UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

STUDENT EXPERIENCE ENHANCEMENT GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held on
Thursday 7 November 2013

Present: Ms C Fyfe (Chair)
Mr J Appleyard* Mr B Athwal
Professor A Cashmore Ms J Dunne
Mr J Gillott* Mr R Greenhill*
Mr V Horjkovs* Mr T Lawson (vice Ms T Dodman)
Mr B Marshall* Dr L Matthews
Ms G Miles Miss A Navarro*
Mr M Rubin* Professor J Scott
Ms F Stone Ms C Taylor (vice Mr B Wynne)
Miss M Wu* Professor T Yeoman

* student representatives

In attendance: Ms J Chalmers (for the business recorded in 13/M27) and Mrs K Galloway (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Professor G Conole, Mr C du Couëdic de Kerérant*, Ms T Dodman, Dr R Parry, Mr B Wynne, and Mr C Gooch

13/M21 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Group considered and approved its terms of reference and membership for the 2013/14 academic year, subject to the addition of the Director of Distance Education (attached as 13/M21 App).

The Group welcomed its new members.

13/M22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Group considered the minutes of a meeting held on 7 June 2013.

The Group approved the minutes as a correct record.

Arising from 13/M13, the Group noted that the student staff partnership national conference would take place at the University on 27 November 2013. It would receive at its Spring meeting an evaluative report on the event prepared by the student staff partnership team.

13/M23 ENHANCEMENT THEMES FOR 2013/14

The Group received a paper confirming its agreed enhancement themes for the 2013/14 academic year and identifying the focus of work within these areas and their respective lead contacts (minute 13/M18 refers).

13/M24 ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK WORKING GROUP

The Group received a written report of a meeting of the Assessment and Feedback Working Group held on 24 September 2013.

The Group welcomed the work underway exploring the provision of feedback to students on examination performance. It discussed some of challenges and misconceptions involved in providing students with feedback on examination performance and noted that the aim of the work was to identify models that would be efficient, easy to operate and scalable. Heads of Department were to be contacted by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) to alert them to possibilities for providing examination feedback to students and request their departments adopt a method to trial.
13/M25 WORKING GROUP ON STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY

The Group received minutes of a meeting of the Working Group on Student Employability held on 22 October 2013.

13/M26 LECTURE CAPTURE SYSTEMS

The Group received a verbal report on progress with the lecture capture systems pilot from the Lecture Capture Project Manager.

She reported that the trial would focus on the Echo 360 system during Semester 1 whilst licensing difficulties with the Panopto system were resolved. An academic member of staff from each of the five participating departments – Chemistry, Education, Law, Mathematics and Medicine – had been recruited to participate in the trial. Training for these departmental contacts was underway and recording of their lectures was planned to commence in the week beginning 18 November 2013. Students would then be able to stream the edited recordings but downloads would not be available. Since the University would control the recordings, the creation and release of material captured would be appropriately sensitive to issues concerning copyright and consent. Staff members involved in the pilot would emphasise to students that lecture capture systems were not intended to be a substitute for attendance.

The Group noted that the aim of the trial was to build awareness of lecture capture systems and to evaluate the impact of lecture capture systems on the student experience from both student and staff perspectives. This information would then be used to inform the creation of a draft institutional policy on lecture capture. Identification of a suitable long-term supplier would be handled through a separate procurement process for which a business case was in preparation. The Group noted that there was potential for a subsequent pedagogical phase of the project to investigate ‘flipped learning’, whereby a lecture would be delivered to students via a recording and an ensuing ‘live’ teaching session would then develop its subject matter.

The Group noted that because handheld devices with the capacity to record video were now commonplace some students were already tempted to use the technology without obtaining the appropriate permissions. The Group agreed that the project was timely and that lecture capture had the potential to add a new dimension to learning and teaching.

The Group thanked the Lecture Capture Project Manager for a very encouraging report and it welcomed further news about the pilot project with interest.

