UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

STUDENT EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Student Educational Experience Committee held on 29 September 2020.

PRESENT: Dr Mairi Watson (Chair)

Muhammed Saad Raees  Neal Geach  Catherine Rendell
Kayleigh Malone     Dr Phil Porter  Julie Kelly
Dr Ivan Phillips    Dr Stephen Kane  Geri Ward
Rosemary Allen      Karen Barton  Bethan Adams
Dr Karen Atkinson   Professor Helen Barefoot  Samantha Kelly
Karen Robins        Dr Susan Grey  Judith Baines
Dr Andrew Maunder   Professor Frank Haddleton  Scott Isaacs

IN ATTENDANCE:

Shelby Loasby    Dr Ciara Meehan  Maria Banks
Stephen Owen    Leire Caselles Vallejo

APOLOGIES:

Lisa Uttley

1  CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS, IF ANY

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.2 The Chair brought the University’s Outbreak Plan to the attention of the Committee and highlighted the importance of understanding the decision process in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak on campus.

1.3 The Committee noted that the Outbreak Plan was not a fixed document and would be updated as new information came to hand. Members could provide any feedback to the Chair or to the Deputy Secretary and Registrar, Helen Davidson. Q&A sessions were also scheduled so staff had an opportunity to discuss the Outbreak Plan.

1.4 The Outbreak Plan could be accessed in HertsHub via the following link:

https://herts365.sharepoint.com/sites/Toolkits/SitePages/University-Outbreak-Plan.aspx?dm_t=0%2c0%2c0%2c0%2c0%2c0

2  NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY

There were no new declarations of interest.

3  IN ATTENDANCE

The Committee noted that Bhavna Jethwa would be in attendance as an observer.

4  ACADEMIC BOARD STANDING ORDERS

The Committee noted the Academic Board Standing Orders, effective from 1 December 2018, which could be found at the following link:

5 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMPOSITION - Minutes 134.5, 134.6, 135.4 & 141.3, refer

5.1 The Committee considered amendments to its Terms of Reference and Composition, including a name change from Student Educational Experience Committee (SEEC) to Education and Student Experience Committee (ESEC).

5.2 The Committee noted that a small subgroup of Members had met and agreed on the recommended changes, which were intended to better reflect the strand of the University’s Strategic Plan 2020-2025 that the Committee was responsible for. For example, some of the language had been updated and monitoring of student experience at collaborative partners enhanced. The Committee’s links with the School Academic Committees had also been strengthened and a clear and formal line of communication between the two established.

5.3 In respect of the Committee’s composition, a new formal role of Vice-Chair was proposed. Representation of research students was maintained.

5.4 The Committee resolved that changes to its Terms of Reference and Composition would be recommended to the Academic Board for approval.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 6, refers.)

6 MEMBERSHIP

The Committee noted vacancies and changes in its membership.

(Agenda Paper 7, refers.)

7 MINUTES - 7 JULY 2020

The Committee confirmed the Minutes of 7 July 2020 as an accurate record of the business conducted.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 8, refers.)

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

8 SCHEDULE OF ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

8.1 The Committee received the current schedule of actions arising from the Minutes.

8.2 The Committee noted that the action related to Minute 145.5.2, 7 July 2020, in respect of reviewing the wording of the requirement, within the BAME Institutional Action Plan, for individuals to ensure that every contact with students was a positive one, had been completed.

8.3 All other actions due were being dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 9, refers.)

9 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no other matters arising from the Minutes not taken elsewhere on the agenda.

ESEC ACTION PLAN

10 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

10.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Chair in respect of the ESEC Action Plan.
10.2 The Committee noted that the ESEC Action Plan was based on the Education and Student Experience strand of the Strategic Plan and would inform the Committee’s agenda going forward.

10.3 The Plan was currently in draft form and would be circulated to Members electronically after the meeting for comment.

11 **SPMG - SCHEDULE OF REPORTS AND MONITORING OF INTERNAL METRICS**

_Minute 11 is confidential and available to Members and Officers in Attendance only._

12 **PROGRAMME SPECIFICATIONS PROJECT**

12.1 The Committee _received_ an oral report from the Director of Academic Quality Assurance, Professor Frank Haddleton, and the Director of Learning and Teaching, Karen Barton, on the Programme Specifications Project.

