

Draft:	4-May-2016
Approved for circulation:	1-Jun-2016
Confirmed by Committee without amendments	25-Oct-2016

## Education Committee

---

### Open Minutes

Date of meeting: **Wednesday, 04 May 2016**

Duration of meeting: **14:00 to 17:15**

Location: **HW-G5.05**

### Attendance

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
<b>Sean Mackney</b>	Senior Management Team	Chair
<b>Ruth Gunstone</b>	Student Services	Ex-officio
<b>Jenny Wade</b>	Students' Union	Ex-officio
<b>Julie Irwin</b>	Learning and Teaching	Ex-officio
<b>Steve Hoole</b>	Learning and Teaching	Ex-officio
<b>Phil Wood</b>	Design, Media and Management	Nominated
<b>Frazer Mackenzie</b>	Design, Media and Management	Nominated
<b>Martha Wiekens</b>	Design, Media and Management	Nominated
<b>Nic Fryer</b>	Design, Media and Management	Nominated
<b>Ash Mistry</b>	Design, Media and Management	Attending in place of Maurice Gledhill
<b>Julia Williams</b>	Society and Health	Nominated
<b>Ian Chisholm-Bunting</b>	Society and Health	Nominated
<b>Liz Bell</b>	Academic Quality	Secretary
<b>Kirstie Ward</b>	Academic Quality	Minute Secretary

### Apologies

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
<b>Carol Pook</b>	Society and Health	Nominated
<b>Rebecca Rochon</b>	Society and Health	Nominated
<b>Maurice Gledhill</b>	Design, Media and Management	Nominated (rep see above)
<b>Ed Roe</b>	Students' Union	Nominated

## Absent

Name	Faculty / Directorate	Category of membership
Ciaran O’Keeffe	Society and Health	Nominated
Amin Choudhury	Students’ Union	Nominated

## Welcome

16.23 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

## Declaration of conflicts of interest

16.24 No conflicts were declared.

## Minutes of the previous meeting

16.25 The minutes of the Education Committee held on 10 February 2016 were approved as an accurate record without amendment.

## Status of actions from the previous meeting

16.26 The action sheet from the Education Committee held on 10 February 2016 was noted.

## Matters arising

16.27 There were no matters arising.

## Chair’s Actions

16.28 There were no Chair’s Actions to report.

## Chair’s Report (Verbal)

16.29 In his verbal report the Chair highlighted the changing landscape of Higher Education including the increasing emphasis on degree and higher level apprenticeships to level 7, and reported that in respect of this development a cross-institution action group had been formed. These developments are aligned to the Buckinghamshire New University offering, and have synergy with disciplines being taught.

16.30 Risks that were identified with this development included amending practice to meet the different funding stream requirements and pedagogy. The Chair highlighted that this was built into the Education strand of the University strategy and would follow through into faculty plans.

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

16.31 The Chair noted that the terms of reference state that the term for nominated positions is two years. As the Committee was newly constituted in September 2015, this means that all nominated terms would come to an end at the same point (September 2017). As no members indicated that they would be stepping down, and to ensure some continuity of membership, it was agreed that, at this point next year, the Deans would be consulted by the Chair to arrange which half of the nominees would be extended by one year.

**Action: Forward note to liaise with Faculty Deans to confirm extended nominations before end of next academic year (Chair)**

16.32 The Committee were informed that there would be a survey amongst members, reviewing the effectiveness of the Committee.

- 16.33 The Committee noted the information from Jenny Ward (JW) that the Students' Union would take action to support the attendance of the student representatives, as attendance had been limited this academic year.

### Education Strategy implementation (EDU16.07)

- 16.34 The Chair informed the Committee that the University Strategy, and the associated Research and Enterprise, and Education strands, will be presented to Council for approval in June 2016. The implementation of the strategy would be through the faculty and directorate plans, and the Education Committee will have a strategic monitoring role.
- 16.35 Members had small group discussions to consider the operational requirements that would need to be in place and what actions should be taken and by whom to support the strategy. They then fed back to the whole group in plenary.

The table below summarises the discussion.

