.06)

- 16.16 Julie Irwin gave a brief overview of the policy presented to the committee for endorsement to Senate. The policy focuses on national definitions and indications for Bucks and would be supported by a series of guidelines and procedures to operationalise the policy.
- 16.17 It was confirmed to the committee that the policy would be monitored utilising a risk-based approach. It would be the responsibility of the department/course team to meet the requirements of the policy.
- 16.18 The Committee endorsed the policy to Senate.

Any other business

- 16.19 The committee was informed that a policy document regarding inclusivity in the curriculum was being drafted by Julie Irwin, Maureen O'Brien and Ruth Gunstone to be presented to the committee in May 2016.
- 16.20 It was expressed that development of a full curriculum strategy which includes all strands such as sustainability, inclusivity, employability etc. should be the primary concern, rather than discrete policy areas.

Date of next meeting

- 16.21 Next meeting was noted as being held on 04 May 2016 at 2pm in HW-G5.05.
- 16.22 The meeting ended at 16:30.