

Present:

- Jules Singh (Education Officer) [JS]
- Danielle Murinas (Postgraduate Officer) [DM]
- Wei-Lun Chen (International Officer) [WLC]
- Aaminah Saleem (Student Member) [AS]
- Ana Matei (Student Member) [AM]
- Umayr Latif (Student Member) [UL]
- Alexandra Stanier (LES College Rep) [ASt]
- Luke Russell (CoSS College Rep) [LR]
- Daisy de Labilliere (Student Member) [DdL]
- Sadia Yuusuf (Commuter Student Rep) [SY]
- Adam Sheridan (Director of Engagement) [ASh]
- Amelia McLoughlan (Representation Coordinator) [AMc]
- Deborah Longworth (Interim Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education.) [DL]

Apologies:

- None.

Trigger Warnings:

Item No.	Item Title	Meeting Notes	Actions
Start			
1	Welcome & Introductions	JS led the introductions with committee members.	<i>Meeting meets the quorum of 7.</i>

2	Speaker Space	<p>DL introduced themselves by informing the committee on her experience leading up to the role over the last year and her focus on student feedback. Some main concerns have been that students felt that the university did not support them in their mental health and wellbeing particularly but also very much around the sort of areas of academic support. It was noted that there is a 50/50 split in the feedback often in the very same areas and programmes saying the opposite, which his highlighted discrepancy.</p> <p>DL also highlighted the University Communications framework that started around this time last year, but it was really only coming to fruition last semester and include the time to talk campaign, and the UoBe Ready campaign.</p> <p>In response to the volume of student enquires, the University has increased staff and invested in</p>	
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		<p>UoBe Heard, which is the 24 hour 365 days of the year wellbeing helpline.</p> <p>One of the biggest things DL raised is the need to address student anxiety around assessment and feedback. The University is launching an educational enhancement fund project, which is focused on student experience and assessment - focus groups with students in different at different levels in different colleges, asking them about their experience of assessment. To monitor satisfaction, in addition to the NSS survey, the University is going to run a new undergraduate survey called UKES, UK engagement survey and initiate phase two of the student experience plan.</p> <p>LR suggested a checklist for feedback, potentially a front sheet with the rubric and what the students concerns were that staff could answer with what went well,</p>	
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		<p>what they need to improve and maybe just more comments.</p> <p>DL noted that this one is interesting things around inconsistencies as well. The University tried to address this with university wide approaches, but they don't always work because of different disciplines. Previous, we have tried a kind of three part structure, where staff were asked to say three things that the student had done well, three things that could have been improved, and three things to take forward for the next essay. But many students said they didn't find that valuable.</p> <p>LR asked if there would be any way of moderating assessment feedback more specifically to lectures.</p> <p>DL answered that a process is in place - there is an emphasis on schools to monitor more closely as to whether the processes are working.</p>	
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		<p>JS asked the committee is there were any more questions.</p> <p>AS raised the exam of exams and whether the University has a contingency plan for if/when student test positive for COVID, and if so, how that this plan can be communicated to students.</p> <p>DL replied that there is a contingency plan that's kicked in with both EPS and MDS. There are a whole suite of assessments across the university, some are always online. They're not online exams. What are traditionally closed book exams, typically in engineering, physical sciences, and some accountancy as well, and more mathematical test where there are concerns around academic integrity. An online exam backup is in place, should there be COVID restrictions but the University may review this further down the line.</p>	
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		<p>JS asked if there were any more questions.</p> <p>DL added that the University are looking to what the future of online proctoring and academic integrity might be for exams. At the moment, institutions across the country, in particular mathematically based subjects, are very much returning to closed book as the norm with online backup only if needed.</p> <p>LR asked if the backup is in case someone tests positive for COVID during the exam time.</p> <p>DL answered that the university has a system if someone breaks their leg in the morning or is unwell during the exam period. The normal process would kick in for those students complete those assessments in the supplementary period.</p> <p>JS noted EPS were considering an additional supplementary period</p>	
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		before the assessments switched to online delivery.	
