UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

EDUCATION AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Education and Student Experience Committee held on 8 March 2022.

PRESENT: Dr Mairi Watson (Chair)

Karen Barton  Neal Geach  Geri Ward
Rhiannon Ellis  Dr Phil Porter  Sharleni Inbanathan
Dr Ivan Phillips  Dr Stephen Kane  Anna Levett
Rosemary Allen  Professor Helen Barefoot  Laide Bissessor
Dr Karen Atkinson  Professor Frank Haddleton  Scott Isaacs
Karen Robins  Catherine Rendell  Associate Professor Sarah Flynn
Dr Andrew Maunder  Julie Kelly

IN ATTENDANCE:

Syeda Zara Haram  Lisa Uttley  Bethan Adams
Dr Julie Vuolo  Stephen Owen  Mohammed Ilyas
Leire Caselles Vallejo

APOLOGIES:

Katie Morton  Brian Jukes  Muhammed Saad Raees
Dr Susan Grey  Dr Ciara Meehan  Maria Banks

NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY

There were no new declarations of interest.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Committee noted that Ellen Grace, Student Success Manager, would be in attendance as an observer.

MEMBERSHIP

102.1 Category 3: President of the Students’ Union or one (1) elected officer nominated by the Trustees of the University of Hertfordshire Students’ Union (or named alternate)

The Committee noted that this would be Zara Haram’s last meeting following her appointment as University staff member in Academic Registry. The Committee thanked Zara Haram for her contribution and wished her well in her new role.

103.2 Category 4: A student nominated by the Students’ Union

The Committee noted that Katie Morton would be completing her studies at the University shortly and she would cease to be a member.

103.3 Category 17: Head of Careers, Employment and Enterprise

The Committee noted that Anna Levett had now been confirmed as Head of Careers, Employment and Enterprise. This would be reflected in the Committee’s membership list effective immediately.

(Agenda Paper 4, refers.)
The Minutes of the meeting of 18 January 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record of the business conducted.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 5, refers.)

The Committee received a schedule of actions arising from previous meetings.

The Committee noted that all actions due would be discussed elsewhere on the agenda.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 6, refers.)

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

The Committee received an oral report from the Chair on the ongoing Office for Students (OfS) consultations, the Augar review, senior staff changes and the review of Peer Observation.

OFS consultations

The OfS consultations in connection with the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) were of particular interest to the Committee. The proposals contained a substantive amount of change, including the introduction of three key measures as evidence for the student outcomes aspect: continuation, progression and completion.

(CLERK’S NOTE: The TEF consultation document can be accessed at the following link: https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/42846a2c-aa90-40a7-9a0c-f207dab59da/consultation-on-the-tef.pdf)

There would likely be a greater emphasis on the institutional narrative, which would be focused on educational gain. Each institution would be defining their own version of this. The University’s central pillar would be ‘community’, since there was good evidence of this in the National Student Survey results.

The proposed changes to the TEF contemplated the retention of the existing gold, silver, bronze rating categories. There were concerns that, whilst the metrics the institutions would be assessed against would change, the rating categories would remain the same, thus potentially giving way to an unhelpful narrative of loss of status. In addition, there was an additional possible outcome of ‘requires improvement’, in which case an institution would not be awarded a TEF rating.

Also of concern were the tight deadlines associated with the TEF consultation. The outcome of the consultation was expected in July 2022, with the submission window opening in early September 2022, followed by a TEF submission deadline only a few weeks later in mid-November 2022.

The Committee also noted the OfS consultations on quality and standards, known as the B conditions, including the current consultation on condition B3. The resulting conditions of registration would effectively replace the Quality Code and have significant impact on processes.
The Committee also noted that the government had announced the next steps following the outcome of the Augar Review. There would be significant changes in the higher education sector regarding foundations programmes, the way loans would be handled, lifelong entitlements, entry criteria, etc.

**Senior staff changes**

106.8 The Committee noted the appointment of Professor Julie Newlan as Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor following the departure of Professor Matthew Weait to the University of Oxford.