12.2 The Committee noted that the Project had been approved in 2018, however it had been delayed due to the Covid-19 lockdown. The University had decided to tender externally for a software system which would result in a database for programme specifications, including Definitive Module Documents (DMDs), and better integration with Canvas.

12.4 It was further noted that the Project presented an opportunity to review both programme specifications and DMDs and design them more flexibly, consistently and concisely. It was also an opportunity to identify best practice when describing modules.

12.5 The next step in the project was identifying timescales and producing a project plan.

**CONTINUATION RATES - Minute 139.4.2, refers**

13 **HERTFORDSHIRE BUSINESS SCHOOL**

The Committee _received_ a report from the Associate Dean of Hertfordshire Business School (Learning and Teaching), Karen Robins, on actions currently being taken to improve continuation rates.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 14, refers.)

14 **SCHOOL OF PHYSICS, ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE**

The Committee _received_ a report from the Associate Dean of School of Physics, Engineering and Computer Science (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience), Dr Stephen Kane, on actions currently being taken to improve continuation rates.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 15, refers.)

15 **SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS**

The Committee _received_ a report from the Associate Dean of School of Creative Arts (Learning and Teaching), Dr Ivan Phillips, on actions currently being taken to improve continuation rates.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 16, refers.)

16 **SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

The Committee _received_ a report from the Associate Dean of School of Education (Learning and Teaching), Rosemary Allen, on actions currently being taken to improve continuation rates.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 17, refers.)
17 SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK

The Committee received a report from the Associate Dean of School of Health and Social Work (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience), Dr Karen Atkinson, on actions currently being taken to improve continuation rates.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 18, refers.)

18 SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

The Committee received a report from the Associate Dean of School of Humanities (Learning and Teaching), Dr Andrew Maunder, on actions currently being taken to improve continuation rates.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 19, refers.)

19 HERTFORDSHIRE LAW SCHOOL

The Committee received a report from the Associate Dean of Hertfordshire Law School (Learning and Teaching), Neal Geach, on actions currently being taken to improve continuation rates.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 20, refers.)

20 SCHOOL OF LIFE AND MEDICAL SCIENCES

The Committee received a report from the Associate Dean of School of Life and Medical Sciences (Education), Dr Phil Porter, on actions currently being taken to improve continuation rates.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 21, refers.)

NEW ITEMS OF BUSINESS

21 REPORT ON THE GLJ DEVELOPMENT MODULE

21.1 The Committee received a report from the Director of Learning and Teaching, Karen Barton, on the Guided Learner Journey (GLJ) Development Module.

21.2 The Committee noted that there were good rates of staff engagement with the GLJ Development Module.

21.3 The report also outlined plans for continuing support workshop sessions for early 2020/21.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 22, refers.)

WORKING GROUPS AND SUBCOMMITTEES

22 BAME STUDENT SUCCESS WORKING GROUP

22.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Deputy Director of Learning and Teaching, Professor Helen Barefoot, on the work of the BAME Student Success Working Group.

22.2 The Committee noted that the BAME Institutional Action Plan had been approved by the Academic Board at its June meeting and launched at an online event on 10 September 2020. Attendance to the launch event had been in excess of 200 participants.

22.3 The Plan could be accessed on HertsHub at the following link: https://herts365.sharepoint.com/sites/Equality-support-for-staff/SitePages/Working-together-to-improve-race-equality.aspx
22.4 It was also noted that an institutional commitment had been made to ensure that every individual would have an equality objective relating to race in their appraisal. This was linked to the section of the Action Plan related to actions by individuals.

23 DATA FOR LEARNING WORKING GROUP

23.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Director of Learning and Teaching, and Chair of the Data for Learning Working Group, Karen Barton, on the activities of this Group.

23.2 The Committee noted that the dashboard had been released to all the programme teams who had requested it. The personal tutoring resource had been put together and made available to Programme Leaders. Others needing access to the dashboard were encouraged to request it.

23.3 It was further noted that the continuation or otherwise of this Working Group would be discussed outside the meeting and any proposals brought to a future meeting.