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3	<p>Minutes & Action Log</p>	<p>JS sought approval of the minutes from the previous meeting. Committee reached immediate consensus without queries or amendments.</p> <p>JS went through the action log:</p> <p>Rep Fund and the Beliefs and Commitments are set as agenda items.</p> <p>Idea Submission: Mock Exams.</p> <p>JS were under the assumption that this was specific to EPS and has raised this with the Deputy Director of Education within EPS, who did commit to mock exams in person. However, in-person exams didn't go ahead. This could be reconsidered that for the summer exam period, with the likelihood of in-person exams. JS will continue to get that assurance that this will happen. This will also be a potential issue for MDS due to the prevalence of in-person exams.</p>	<p>Minutes Approved.</p> <p>Education Officer to continue to get assurances of mock exams for all in-person exams previous to the</p>
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		<p>LR noted that this should be where students have in-person exams, rather than limiting it to two colleges.</p> <p>Idea Submission: Universal Assessment.</p> <p>JS notes that DL touched on this in the previous item and disagrees with the argument that there are pedagogical reasons where you couldn't have online exams for certain subjects. There is a conflict in the University's messaging on this, as the online exams have either worked or they haven't. If it has worked then, they should probably continue them if students are receptive. Further research is needed and there might be an opportunity to explore that in a bit more detail in this assessment and feedback project, cited by DL.</p> <p>DM noted that the idea may be limited by external factors such as teaching requirements and accreditation processes in place, that the university has very little</p>	<p>summer exam period.</p> <p>Education Officer to explore the potential for addressing this through the University's Assessment and Feedback project.</p>
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		<p>control over. DM also noted that as DL mentioned academic integrity, any implementation of this would need significant work on online academic integrity and the provision of extra support, so that people are aware when they are passing the boundaries into collusion and cheating.</p> <p>JS raised concern about the academic integrity project that the university are undergoing, because there's some consideration into adopting the approach that other universities have done with online exams, which includes screen monitoring, and potentially eye tracker software, for when you're doing your online exams, to prevent cheating and collusion. While it's not that too dissimilar to what would happen in person with invigilators, to sure that everyone's operating under exam conditions, it has the potential to go too far.</p>	
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		<p>LR noted that if you're at home completing an exam, that's your own space.</p> <p>DM highlighted that most people have several devices and you could only reliably track the one screen.</p> <p>ASt added, for example students having an iPad on a zoom call and then having your laptop open next to it.</p> <p>DM agreed and questioned effectiveness of tracking software in these cases.</p> <p>LR noted that if people don't like something, they will find a workaround.</p> <p>ASt agreed saying that some people will avoid [the tracking] and that there will always be cheating.</p> <p>JS raised that this is the other half of the project; trying to show people that there are consequences for</p>	
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		<p>cheating in these exams, you will get caught. Noting that the Officers to sit on misconduct committees all the time, where we see students that didn't think they were going to be caught colluding or cheating. We want to do as much as we can to stop people getting to that point and will look into how further to raise awareness.</p> <p>AMc noted that the committee may wish to look at the wording as in its current form this may present barriers to implementation.</p> <p>JS questions whether to alter it within the committee.</p> <p>AMc noted that the idea submitter would need to be consulted.</p> <p>JS suggests that a sentence including accreditation would need to be added. Also, further student consultation would need to be sought to confirm that students formally with in-person exams were</p>	<p>Education Officer to look into further awareness raising</p> <p>Idea Submitter to be consulted on wording</p>
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		<p>happy with them being moved online.</p> <p>AMc asked committee members from colleges affected [MDS] if they have anything to add.</p> <p>SY added if the exams were held online, with eye tracking devices, there a potential for it to be inaccurate and questioned the accuracy of the software. For example, if a student was daydreaming/looking into the distance.</p> <p>JS agreed that it definitely can't be a rushed decision. It needs to be looked into and they will reach out to some education officers from different unions to see if it's worked at other institutions.</p> <p>Speaker Space</p> <p>JS noted that this had been actioned and asked the committee if this is something to continue in future meetings, i.e. members of the</p>	<p>Education Officer to look into online exam tracking at other HEIs</p> <p>Education Officer to seek speaker for next meeting.</p>