13/M27 ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING SPACES

The Chair reported that with the initial phase of refurbishment work now completed work was now concentrating upon the enhancement of spaces used for IT teaching and social learning.

IT teaching spaces review

The Group received an interim written report from the IT Teaching Space Review lead outlining initial progress with the project, starting with assessments of need and developments within the College of Medicine Biological Sciences and Psychology. The Group noted that the review would concentrate upon formal teaching spaces. The Group noted that the project was currently at a very early stage but welcomed its thorough approach.

Social learning space development

The Group noted that various options for expanding the availability of social learning spaces on the University estate were under consideration. These were currently focused upon enhancement opportunities within the Charles Wilson Building and Oadby Student Village. The Director of Residential and Commercial Services reported the seating area for the Chi food outlet in the Charles Wilson Building had been identified as an ideal space for development into a social study space as had one of the residences in the Oadby student village area. The Group noted that the development of these spaces would largely be achieved by enhancements to the layout, furniture
and through branding. Since little or no structural changes would be required the expectation was that work could proceed quickly.

The Group welcomed news of these two planned developments. It noted that a Working Group was to be established to consider ideas for these spaces and alongside this IT Services would be running focus groups to inform the IT facilities planning. The Group agreed that representatives from the Student Experience Enhancement Group should form a significant part of the working group’s membership.

13/M28 STUDENT HANDBOOKS

The Group received an interim report from the Quality Office on its review of 2013/14 student handbooks.

The Group noted the specifications for the presentation of handbooks that had been introduced to unify the visual identify of the University's student handbook provision had been well-received and it welcomed news that all handbooks reviewed by the Quality Office to date had been issued in electronic form, with print copies also being available at each department’s discretion. Every handbook presented for review had incorporated standard text provided in the Guidelines on the Production of Student Handbooks but many handbook editors had also added additional detail to some of these entries. The Group heard that whilst these additions were well-intended the review had revealed that in several instances the changes had resulted in content being introduced that was confused or incorrect. Identifying and alerting the department to these instances had proved time-consuming.

The Group agreed it was essential that student handbooks were kept up-to-date as a matter of routine and any department issuing hard copies of student handbooks should reinforce to students that the authoritative text was always the current online version.

13/M29 TEACHING FUNDS APPROVALS GROUP

The Group received minutes of a meeting of the Teaching Funds Approvals Group: Fund for Teaching Enhancement Projects held on 8 October 2013.

The Group noted that the outcomes of the projects were to be published in the University’s Journal of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (JETL)

13/M30 DATES OF 2013/14 MEETINGS

The Group noted the dates of its remaining meetings in the 2013/14 academic year:
Thursday 27 February 2014 at 2.00 p.m.
Wednesday 4 June 2014 at 10.00 a.m.

Duration of meeting: One hour and 45 minutes
UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

STUDENT EXPERIENCE ENHANCEMENT GROUP

(a) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students) (Chair)
(b) One academic representative from each College (including Teaching Fellows where possible; at least one member should be drawn from a department with significant distance learning provision)
(c) The Director of the GENIE Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
(d) The Professor of Learning Innovation
(e) The Director of Distance Education
(f) The Director of the Career Development Service
(g) The Head of Student Support Services
(h) The Deputy Librarian
(i) The Director of the Academic Practice Service
(j) The Assistant Director of IT Services
(k) The Director of Residential and Commercial Services
(l) The President of the Students’ Union
(m) The Education Officer of the Students’ Union
(n) Student representatives nominated by the Students’ Union

Reports to: Academic Policy Committee
Secretariat: Quality Office, Student and Academic Services

Terms of reference:

- To take strategic steps to enhance the quality of the student experience of learning and teaching, support services, the learning environment and student facilities
- To evaluate and benchmark the student experience
- To develop and use key performance indicators orientated from the student perspective
- To identify and respond strategically to the external environment including relevant legislation and social, political and financial trends affecting students