24 SHAPE OF THE YEAR WORKING GROUP

24.1 The Committee received the final report of the Shape of the Year Working Group from the Director of Academic Quality Assurance and Chair of the Working Group, Professor Frank Haddleton.

24.2 The Committee noted that the Group’s recommendations had been favourably received by the Vice-Chancellor’s Executive (VCE) and the Chief’s Executive Group (CEG).

24.3 The Committee also noted that a recommendation to hold Graduation Ceremonies in July was still being assessed for feasibility.

24.4 The Group’s recommendations applied to the standard academic year; however, some programmes would need exceptions to the proposed schedule. The Committee was reassured that this was acknowledged and accepted.

24.5 The Committee resolved that the Shape of the Year Working Group’s recommendations be recommended to the Academic Board for approval at its November meeting.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 25, refers.)

STUDENT VOICE

25 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS) RESULTS 2020

25.1 The Committee received a report from the Deputy Director of Academic Quality Assurance, Catherine Rendell, on the NSS results 2020.

25.2 The Committee noted that the NSS future was uncertain, however, the Office for Students had confirmed that it would run in 2021.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 26, refers.)

26 PROGRAMME LEVEL RESPONSE TO NSS RESULTS 2020

26.1 The Committee received a report from the Deputy Director of Academic Quality Assurance, Catherine Rendell, on the Programme level response to the NSS results 2020.

26.2 The report set out how support and action planning would be taken forward in 2020/21 to help programmes improve the student experience.

26.3 The Committee noted that early action plans on NSS results were an innovation this year. A SharePoint site had been set up so senior teams in Schools, the Learning and Teaching Innovation Centre (LTIC) and others could review the action plans jointly and comment.
26.4 The Committee also noted that this year some Programmes had been identified for priority action based on their ‘contribution factor’ in terms of the impact on the University’s overall NSS results.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 27, refers.)

27 POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT EXPERIENCE SURVEY (PTES) 2020

27.1 The Committee received a report from the Deputy Director of Academic Quality Experience, Catherine Rendell, on the PTES 2020 results.

27.2 The Committee noted that the survey was carried out during the Covid-19 lockdown and, as expected, this had affected both response rates and results. Data gathered at subject level was, however, still useful.

27.3 It was also noted that Schools had been asked to put forward an action plan to improve areas where they had received lower PTES scores. These plans would be reviewed in the new SharePoint site in the same manner as action plans for NSS results.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 28, refers.)

HERTFORDSHIRE STUDENTS’ UNION

28 COVID RESEARCH REPORT

28.1 The Committee received a report from the Hertfordshire Students’ Union (HSU) Student Voice Manager, Steve Owen.

28.2 The report had been carried out by HSU to assess the student experience during COVID-19, and the impact the pandemic had had on students’ education and wellbeing.

28.3 The Committee noted the key findings and recommendations as set out in the report.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 29.1, refers.)

29 PRIORITY CAMPAIGN

29.1 The Committee received a presentation from the HSU’s Vice-President Community, Kayleigh Malone, and Vice-President Education, Saad Raees, on the six strands that the HSU team would be working on as a priority during 2020-2021.

29.2 The Committee noted that the Chair sat on the HSU Board and she would be working together with HSU on implementing their Priority Campaign.

(Confidential Tabled Agenda Paper 29.2, refers.)

STANDING REPORTS

30 ITEMS OF REPORT FROM THE LEARNING AND TEACHING INNOVATION CENTRE

30.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Director of Learning and Teaching, Karen Barton, on the activities of the Learning and Teaching Innovation Centre (LTIC).

30.2 The Committee noted that the LTIC was working on a new Student Engagement Policy to replace the Student Attendance Policy. Although required for Tier 4 compliance, it would apply to all students and would draw on key data from the Data for Learning Dashboard to flag ‘non-engagement’.
31 ITEMS OF REPORT FROM WIDENING ACCESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

31.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Director of Learning and Teaching, Karen Barton, on Widening Access and Student Success (WASS).

31.2 The Committee noted that Dr Julie Vuolo had been appointed as the new Deputy Head of WASS and would take up her role from 26 October 2020.

32 ITEMS OF REPORT FROM STUDENT WELLBEING

32.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Dean of Students, Geri Ward, on Student Wellbeing.