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		<p>University Senior Education Team. Committee had no objections.</p> <p>Study Spaces</p> <p>JS stated that availability for additional zoom spaces within the guild is resolved. The Zoom Zone is located in the Amos Room 9am to 5pm. However, this may need some further promotion, considering the piano and that there needs to be a balance so it remains fairly quiet.</p> <p>WC asked someone is playing piano and someone wants to use the Amos Room, is the priority for it to be a zoom zone.</p> <p>JS stated that they would speak to room booking and see if they could move the piano or otherwise resolve the conflict.</p> <p>ASt asked if the room was lockable as a potential method of accessing the room during the zoom zone period.</p>	<p>Education Officer to speak to Room Booking about the piano in Amos</p>
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		<p>JS noted that the difficulty is that the zoom zone is multiple occupancy.</p> <p>SY asked the capacity of the zoom zone/Amos Room.</p> <p>ASh noted that the seated capacity was unknown [on the spot] but suggested that JS take the issue to space group. It is a group of officer and staff, focused on the room usage of The Guild, and that would tie into all the other bookings. It is important to balance it as show season is coming up after Easter.</p> <p>AS noted that more promotion is needed.</p> <p>JS agreed and stated this needed more exploration as the communications team will be busy with elections but this could be communicated through the colleges as an alternative, and informing reception staff.</p>	
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		<p>DM also suggested contacting library services to promote the space.</p> <p>JS noted that library services have a zoom space and asked if the committee were aware of this. The committee was not aware.</p> <p>LR suggested putting up posters with the information so students don't need to go to reception.</p> <p>SY suggested emphasising the room on Guild and University social media as many students follow those accounts.</p> <p>Meeting Scheduling JS and AMc asked the committee if the doodle poll was a helpful process for scheduling meetings. Committee agreed.</p>	<p>Education Officer to investigate the promotion of Zoom spaces</p> <p>Doodle polls to continue for meeting scheduling</p>
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<p>4</p>	<p>Officers Updates</p>	<p>JS noted that most of their updates have been discussed previously but is open to any questions. The campaign from STARS to try and get the amount of scholarships provided to student refugees up from one per year to five per year was briefly discussed.</p> <p>ASt asked if this was for undergraduate or postgraduate students.</p> <p>JS replied that while it was originally for undergraduates, due to the competitive nature of applications, however, given the difficulty of obtaining refugee status, postgraduate applications are being accepted.</p> <p>DM noted the ongoing work on the disabled students' commission and raising the issues at postgraduate committees and collaborating with the Activities and Employability Officer and Disabled Students' Officer. Also, various discussions</p>	
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		<p>about the employability and with careers network have been held to ensure actions have been completed. DM has also been involved in the appointment of the new director of postgraduate taught students and working with JS on academic integrity.</p> <p>WC noted that the main update on international students is on the agenda, but that international students can apply to study online.</p> <p>JS raised that WC ran a very successful and popular One World Festival.</p>	
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5	Rep Fund	<p>JS outlined the aspects of this item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding criteria - Discussion of the process going forward - A summary of the latest applications. <p>JS noted that the committee had agreed that a subcommittee was probably the best way forward at the last meeting.</p> <p>AMc raised that the Terms of Reference draft discussed at the last meeting needs to be approved. Also noted that the subcommittee has almost full membership, with one open place specifically for a College Rep member of the committee. The subcommittee can still go forward, and any College Reps wanting to volunteer can join.</p> <p>JS asked the committee if there were any objections, else the committee will move to a collective view to continue with the subcommittee as outlined in the Terms of Reference.</p>	