106.9 Jo Stuart, former Director of Marketing and Communications, would take over Professor Julie Newlan’s responsibilities as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business and International Development) in the new role of Strategic Lead for Business, International, Marketing and Recruitment until the end of June 2023.

**Review of Peer Observation of Teaching (UPR HR11)**

106.10 Volunteers were required for a working party aiming to formulate recommendations for a revised approach to peer observation of teaching and faster impact on programme performance. Associate Professor Sarah Flynn, Karen Robbins, Rosemary Allen, Dr Ivan Phillips, Dr Karen Atkinson and Professor Helen Barefoot expressed their interest in volunteering. The Working Party would include representation from Human Resources.

106.11 The Committee agreed that a situation report on the review of Peer Observation of Teaching (UPR HR11) would be brought to the May 2022 meeting to ascertain whether changes to the relevant UPR where feasible for September 2022.

**War in Ukraine**

106.12 The Committee noted that, in light of recent events in Ukraine, relevant University colleagues would be meeting in the afternoon to re-evaluate the University’s partnerships with Russian institutions.

**HERTS LEARNING UPDATE**

107.1 The Committee received a presentation from the Director of the Learning and Teaching Innovation Centre, Karen Barton, on the Herts Learning project.

107.2 The presentation showed how the Herts Learning Principles aligned with the original strategic objectives. The Principles would be embedded in learning and teaching policy, which, in turn, would drive the periodic review and validation of programmes and had informed the development of a new Definitive Module Document (DMD) that was part of the new Curriculum Management System.

107.3 The new DMD template included a revised table of teaching activities that reflected the Principles.

107.4 The Committee noted an example of what the breakdown of activities for a full time undergraduate student could be. The breakdown would be tailored to each programme and cohort. There was no ‘one size fits all’.

107.5 The approach presented would be taken to the Chief Executive’s Away Day the following week so the impact of the Herts Learning Principles could be mapped to the following year’s budgets.

107.6 Collaborative Partners would start going through the Herts Learning process more formally in 2023-24. The Hertfordshire Colleges Consortium would be the first group of partners to go through the process. It was acknowledged that some partners may have to wait until they went through the validation process.

(Confidential Tabled Paper 9, refers.)
108 UNIVERSITIES UK - FRAMEWORK FOR PROGRAMME REVIEWS
108.1 The Committee received a report from the Director of Academic Quality Assurance, Professor Frank Haddleton, on Universities UK’s (UUK’s) framework for programme reviews.

108.2 The Committee noted that UUK’s proposal had been published in advance of the Office for Students consultation in an attempt to propose alternative means of assuring quality and standards.

108.3 UUK was proposing that universities publish statements on their websites showing how they assured themselves of the quality and standards of their provision, particularly the monitoring processes. UUK suggested a number of metrics to monitor quality and standards, some of which the University was not currently measuring.

108.4 UUK’s proposed framework had been considered by the Vice-Chancellor’s Executive (VCE), who was of the view that University should issue a statement pointing to the existing measures the University used to assure itself. A draft statement would be brought to this Committee and to the Academic Standards and Audit Committee for consideration in time for it to be published in September 2022.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 10, refers.)

109 IN-YEAR WITHDRAWAL RATES
109.1 The Committee received a report from the Academic Registrar, Julie Kelly, on the most recent withdrawal data.

109.2 The Committee noted the information contained in the report and agreed that there would be benefit in identifying (a) the number of dormant students who end up withdrawing and (b) withdrawal numbers by programme.

109.3 The Committee further noted that the Student Performance Monitoring Group (SPMG) would be developing withdrawal data reporting capability further, particularly given its rise in importance with OfS’s new B3 conditions of registration.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 11, refers.)

STUDENT VOICE
110 HSU PRIORITY CAMPAIGN
The Committee received a report from the president of the Hertfordshire Students’ Union (HSU), Rhiannon Ellis, on HSU’s priority campaign and recent activities.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 12, refers.)

