UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Confirmed minutes of a meeting of the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee held on Friday 16 February 2018

Present: L Jackson (Co-Chair, Students' Union Education Officer), Professor G van der Velden (Co-Chair, Academic Director of Warwick International Higher Education Academy (WIHEA)), A Brewerton (Head of Academic Services, Library), Professor A Clark (Academic Director (Undergraduate), WIHEA Fellow), E Dunford (Students' Union Postgraduate Officer), Professor L Gracia (Dean of Students), Dr C Hampton (Academic Representative of the Faculty of Arts), Dr J Heron (Academic Representative of the Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning (IATL)), Dr C MacLean (Academic Representative of the Faculty of Social Sciences), Dr H Nolan (Academic Representative of the Faculty of Medicine), H Pennack (Director of University Marketing), A Thomas (Service Owner, Academic Technology, IT Services), Dr D Wood (Academic Representative of the Faculty of Science).

Apologies: S Bennett (Director of Student Careers and Skills), Professor G Cooke (WIHEA Fellow, School of Engineering), Dr R Freeman (WIHEA Fellow, Head of Student Engagement and Recruitment, Life Sciences), Professor C Hughes (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)), Dr I Tuersley (Student Engagement Coordinator, Faculty of Science).

In Attendance: D Derricott (Secretary), A Greenhalgh (Acting Assistant Secretary), N Howell-Manning (Student Communications Officer), H Rowles (Assistant Registrar (Space Management and Timetabling)) for item 36/17-18.

* An asterisk in front of the title of the minute denotes a RESTRICTED item that should not be shared beyond the membership of the Committee

32/17-18   Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED:

(a)   That, should any members or attendees of the Committee have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Code of Governance (2014), available online from http://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/publications/;

RESOLVED:

(b)   That no conflicts of interest were raised.

33/17-18   Minutes

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee held on Monday 22 January 2018, noting amendments to minutes 24(c), 24(g) and 25(h)/17-18 as follows (additions underlined, deletions struck through):

(a)   Review of Personal Tutoring (minutes 24(c) and 24(g)/17-18)

       (i)   'That a consideration regarding merit pay was missing from the recommendations and it was accepted that this needed to be addressed;'

(ii) ~~'That the paper did not include any metrics as Personal Tutoring will be part of the Personal Development Review process;'~~

(b) *University Education Strategy (minute 25(h)/17-18)

'*That, allied to Dr Wood's point, it is good that the Strategy is clear and is non-controversial and the lack of sections talking about specific Faculties is welcomed, however as you drill down through the Strategy, you start to introduce potentially contentious issues (e.g. CMF) and you might wish to consider* ~~*halting how far people can drill down on the website once a page begins to outline tactical approaches*~~ *which elements are considered strategic, and which might be tactical or issues of policy that require more careful conversations or interventions*.'

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee held on Monday 22 January 2018, noting amendments to minutes 24(c), 24(g) and 25(h)/17-18 as set out above, be <u>approved</u>.

34/17-18   <u>Matters Arising</u>

(a) <u>Faculty Student Engagement Coordinators (minute 20/17-18 referred)</u>

REPORTED: (by the Co-Chair, L Jackson)

(i) That following the Committee's approval to evolve the SSLC Coordinator role into that of Student Engagement Coordinator, the role had been advertised to staff;

(ii) That expressions of interest were sought before Monday 19 February and would be reviewed by the Chairs of Faculty or their nominees;

(iii) That it was envisaged the process would conclude in time for the new Coordinators to attend their first meeting of the Committee on Friday 27 April 2018.

(b) <u>University Education Strategy (minute 25/17-18 referred)</u>

REPORTED: (by the Co-Chair, L Jackson)

(i) That the Committee's feedback on the draft University Education Strategy had been verbally reported to the meeting of Senate on Wednesday 24th January 2018;

(ii) That an extract of the Committee's unconfirmed minutes had been shared with the team developing the Strategy to inform its revision.

35/17-18   <u>Chairs' Business</u>

REPORTED: (by the Co-Chair, Professor G van der Velden)

(a) That a number of informal expressions and proposals regarding the Faculty Student Engagement Coordinators had been received;

(b) That new websites profiling the strategic priorities for the student learning experience, as confirmed in the draft Education Strategy, were going live this year with the website showcasing student research opportunities now live and international and interdisciplinary websites to follow, noting that further development would take place to support departments to develop their own narrative around each of the priorities;

(c) That the Survey Strategy Steering Group was now established and the first meeting had taken place with the aim of moving from the current fragmented position to a joined up approach to managing surveys;

(d) That the promotion criteria was being consulted on with a deadline of 16 February 2018 for submission of final comments, noting that there was real potential to recognise and promote the value of enhancing the student learning experience and student engagement, and that making leadership in this area more visible would be key to raising awareness;

(by E Dunford)

(e) That students had voted overwhelmingly in favour of supporting UCU action;

(f) That the call for papers for Warwick IPC (Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Conference) would open next week;

(g) That Varsity 2018, the annual sports tournament between the students of Warwick and Coventry, was to take place this month.

36/17-18   Teaching Room and Student Space Developments 2017/18

CONSIDERED:

A paper from H Rowles, Assistant Registrar (Space Management and Timetabling), on the schedule of works to refurbish teaching and learning spaces (paper SLEEC.14/17-18).

REPORTED: (by H Rowles)

(a) That the Teaching and Learning Space Development Group (TLSDG) had been reformed and reconstituted with an expanded remit to look at teaching space and associated study spaces across the University;

(b) That as well as looking at short-term work over the coming year, TLSDG would develop a longer-term view of space development, drawing on condition surveys and feedback from staff and students to inform the prioritisation and design of learning space improvements;

(c) That a five-year plan for refurbishment of teaching rooms would aim to refurbish older teaching rooms to a standard in line with newer rooms while maintaining the high quality of new or newly refurbished teaching rooms;

(d) That there was a significant budget of £1.0m but that individual projects could quickly use this up, noting that additional funding from Estates would be drawn on where individual projects affected the fabric of the building;

(e) That TLSDG still needed to consider how to solicit and receive requests for investment in a fair and equitable way;

(f)   That departmentally-owned teaching spaces would be brought into scope too c. 150 centrally TT spaces and around the same number of local general teaching spaces across campus;

(g)   That TLSDG had a broad membership to help elicit suggestions, including feedback from condition surveys, timetabling representatives, and email, noting that previous attempts to engage with staff and students via focus groups had proved unsuccessful;

(h)   That plans developed so far had been in liaison with relevant departments at Gibbet Hill; changes at Westwood were part of a wider effort to move Foundation teaching to free up teaching space on central campus; and other works had been driven by identified remedial work needed and environmental sustainability strategies;

(by the Co-Chair, Professor G van der Velden)

(i)   That focus was needed on the existing Humanities Building for current students who would not be around to benefit from the new Faculty of Arts building, noting that the conditions of teaching rooms was just as important as the availability of technology;

(j)   That the TLSDG needed to collect user needs first before developing the five-year plan;

(k)   That on sample dates hard copy feedback surveys could be left in teaching rooms and study spaces for students and staff to complete;

(l)   That a group had been set up, drawing together interested parties, to consider the co-location of student facing services in Senate House;

(by Dr J Heron)

(m)   That there was good data gathering work underway by the Space Management and Timetabling Team (SMTT), noting that some lessons had been learnt from the Ramphal Building with qualitative feedback now needing to be captured on The Oculus to help clarify views on what would be an effective innovative learning space;

(by H Pennack)

(n)   That University Marketing could help with recruiting and facilitating focus groups as part of their wider work;

(by Dr C MacLean)

(o)   That as a busy academic, it was difficult to have time for focus groups, but would welcome the opportunity to give feedback through a survey or other quick method;

(by A Thomas)

(p)   That it would be helpful to categorise and describe different types of teaching which can be easily understood and talked about when designing teaching space to enable a common understanding of needs;

(by Professor A Clark)

(q)   That departments may feel that there has been a lack of mechanism for feeding back on spaces or lack of impact to date; the new budget and group could change that and

it was worth making sure staff and students knew about it, noting that disseminating the five-year plan would also spark interest;

RESOLVED:

(r)   That the Committee <u>noted</u> the contents of the paper on the schedule of works to refurbish teaching and learning spaces (paper SLEEC.14/17-18);

(s)   TLSDG to develop a proposal for engaging space users for this Committee's consideration at a subsequent meeting this academic year.

37/17-18   Module Evaluation

CONSIDERED:

A report from Professor G van der Velden, Academic Director of WIHEA, and A Thomas, Head of Academic Technology, (paper SLEEC.15/17-18) summarising the progress to date of the three groups considering student module evaluations.

REPORTED: (by the Co-Chair, Professor G van der Velden)

(a)   That work on module evaluation was moving quickly, noting that the paper was a work in progress update and further proposals would come to the next Committee meeting;

(b)   That workshops to inform design were taking place and widely promoted, with the draft questions now published online and being widely discussed;

(c)   That departments will be asked to feedback to SLEEC on the proposals in advance of its meeting in April, noting that although set up centrally this was not a mandatory survey and the expectation was that not every department would use it;

(d)   That module evaluation should not be used as a single indicator but as part of multiple qualitative and quantitative data about quality in the round, together with the correct guidance;

(e)   That safeguards were being put in place, e.g. not having access to module-level data centrally and not requiring module evaluation data to be evidenced in promotional cases, noting that it was the Committee's role to protect and promote these principles;

(f)   That the technical solution might allow us to add some explanatory text to the questions or be able to ask students to give more detail on why they chose the score they did;

(g)   That a decision would need to be made on how to deploy the questions for different types of modules, e.g. practice-based modules;

(by A Thomas)

(h)   That there were a range of solutions each with a different cost profile, including one which uses Moodle at a lower cost and a more expensive purpose-built commissioned system, noting that there were issues affecting the choice of system around whether to lock down the core questions and whether to have a powerful database to hold and interrogate the data;