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		<p>AMc raised that before voting the committee needs to consider defining the process in applications that require quick turnaround. At the last meeting, an email circulation was suggested in the first instance, unless it was a complex case. If the email circulation can't come to an agreement the subcommittee would convene an in person meeting for that and/or more complex ones. This process needs to be agreed going forward.</p> <p>JS noted that they believed a similar process was conducted by a subcommittee for emergency planning applications.</p> <p>AMc highlighted that this maybe a subcommittee of Activities committee or MDX committee.</p> <p>JS clarified the query for Ash.</p> <p>ASh explained that these committees do occasionally conduct</p>	
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		<p>business and decision making via email circulation for example over the summer – as long as quoracy can be achieved. This needs to be recorded properly, such emails are saved as evidence of the decision, in case of a challenged. Ideally though we would aim for having that discussion in the room, if possible.</p> <p>JS suggests that in the first instance the subcommittee uses email circulation. The grants requested are smaller than activities committee, and applications are often quite straightforward such as pizza provided for a student feedback session. We can figure out the membership.</p> <p>LR volunteers to fill the remaining College Rep position on the subcommittee.</p> <p>Rep Fund Applications JS read out the previously approved applications.</p>	
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		<p>JS presented the application from Creative Writing for £85 to support a Write-a-thon with themed book vouchers. 5 x £10 book vouchers plus refreshments</p> <p>Committee requested clarification.</p> <p>ASt asked how many participants were expecting, as five sounded like a lot.</p> <p>JS clarified that these were book vouchers in a prize draw and not for attending the event, noting that it seemed fitting.</p> <p>AMc noted it was innovative given the usual fund requests.</p> <p>SA noted that it did seem reasonable given that books are around £10 each and they are not asking for a lot of food.</p> <p>JS highlighted that they've said to source from an independent bookshop, or Waterstones in the</p>	
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		<p>case of a distance learner – that’s a nice touch.</p> <p>DM raised that the cost for food is generalised and they isn’t details of what food will be brought.</p> <p>JS replied assuming it's calculated but noted that in an ideal application, they would be a breakdown of what exactly they'd be spending on food. Additionally clarification was sought on numbers.</p> <p>AMc noted that numbers would be included in the summary, if it had been listed in the application.</p> <p>ASt added that they could, if sourced from Joe’s Bar get around ten pizzas for that budget.</p> <p>AMc clarified that the reimbursement process requires receipts. Therefore, a reps can claim up to their grant amount but only if it is evidence. The reps teams</p>	
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		<p>often process reimbursement that are under the grant amount.</p> <p>JS noted the overall total budget for the Rep Fund being £2,500 for academic year and therefore suggested approval given the application fit the criteria, the committee is only interested to know the specificity of food.</p> <p>Committee raised no objections.</p> <p>JS presented the application for PGT Geotechnical Engineering who have requested £100 for food at Joe's Bar that accompanies a post-it style feedback session.</p> <p>ASt noted that £100 pounds is a lot of pizza at Joe's.</p> <p>DM agreed that, while the committee assumes this is to cover pizza, £100 is a lot of money for food, and therefore suggested the committee offers a lesser grant.</p>	
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		<p>SA further agreed and noted that the application does not specify the amount or type of food.</p> <p>JS agreed and suggested a counter offer of £50.</p> <p>Committee Agreed.</p> <p>JS confirmed the grant of £50, and notes the applicant can re-submit an application to the subcommittee if they wish for more funding.</p> <p>LR raised for the applicant to include expected numbers within the application.</p> <p>AMc noted that this is a question within the Rep Fund application, but it is not always completed. This can be due to events run across cohorts and attendance numbers not being known.</p> <p>ACCESS BREAK</p>	
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6	Industrial Action	<p>JS orally presented information that UCU have announced strike dates and industrial action. This will be 14th – 18th February, 21st and 22nd February and the 28th February – 2nd March. These dates cover action in relation to two separate disputes, both the USS pensions dispute and the four fights dispute on pay and working conditions. We had the referendum last semester and the guilds subsequent position is that we would support strikes. In terms of what that looks like, it's providing rooms in the building for teach outs and a space for them to organise.</p>	
7	Disabled Students Commission		
8	Beliefs & Commitments		
9	Semester 2 Teaching		
10	AOB		

Date & Time of next meeting: