Academic Board

Learning Teaching and Student Experience Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2020.

Membership:

Present: Amanda Coffey (Chair), Rakhee Aggarwal, David Barrett, Suzanne Carrie, Jackie Chelin, Rachel Cowie, Lauren Davis, Jenny Dye, Sarah Grabham, Lisa Harrison, Antony Hill, Jamie Hulley-Mills (student), Bethany Jackson (student), Kaynat Kadar (student), Selen Kars, Abbie Learoyd-Smith (student), Nassime Mezani (student), Jo Midgeley, Cathy Minnett-Smith, Heather Moyes, Anna Piasecki, Jackie Rogers, Simon Scarle, Richard Strange, Wendy Rowley (student), Luke Rudge, Neil Willey, Tracey Horton (Officer), Iain Mossman (Secretary).

Apologies: Jane Ojiako

In attendance: Nick Biggs (for item LTSEC20.11.10), Dan Bougourd and Tracey Horton (for item LTSEC20.11.07), Fiona Hamilton (for item LTSEC20.11.05).

MINUTES OF THE MEETING	
	MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING
LTSEC20.11.01	Members approved the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2020 as an accurate record with one observation made in respect of item LTSEC20.09.05.2 It was noted this would be addressed outside of the meeting. The Chair welcomed new members to the committee.
	MATTERS ARISING
LTSEC20.11.02	None to report
LTSEC20.11.02.1	**Action Sheet** - Completed items will be removed prior to the next meeting. **Action: Officer**
LTSEC20.11.02.2	**Chair's Actions – Academic Appeals Policy** - The Chair confirmed that the removal of the requirement for a representative from Hartpury University on the appeals panel had been approved via Chair's Action.

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	STANDING AGENDA ITEMS
LTSEC20.11.03	**Chair's Introduction**
LTSEC20.11.03.1	The Chair provided the following verbal update: 1. Thanks were extended to all colleagues who have worked exceptionally hard to ensure students have had a positive start to the academic year. 2. The Executive Team will be working with faculties to help them co-ordinate their response to the Department for Education's announcement that students should return home during the 'student travel window' from 03 December to 09 December 2020. 3. Work has begun to explore the ways the University can continue to support students both during and at the end of the 2020/2021 academic year. This includes updates to the academic regulations, a Block Zero period for January starters and a move away from controlled conditions assessments. Student and Academic Services are working with faculties in order to create sustainable academic year calendars for 2021/2022 and beyond.
LTSEC20.11.03.2	**Update on activities to assure a quality student experience**
	The Chair introduced paper LTSEC20.11.02 for noting. 1. The Office for Students will require evidence of how the University has delivered teaching and assured quality and standards during 2019/2020. 2. Members were invited to suggest examples of the evidence that could be used as part of the evidence base to inform an assurance statement.
	During discussions members suggested the following examples: 1. Evidence and assurance that the University has continued to use its existing quality processes to reflect on impact of the pandemic. 2. Feedback on, and details of the support provided to Post Graduate Research (PGR) students and Non-linear / Continuing Professional Development students. 3. The newly created Student Consultation Panels. 4. Local faculty support for students, for example, the Bristol Business School has introduced weekly workbooks for self-isolating students. 5. Further comments should be fed back to the LTSEC Secretary.