(i)   That there was a tension yet to be resolved between the focus of the questions being on an individual or on the wider student learning experience;

(j)   That departments would be able to set additional questions, including around University support services, such as the Library or IT services, where this is of particular interest;

(by Dr C MacLean)

(k)   That it was important for departments to engage at this starting point in the process to ensure continued engagement throughout the process;

(l)   That taking data in the round was important but that did not always happen in a culture where hard judgement was taken on how a module evaluation reflected on an individual;

(m)   That there was work to do with students to get them to engage responsibly and constructively, so as to ensure it was useful and to protect staff wellbeing;

(n)   That the questions were simple and shifted away from 'liking' and 'disliking', which missed the point about learning, noting, however, that the question on how well the module was organised could be interpreted in a variety of ways;

(by Professor L Gracia)

(o)   That concerns around gender bias emphasised the importance of using the literature to ensure the right design from the start, particularly in case the data was used for different purposes in the future;

(p)   That it was important to understand the context of the module, e.g. the teaching space and any technical issues;

(q)   That the use of the word 'appropriate' in the questions was problematic and should instead focus on whether opportunities were available;

(by A Brewerton)

(r)   That the Library had found module-level feedback useful to help target investment where students identify gaps in provision;

(by E Dunford)

(s)   That there were multiple strands of work underway to encourage positive and appropriate behaviours by students when participating in surveys;

(by the Co-Chair, L Jackson)

(t)   That a short statement at the beginning supported by the Students' Union and Vice-Chancellor could frame the survey to encourage constructive feedback.

RESOLVED:

(t)   That the principles and proposals set out in paper SLEEC.15/17-18 as the basis for wider consultation with the University community on module evaluation, be approved;

(u)   That final proposals from the three groups considering a University-supported solution for module evaluation be presented to the April meeting of SLEEC for approval.

38/17-18   Student Survey Action Plans

REPORTED: (by the Co-Chair, Professor G van der Velden)

(a)   That Faculty Education Committees had delayed their reports to SLEEC summarising Survey Action Plans, including the good practice, the primary areas of focus for each department and the major issues that the Faculty wished to raise with the University;

(b)   That feedback from Faculty Education Committees on the process of reviewing Survey Action Plans would be considered before bringing this to a future meeting of SLEEC.

39/17-18   Student Academic Representation Transformation

REPORTED: (by the Co-Chair, L Jackson)

(a)   That there were four strands of work to the project: establishing baseline expectations for student representation; supporting representatives to be effective; digital transformation; and student engagement in University governance structures;

(b)   That the project was currently waiting for the Faculty Student Engagement Coordinators to come into post to enable working with them on some of the detail, noting that the role of SSLC Academic Convenors would also be reviewed;

(by Dr J Heron)

(c)   That it would be useful for members to suggest colleagues outside of SLEEC who might attend workshops, etc.;

(by the Co-Chair, Professor G van der Velden)

(d)   That it was essential to have a strong, informed, elected student voice, noting that all of this had impact on how departments worked.

RESOLVED:

That a paper with more detail be submitted to SLEEC for consideration at the meeting on 27 April 2018.

40/17-18   Progress against recommendations from ITLR

RECEIVED:

A report from Professor G van der Velden, Co-Chair of SLEEC, (paper SLEEC.18/17-18) summarising on the progress made against recommendations from the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review (ITLR) 2017 relating the remit of SLEEC.

REPORTED: (by the Co-Chair, Professor G van der Velden)

(a)   That progress against the recommendations made by ITLR panels and faculty engagement events was currently being reported on and considered by a number of

committees, which in turn were reporting an overview to the University's Education Committee;

(b) That a number of the recommendations were made to the University, noting that these had been grouped into themes and assigned to members of the Education Executive to monitor and report on directly to Education Committee;

(c) That some of the recommendations related to the remit of SLEEC and had therefore been presented alongside a summary of progress towards them so that the Committee could maintain appropriate oversight of quality enhancement activity underway.

41/17-18   Any Other Business

REPORTED: (by A Thomas)

(a) That there was a need to consider how learning technologies could appropriately mitigate the impact of planned and unplanned staff absences on the student learning experience, noting that the University's Academic Continuity Group was considering this specifically in the context of upcoming industrial action.

42/17-18   Future Meetings

REPORTED:

That the dates and venues for the Committee's meetings for the remainder of the academic year 2017/18 were as follows:

(a) 1pm to 3pm on Friday 27 April 2018 in CMR 1.0, University House:

(i) Deadline for notification of intention to submit a paper: 12 noon, 6 April 2018;
(ii) Deadline for draft papers: 12 noon, 13 April 2018;
(iii) Circulation of electronic papers: 20 April 2018.

(b) 1pm to 3pm on Monday 21 May 2018 in in CMR 1.0, University House:

(i) Deadline for notification of intention to submit a paper: 12 noon, 1 May 2018;
(ii) Deadline for draft papers: 12 noon, 8 May 2018;
(iii) Circulation of electronic papers: 14 May 2018.