Area of discussion	Notes
<b>Review of portfolio</b>	<p>Concentrate on areas of strength and potential growth.</p> <hr/> <p>Increase in research informed activity, such as development of STEM based subjects</p> <hr/> <p>Career-led programmes of study</p> <hr/> <p>Research informed teaching</p> <hr/> <p>Curriculum review</p>
<b>Academic structure</b>	<p>Consideration of potential changes to the academic year including summer working, placement and Erasmus opportunities and semesterisation.</p>
<b>Utilising current expertise</b>	<p>Significant development of placement activity is found in PQN. Could their structures and protocols be developed and supported across the institution?</p> <hr/> <p>Noted that in DMM support for placements/internships etc. sits with individuals in course teams and there are variations in the quality, opportunities and support available to students and staff.</p> <hr/> <p>Noted the value and advantage of being a small institution (rather than a collection of colleges for example) and the potential this gives to share knowledge, expertise and contacts for the benefit of students and staff.</p> <hr/> <p>Identify and share good practice.</p> <hr/> <p>Ensure that there is a coordinated approach to projects and developments in the University, avoiding duplication and enabling interested parties to be involved. Noted that the committee structure has a fundamental role in this area.</p>

Area of discussion	Notes
<b>Student metrics</b>	Developing and embedding predictive analytics, noting the need to ensure that they are utilised in an efficient and effective manner to facilitate early intervention.
<b>Monitoring impact of strategy</b>	Development of KPIs
<b>Resource</b>	<p>Given the period of financial constraint, development of resource in one area of the strategy will probably require either reduction in or cessation of activity in another area/s. Strategic direction as to how these priorities will be considered and agreed is required.</p> <p>Investing in the development and refinement of skills for support online and FDL programmes, which may mean new staff, consultants or up-skilling of current workforce</p>
<b>Learning journey</b>	<p>How to develop programmes and support the associated needs for academic development from level 3 through and beyond level 7? How is this to be facilitated? How are programmes to be developed? For example how would the level 3 programmes fit with current regulatory structures?</p> <p>Utilising different teaching techniques such as coaching.</p> <p>Development of personalised support packages, so that the individual student feels nurtured and supported to achieve full potential.</p> <p>Development of independence of learning, ensuring that students are empowered to identify and utilise support mechanisms. Enabling this by appropriate signposting/development.</p> <p>Embed seriousness to study in our students. Committee noted recent league table results that show the institution performing badly in comparison to the sector in student use of learning resources.</p>
<b>Operational effectiveness</b>	<p>Improvements to the organisational ability to adapt and change to current environment.</p> <p>Priority has been given to developing the University's digital infrastructure, the implementation of which will provide benefits and free up resource that can be repurposed.</p>

Area of discussion	Notes
	Undertake process reviews to improve experience and better allocate resource.
	Potential refinements to PRE-SURE process to monitor effectiveness of implemented strategies.

- 16.36 The Committee then considered how it would undertake its role in reviewing the education strand of the strategy. This would need to include; the monitoring and review of work undertaken, identification of policy gaps and the commissioning of development and refinement of the University's formal documents. The Committee noted that benchmarks to support the strand were in the process of being developed and the Committee would be instigator and challenger of the metrics.

### **Building the Education committee programme 2016/2017**

- 16.37 The Committee discussed how to allocate business schedule / agenda items for meetings in academic year 2016/2017. Suggestions included assigning elements of the education strand as a major discussion topic to each meeting of the year to provide specific focus.

- 16.38 The Committee also considered how major projects, such as potential changes to the academic year, would be instigated and agreed that this would derive from the Faculty and Directorate planning, following on from SMT confirming the 'direction of travel'.

- 16.39 It was agreed that as the next meeting would take place after approval of the strategic plans emanating from faculties and directorates, that this would be an opportunity to analyse the plans to identify any gaps in the strategies.

**Action: all faculty and directorate plans to be presented to the Committee, to be mapped against the education strand of the University Strategy at first meeting of next academic year. (Secretary)**

- 16.40 Members considered that the terms of reference of this committee might need to be reviewed to accommodate requirements of the new strategies. It was agreed that the Committee would feedback views on the terms of reference to the Secretary. The Chair and Secretary would then review the feedback, in conjunction with the terms of reference for Quality & Standards Committee.

**Action: Review terms of reference following feedback from the Committee (Chair and Secretary)**

- 16.41 It was agreed that items for consideration by the Committee could be proposed by any member, to be included on the agenda, and should be accompanied by a discussion paper, rather than have a standing report from individual areas. This would provide greater flexibility in responding to developments.

### **Work-based and Placement Learning Policy (EDU16.11)**

- 16.42 The Committee considered the Work-based and Placement Learning policy, which had been returned to Committee by Senate. It was agreed that this was a principles document which requires additional procedural detail to enable full implementation. However it was further agreed that this policy be accepted as an interim measure in order to be compliant with the QAA Quality Code.

- 16.43 There was discussion regarding the need to ensure that consistent language was used to refer to work-based, work-related and placement learning within all

documentation such as programme handbooks or formal documents, and the potential impact in areas such as the Consumer Rights Act 2015 legislation.