111 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2022
111.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Deputy Director of Academic Quality Assurance, Catherine Rendell, on the National Student Survey (NSS).

111.2 As part of the NSS review, a pilot survey would run alongside the NSS 2022 survey between January and March 2022 for a sample of students. The pilot questions were available from the OfS website. It was interesting to note that two different forms of questioning were being piloted, one of which was not operating on the usual five-point scale.

112 POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT EXPERIENCE SURVEY 2022
112.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Deputy Director of Academic Quality Assurance, Catherine Rendell, on the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES).
The Committee noted that PTES officially opened on 21 March 2022. The University had unofficially opened the survey in February to suit some Schools’ circumstances.

Promotion of PTES needed to be at programme level, however, there would also be a centralised marketing campaign in March.

The Committee further noted the possibility of a postgraduate NSS in the future, as OfS was piloting a postgraduate experience survey this year.

**SEMEREST A STUDENT VOICE QUESTIONNAIRES - MINUTE 83.1, REFERS**

*Minute 113 is confidential and available to members and officers in attendance only.*

(Confidential Agenda Paper 15, refers.)

**STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF RESEARCH DEGREE STUDENTS**

This item would be taken at the next meeting.

**LEARNING AND TEACHING INNOVATION CENTRE**

**CANVAS EXPORTED GRADEBOOK MARKSHEET - PHASE 2, EXTENDED PILOT REVIEW**

115.1 The Committee received a report from the Director of the Learning and Teaching Innovation Centre, Karen Barton, on the Canvas Exported Gradebook Marksheet project.

115.2 The report was concerned with phase 2 of the pilot, which had explored the use of the Canvas gradebook export to return module marks to Academic Registry, and included a number of recommendations.

*Minutes 115.3 – 115.5 are confidential and available to members and officers in attendance only.*

(Confidential Agenda Paper 17, refers.)

**REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING INNOVATION CENTRE - MINUTE 80.4, REFERS**

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

116.2 The Committee noted that the next Learning and Teaching conference would take place on 7 July 2022. A call for papers had been made with a deadline of 25 March 2022 for submissions. The subject of the 2022 conference would be the postgraduate taught student experience.

**Graduate Attributes Refresh Project**

116.3 The Committee also received a report from the Associate Director of Learning and Teaching (Workplace Learning and Degree Apprenticeships), Associate Professor Sarah Flynn, on the Graduate Attributes Refresh Project.

116.4 The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 18 January 2022, amendments to UPR TL03 ‘Learning and Teaching Policy and Graduate Attributes’ had been considered and recommended for approval by Academic Board. The report submitted summarised the student feedback phase of the project and proposed the next steps towards implementation, once the new Graduate Attributes had been approved by Academic Board.
The Committee agreed that the report should accompany the submission for approval by Academic Board of the new Graduate Attributes.

(Confidential Agenda 18, refers.)

**REPORT FROM WIDENING ACCESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS**

117.1 The Committee received an insight paper from the Deputy Head of Widening Access and Student Success (WASS), Dr Julie Vuolo, on mature learners.

117.2 The Committee noted the information contained in the paper, which included information on mature learners in general, at the University in particular and how they could be supported.

117.3 WASS was hoping to produce similar insight papers on other cohorts, such as estranged students, care leavers, etc, and what it meant for staff at the University. The papers would be made available in a repository accessible through HertsHub.

117.4 Members agreed that the paper was presented in an accessible format and would be useful for programme teams to think about their student body and where flexibility or additional support may be needed. Some of the issues raised by the paper could be addressed at an institutional level, the mechanisms for which should be explored. It was important to note that the University’s Action and Participation Plan contained targets for some of these student groups.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 19, refers.)

**COLLABORATIVE PROVISION**

118 **COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS ASSURANCE GROUP AND NEW TOR FOR UKCPAG AND IAB Ops**

118.1 The Committee received a report from the Director of Academic Quality Assurance, Professor Frank Haddleton, on the new Collaborative Partnerships Assurance Group and the new Terms of Reference for the UK Collaborative Partnership Advisory Group (UKCPAG) and International Advisory Board Operational Group (IAB Ops).