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	6. It was agreed the item should be retained as a standing item on the agenda.
LTSEC20.11.03.3	**Update from the Students' Union**
LTSEC20.11.03.1	The Chair noted that paper LTSEC20.11.03 had been received and read with interest.
	TRANSFORMING FUTURES LEARNING STRATEGY 2030
LTSEC20.11.04	**Transforming Futures Learning and Teaching Strategy 2030**
LTSEC20.11.04.1	In a verbal update the Chair thanked colleagues for their contributions and feedback. 1. Work continues in respect of managing enablement of the strategy. 2. Further update will be provided to LTSEC in due course.
LTSEC20.11.05	**Strategy 2030 Readiness**
LTSEC20.11.05.1	The Director of Student and Academic Services spoke to paper LTSEC20.11.04: 1. Establishing a subject readiness review programme of work to inform our strategic priorities. 2. The next steps include: an analysis of the areas which need to be explored in more detail, the establishment of a commissioning body to take the work forward and the identification of areas of strength within our existing offer. 3. The paper will be taken to Academic Board in December 2020.
LTSEC20.11.06	**Mature Students Research**
LTSEC20.11.06.1	The Evaluation and Data Manager, Equality Diversity and Inclusivity provided the following introduction to paper LTSEC20.11.05: 1. The research looked at the lived experience of students aged 21 and over. Whilst they represent approximately one in four of UWE's students, achievement of first class and upper second degrees is ten percentage points below those of younger students. 2. Key insights showed that the students often feel isolated and a sense of difference and some struggle with the impact of childcare and its impact on academic and social life at the University. 3. Some activities put on in induction and in accommodation are often not appealing to, or appropriate for, mature students.

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	4. Mature students do feel very well supported but barriers to their engagement in the full student experience exist. It was noted that barriers for these students may also be barriers for others. 5. Recommendations included running tailored induction / welcome activities which have already been discussed with the Students' Union and establishing a mature students society.
	During discussions members noted: 1. The information gained can feed into the review of Block Zero. 2. Within the category of mature students, it was noted that there are a range of age groups. It was confirmed that this had been recognised in the report by using the Office for Students classification for further analysis. 3. The attainment gap became greater as age increased. However, it was noted that a reverse trend was observed in PGR students and that valuable insight might come from sharing expertise in across the two areas. 4. LTSEC would have a role to play in supporting any subsequent actions as part of its Widening Participation commitment.
	QUALITY AND STANDARDS AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE
LTSEC20.11.07	**Policy Governance Framework**
LTSEC20.11.07.1	The Deputy Director of Student and Academic Services (Policy Development and Student Experience) provided the following introduction to paper LTSEC20.11.06: 1. The paper is a culmination of two year's work following an external review of academic governance. 2. The proposals are designed to facilitate the creation and maintenance of the University's policies and to provide a facilitative framework to help expedite the work of LTSEC. 3. The paper will be taken to Academic Board in December 2020 to seek approval and adoption. 4. Further comments should be fed back to the Deputy Director of Student and Academic Services (Policy Development and Student Experience) as soon as possible.
LTSEC20.11.07.2	LTSEC agreed that the report can be **ENDORSED** to Academic Board for approval.
LTSEC20.11.08	**Reflection on the impact of the Force Majeure Regulations**

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LTSEC20.11.08.1	The Student Voice and Academic Policy Manager and Senior Business Intelligence Analyst presented a review of the impact of removal of mark capping on module results in 2019/2020. 1. A comparison of module outcomes between 2017/2018 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 showed that the number of resits taken increased from 27% of module enrolments to 31% of module enrolments, equating to approximately one thousand extra students. 2. There was a slight drop in 2019/2020 in the first attempt / first sit pass rate and a slight rise in the first attempt / resit pass rate. 3. Average module marks increased from a mark close to 56% in 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 to 58% in 2019/2020. 4. In terms of module 'classifications' in 2018/2019 24% of students achieved a 'first' at the first attempt / first sit which fell to 23% at the resit. In 2019/2020 this trend continued. Whilst slightly more students achieved a 'first' or 'upper second' outcome for the module the numbers did not indicate a significant inflation of marks. 5. The next step will be to report on the overall impact of the regulatory changes upon progression, non-continuation and degree outcomes once student registrations are completed for 2020/2021.
LTSEC20.11.08.2	During discussions members noted: 1. That the results could have been influenced by the fact that many assessments had not been designed to have been taken online and that a number of exams were cancelled. The latter may have contributed to higher module marks in 2019/2020. 2. Further investigation can be undertaken to understand whether the attainment gap was reduced due to the removal of capping for resits and retakes and to provide a breakdown of outcomes for departments. **Action: The Student Voice and Academic Policy Manager and Senior Business Intelligence Analyst**
LTSEC20.11.09	**Student Surveys**
LTSEC20.11.09.1	The committee noted the plans for the 2020/2021 National Student Survey and the Postgraduate Taught Student Experience Survey as set out in paper LTSEC20.11.08 as well as the changes to Module Feedback Surveys.
LTSEC20.11.10	**LTSEC Enhancement Session**
LTSEC20.11.10.1	The Head of Policy Development and Student Experience provided an update on the next LTSEC enhancement session.