32.2 The Committee noted Mental Health and Counselling had now come together under Chaitanya Pankhania’s headship. The services provided would be reviewed this year and input sought from students and staff.

32.3 A crisis service was on operation via phone number 5555. Appropriate staff were on-call should a member of staff or students need their services due to a mental health crisis.

32.4 A new ‘Support to Study’ UPR (UPR EQ11) had supported 100 students over the summer through return to study.

32.5 The Committee further noted that students were using the report and support services very well this academic year and was allowing the Team to provide support quickly. Report and Support could be found in the University website at the following link:

https://www.herts.ac.uk/life/support-and-wellbeing/report-and-support

33 ITEMS OF REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY AND COMPUTING SERVICES

33.1 The Committee received a report from the Head of Library and Academic Support Services, Beth Adams, on the reopening of Learning Resource Centres (LRCs).

33.2 The Committee noted that LRCs had reopened on Monday 21 September 2020 for independent study for University students and staff only.

33.3 Early experience was of low occupancy (50-80 students in a space for 350 in each LRC). Book borrowing was 20% of the usual level.

(Congfidential Agenda Paper 33, refers.)

COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

34 UK COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

34.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Head of UK Partnerships, Scott Isaacs.

34.2 The Committee noted that extensive support from UH Schools and wider UH business support areas had been acknowledged by UK partners.

34.3 Partners reported being in receipt of excellent ongoing communication and high levels of support and guidance from the University throughout the pandemic, which had helped manage student learning experience and supported partners with preparations for 2020/21.

Minute 34.4 is confidential and available to Members and Officers in Attendance only.
OTHER BUSINESS

35 MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCHOOL ACADEMIC COMMITTEES
There were no matters referred from School Academic Committees.

36 MATTERS TO BE REFERRED TO SCHOOL ACADEMIC COMMITTEES
There were no matters to be referred to School Academic Committees not mentioned elsewhere during the meeting.

37 DATE FOR RELEASE OF THE SEEC COMMUNIQUE
The Committee noted that the Chair would work with the Internal Communications Manager, Shelby Loasby, to produce a summary of the Minutes for dissemination.

38 CLERK’S REPORT
Agenda Paper 38 and Minutes 39-40, refer.

39 WORKING GROUPS AND SUB-COMMITTEES 2020-2021
39.1 The Committee noted that there were no Sub-Committees currently established by the Committee.
39.2 The Committee also noted the following Working Groups and support groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working Groups and support groups</th>
<th>Chair/Convenor</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Student Success Working Group</td>
<td>Professor Helen Barefoot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data for Learning (Learning Analytics) Working Group</td>
<td>Karen Barton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape of the Year Working Group</td>
<td>Professor Frank Haddleton</td>
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40 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2020-2021
All meetings were scheduled to be held at 09:30 hours via Microsoft Teams unless advised otherwise, in which case the meeting would be held in the Central Committee Room:

Tuesday 24 November 2020
Tuesday 19 January 2021
Tuesday 2 March 2021
Tuesday 18 May 2021
Tuesday 29 June 2021.

41 PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT
There were no matters for referral to the Learning and Organisational Development Facilitation and Support Team Manager, Jill Lees, concerning matters relating to People Development.

42 RISK
There were no risks inherent in the matters dealt with by the Committee during the meeting that were not discussed when the item concerned was taken.
EMERGENCY BUSINESS

43 SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORTING PROCESS TO SEEC AND ASAC FOR 2020/21

The Committee noted the Annual School Report on Education and Student Experience 2020/21 reporting cycle.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 41.1, refers.)

44 START OF TERM EXPERIENCE

44.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Chair.

44.2 The Committee noted that a Start of Term Experience Review Group would be looking at this year’s start of term experience with a view to bringing back recommendations for the Committee’s consideration.

45 ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Minute 30.2, refers.

46 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Student Educational Experience Committee would be held on Tuesday, 24 November 2020 from 09:30 hours via MS Teams.

Items for the Agenda should be notified to the Clerk, Leire Caselles-Vallejo (‘e’-mail l.caselles-vallejo@herts.ac.uk) by 3 November 2020 and reports submitted by 10 November 2020.