118.2 The Committee noted UKCPAG and IAB Ops were existing groups that advised the Academic Development Committee about proposed UK and international partnerships and had been reviewed to ensure consistency and due diligence.

118.3 The Collaborative Partnerships Assurance Group was a new group which was yet to meet for the first time. Its first few meetings would be used to establish their mode of operation and get the membership right. The Assurance Group would provide this Committee with a better structure for monitoring the student experience at collaborative partners.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 20, refers.)

**REPORT FROM THE HEAD OF UK PARTNERSHIPS**

119.1 The Committee received a report from the Head of UK Partnerships, Scott Isaacs, on UK Partnership related matters, including the student educational experience at partner institutions and progress so far during the 2021-22 academic year.

119.2 The Committee noted the information contained in the report. Members were reassured that the recommendations within the report were being progressed satisfactorily.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 21, refers.)
STANDING REPORTS

120 REPORT FROM ACADEMIC REGISTRY

Minute 120 is confidential and available to members and officers in attendance only.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 22, refers.)

121 REPORT FROM THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

The Committee received and noted a report from the Dean of Students, Geri Ward, on the work of the Dean of Students Office in Semester A.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 23, refers.)

122 REPORT FROM LIBRARY AND COMPUTING SERVICES

122.1 The Committee received an oral report from the Head of Library and Academic Support Services, Beth Adams, on the activities of the Library and Computing Services.

122.2 The Committee noted that Monday 21- Friday 25 March 2022 would be Herts Digital Skills Week. University wide communications had been sent with details of what was available for staff to participate in.

122.3 The planned IT upgrade weekend had been completed. Despite having widely communicated the upgrade, some staff had been found working during the time the upgrade was planned.

122.4 Regarding Multifactor Authentication (MFA) for students, the Library and Computing Services team was trying to balance addressing security concerns with providing a good experience for students. MFA rollout was planned for August 2022 for all students.

GOVERNANCE

123 SUMMARY OF ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORTS

The Committee received and noted the following reports:

123.1 Items for dissemination from Annual School Reports on Academic Standards and Student Experience, 2021/22;

123.2 Evaluation of Annual School Reports on Academic Standards and Student Experience 2021/22 – Matters for the University.

(Confidential Agenda Paper 25, refers.)

124 CLERK’S REPORT

124.1 HSU’s Student Academic Satisfaction Survey – full report – Minute 82.2, refers

The Committee noted the full report of HSU’s Student Academic Satisfaction Survey.

124.2 Working Groups and Sub-Committees of ESEC 2021/22

Sub-Committees

There are no Sub-Committees currently established by the Committee.
Working Groups and support groups

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<th>Chair/Convenor</th>
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<td>Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Student Success Working</td>
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<td>Group</td>
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<td>Professor Helen Barefoot</td>
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<td>Learning Environment Strategic Governance Group</td>
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<td>Karen Barton</td>
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124.3 Schedule of meetings 2021/22

All meetings were scheduled to be held at 09:30 hours in the Central Committee Room:

Tuesday 17 May 2022
Tuesday 28 June 2022.

124.4 Schedule of meetings 2022/23

All meetings were scheduled to be held at 09:30 hours in the Central Committee Room:

Tuesday 20 September 2022
Tuesday 22 November 2022
Tuesday 17 January 2023
Tuesday 7 March 2023
Tuesday 16 May 2023
Tuesday 27 June 2023.

125 PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

There were no matters identified for referral to the Learning and Organisational Development Facilitation and Support Team Manager, Jill Lees.

126 RISK

Minute 126 is confidential and available to members and officers in attendance only.

127 EMERGENCY BUSINESS

There was no emergency business.

128 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Education and Student Experience Committee would be held on Tuesday, 17 May 2022 from 09:30 hours in the Central Committee Room, MacLaurin Building and 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 26 April 2022 and reports submitted by 3 May 2022.