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	1. The theme will be Assessment and Feedback and there will be input from the Assessment and Feedback Partnership Project.
LTSEC20.11.10.2	Discussion from members noted: 1. The session might usefully explore our approaches to assessment and the challenges faced. 2. LTSEC **ENDORSED** the proposal to hold the session as an additional standalone event to take place in March 2021. **Action: Officer and Secretary**
ASSURANCE REPORTING	
LTSEC20.11.11	**Assessment Offences Report 2019/20**
LTSEC20.11.11.1	The Senior Policy Officer (Student Voice and Academic Policy Team) introduced paper LTSEC20.11.10 1. Overall, there was an increase in the number of Assessment Offences in 2019/2020. 2. Safe assign is now automatically activated so may be a reason why more offences are being picked up. 3. The number of offences recorded by BAME students remains disproportionately high. 4. Actions taken from recommendations made in the 2018/2019 report include setting up a generic email to report contacts made by essay mills, the addition of vivas/interviews as a method to determine where an offence may have occurred, working with the Assessment Offences Advisers to review the impact of the removal of capping on penalties, presenting findings at the festival of learning and securing funding to work with students to make a film from the student perspective.
LTSEC20.11.11.2	Discussion from members noted: 1. The University needs to take the initiative to explore the issues around the frequency of offences found amongst international and BAME students, as well as to design assessments in such a way as to reduce the opportunities for committing an offence. 2. The language used in discussion needs to be chosen with care, as the use of 'honest' and 'dishonest' creates a narrative which may not align with the student perspective and experience. However, it was noted that many of the recommendations had been created with student input. 3. The recommendations could feed into the Assessment and Feedback Enhancement session. **Action: Officer and Secretary**

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LTSEC20.11.12	**2018/2019 and 2019/2020 Hartpury College Quality Enhancement and Standards Committee Assurance Reports**
LTSEC20.11.12.1	The committee noted papers LTSEC20.11.11 and LTSEC20.11.12
LTSEC20.11.13	**External Examiners' 2019/20 Assurance Report**

LTSEC20.11.13.1	The Deputy Director of Student and Academic Services (Policy Development and Student Experience) provided the following introduction to paper LTSEC20.11.13
	1. The paper confirmed that the External Examiner system operated as normal during 2019/2020 with a slight delay to reporting due to the late running of examination boards.
	2. The key issue identified by External Examiners were the differences between partnership and UWE provision and the need to manage and develop collaborative delivery.
	    Action: Partnerships Quality Subcommittee and Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Committees to be asked to give attention to this issue.
	3. The new External Expertise System had been positively received by the Examiners.
	4. There is an opportunity to redevelop the format of the report in order to more deliberately draw out the salient points needed by LTSEC and Academic Board.
	    Action: Deputy Director of Student and Academic Services (Policy Development and Student Experience), to review the approach to reporting assurance related to external examining.

	ITEMS FOR INFORMATION
LTSEC20.11.14	None to report
	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
LTSEC20.11.15	None to report
	MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES
LTSEC20.11.16	The minutes of the sub-committee will be noted as they become available to the committee
	DATE OF NEXT MEETING 10th February 2021, 2-5pm on Microsoft Teams