- 16.44 The Committee agreed to endorse the policy in the light of the discussions, noting that this would be an interim policy and that detailed procedures would be developed by a task and finish group. This group would be required to review the policy - in the light of recent changes such as apprenticeships, define terms, develop case studies and consider any implementation issues that may occur.

**Action: Current policy endorsed to Senate as interim policy (Secretary)**

**Action: Task and finish group, led by Julie Irwin to be set up and take forward the agreed plan and provide updated policy and procedure for Senate in December 2016 (JI)**

### **Academic Misconduct Working Party Update (EDU16.08)**

- 16.45 The work undertaken by the working group was highlighted, as recorded in the paper circulated prior to the meeting (EDU16.11). Further review of academic misconduct cases for 2015/2016 had been undertaken which showed that there was a considerably higher numbers of cases coming from partners and students with international fee status, as opposed to other groupings, than would be expected when compared to overall enrolment figures. The recommendation of the working party, in relation to this, was to further develop teaching, learning and support strategies, particularly for these students.

- 16.46 The working party had also considered the current formal document 'Academic Misconduct'. They agreed that, whilst the majority of the policy was sound, there was evidence to suggest that in some areas of the institution the process was not always followed due to the perceived high penalty cost to the student of what was considered poor practice. In other areas similar cases are categorised and are actioned as academic misconduct. The main recommendations of the working group (as stated in the paper) were agreed in principle but it was agreed that further work would be required. The Committee endorsed the direction of travel and requested that full redevelopment be undertaken over the next calendar year and presented to the corresponding meeting in 2017.

**Action: Academic Misconduct Working group to update Academic Misconduct regulations to present to May 2017 committee meeting (KW)**

### **Epigeum Report (EDU16.09)**

- 16.47 The Committee considered the recommendation made to roll out the Epigeum package to all first year students as a mandatory part of year 1 and, in addition, to make it mandatory for those found to have committed academic misconduct. It was agreed that in principle this was a useful addition to the development of academic integrity. However, members also agreed that to introduce penalties for non-completion might create unnecessary barriers during this first phase of adoption.

- 16.48 The Committee therefore considered that the most appropriate action would be to design a single access point in the virtual learning environment to which all students are enrolled. ALL students would then be mandated to complete the module at the beginning of term. A census of completion would be taken on 1 December 2016, with course teams being provided with the details of those that had not completed to then follow up.

- 16.49 Whilst the focus will be on first year undergraduates, it was agreed that this would be mandated for all students but that there would be NO penalty for non-completion.

**Action: Chair to agree purchase of Epigeum with SMT**

**Action: Pilot to be run, mandated for all students, without penalty for non-completion. Results to be fed back to the Committee in one calendar year. (JW and JI)**

### **Students as partners (EDU16.10)**

- 16.50 The position paper highlighted the ambition to develop a true partnership model with students, whilst noting that there are differing levels of desire and availability/ability to engage with some processes within the institution. An example given was that not all students are prepared to represent the student body on a validation panel. Students should be encouraged to be engaged and work in partnership with the University.
- 16.51 The developments were intended to challenge the narrative of students as passive consumers and to change the culture in some parts of the institution. They seek to utilise the development cycle following feedback, which would have the added advantage of developing the graduate skills needed for successful employment.
- 16.52 The Committee welcomed the position paper and looked forward to the development of the full formal document.

### **Simulation in learning, teaching and assessment**

- 16.53 The Committee noted and welcomed the development of a University wide strategy for simulation across the institution.

### **Consideration of the role of Time Constrained Assessment and formal Examination as part of the assessment strategy**

- 16.54 The Committee agreed that this should be taken forward by the assessment special interest group, with a view to incorporating this into a new Assessment strategy formal document.

**Action: Circulate current membership of the group to the Heads of School, to enable a call for additional members (JI)**

### **Any other business**

- 16.55 The Committee were informed that provisional results indicated that the NSS participation target of 75% had been achieved (75.58%). The Committee congratulated the team, and all those involved in encouraging participation. It was additionally noted that the majority of courses had reached the minimum participation threshold for non-aggregated publication.

### **Date of next meetings**

- 16.56 The dates for the meetings next academic year were noted as being:
- 25 October 2016 (G5.05)
  - 23 November 2016 (S3.04) – Joint meeting with Quality & Standards Committee
  - 08 March 2017 (G5.05)
  - 17 May 2017 (G5.05)
- 16.57 The meeting ended at 17:15.