



Minutes of Meeting

Meeting: COUNCIL/SENATE/STUDENTS' UNION COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday 20th March 2018 at 2.15pm

Venue: 4 West Boardroom

Present:	Professor Dame G Breakwell (Chair)	President & Vice-Chancellor
	Ms A Brady	Student Representative
	Mr M Cigerli	Student Representative
	Mr B Davies	President, Students' Union
	Professor P Lambert	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching)
	Professor C Mitchell	Elected by Senate
	Miss C Page	Education Officer, Students' Union
	Mr R Tyrrell	Student Representative
In Attendance:	Mr L Emery	Postgraduate Officer, Students' Union
	Dr J Harris	Director of Academic Registry
	Mr A McLaughlin	Chief Executive, Students' Union
	Mr A Payne	Director of Student Services
	Mr M Pender	Secretary
	Mr B Palmer	Community Officer, Students' Union
Apologies:	Ms A Goodman	Elected by Council
	Dr J Troyer	Elected by Senate

ACTION

1153. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2018 (Paper CSSU17/18-015) were approved as a correct record of the proceedings, subject to the following amendments:

- Minute no. 1150, final bullet point to be amended as follows:

It was reported that a working group had been set up to look at accessibility issues following ~~an audit of disabled access~~ **the internal audit of student disability provision on campus**, and it was suggested that this group needed to look at the current position in respect of the Virgil Building and also identify other wider issues that needed addressing.

- Mr W Galloway to be replaced by Mr B Palmer in the list of those attending.

1154. MATTERS ARISING

1) Min no 1147, Student Disciplinary Statistics 2016/17

As requested at the previous meeting, the Committee received a paper (Paper CSSU17/18-016) which provided details of the projects funded by the Student Experience Enhancement Fund.

It was suggested that the student voice should have an influence on how the

money in the fund was allocated, and it was agreed that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching), the Director of Student Services and the Students' Union President should discuss this matter outside the meeting.

1155. STUDENTS' UNION BUSINESS

(1) Top Ten – Doctoral Issues

The Students' Union Postgraduate Officer introduced Paper CSSU17/18-017 and provided a summary of the perceived student experience of doctoral students.

It was reported that there was concern regarding the pastoral and mental health support available to doctoral students, and it was suggested that the University should explore extra funding opportunities for Student Services to support doctoral students. It was also suggested that there was a need for a greater level of peer support for doctoral students, and it was requested that the business case for a Postgraduate Peer Support Coordinator prepared the previous year be revisited to allow for the expansion of peer mentoring for postgraduate research students.

Professor Cathryn Mitchell, Academic Director of the Doctoral College, responded that there was a great deal of ongoing activity in this area, and although the bid to HEFCE's Catalyst Fund to enhance mental health support had been unsuccessful, the Director of Student Services was taking forward the proposals set out in the bid to see if they could be resourced internally. Peer to peer mentoring, supervisor training and a confidential helpline for the Doctoral College were being looked at, and at Faculty / Department level the Associate Deans (Research) and the Director of Studies were being encouraged to be more pro-active, particularly in respect of the non-completion of progress reports.

During the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- There appeared to be a lack of awareness amongst doctoral students about the support that was available to them, and better signposting of this would hopefully result in increased take up. As PhD students were around for a long time they might require periodic reminders of the support available.
- In respect of the request for additional funding for Student Services, it was suggested that this could be too restrictive and a system wide response was required.
- In respect of the previous business case for a Postgraduate Peer Support Coordinator, Professor Mitchell was unaware of this and it was reported that this may have been unsuccessful as it had been developed in isolation and considered just as the proposals for the Doctoral College were being finalised.

After further discussion, it was agreed that Professor Mitchell should review the previous business case for a Postgraduate Peer Support Coordinator and look at the wider picture to consider what further work

was required in respect of the support provided to doctoral students.

(2) Top Ten issues – University and Local Community Relations

The Students' Union President introduced Paper CSSU17/18-018, which summarised the Students' Union view on the reputation of the University and students amongst the wider local community. It was reported that of the 114 articles which had appeared on the Bath Chronicle website during the current academic year about the University or students, 63% of them were either slightly or wholly negative in nature. Concerns had also been raised by local councillors and a motion had been passed by Bath & North East Somerset Council expressing concern regarding the negative publicity the University had received, particularly over the issue of pay inequality.

To address the above concerns the Students' Union proposed the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1:

For the University to create and embed a full strategy to engage and repair relationships with residents and stakeholders within the local community.

Recommendation 2

For the University to implement KPI's relating to the engagement of local press and residents in its communications and to create marketing content aimed at celebrating the University and demonstrating its benefit to the local community.

Recommendation 3

For the University to create mechanisms, like the LRF, to allow residents of Bath the feedback to the University and allow two-way communication between the University and residents.

Recommendation 4

For the University to consider implementing a full-time staff member whose core function is to work on targeted campaigns, activities and marketing in respect to students and resident relations.

During the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- It was recognised that Bath was a small city and having two Universities within it inevitably led to tensions, particularly in respect of student housing.
- The current SU President had been a huge asset in representing the University in the local community and had fostered effective engagement with local councillors.
- The reporting of students in the city conflated the University of Bath with Bath Spa University, and there was a need to improve the general profile of all students in the city.
- It was reported that over the years the University had made concerted

ACTION

efforts to engage with the local community but many of the same problems persisted. The negative aspects of student life were easy to see, but the more positive aspects were often not reported and unrecognised.

After further discussion, it was agreed that the Students' Union President should discuss the recommendations set out in the report with the Director of Marketing and Communication to see what could be done to improve the current situation, and whether further resources were required. There was general support for the Students' Union initiative in this respect.

AGREED that the paper (Paper CSSU17/18-018) be noted.

1156. DATES OF MEETINGS

The programme of meetings for 2017/18 was noted as being as follows:

- Tuesday 17th April 2018 at 2.15pm

The meeting concluded at 3.15pm.