



**Meeting:** COUNCIL/SENATE/STUDENTS' UNION COMMITTEE

**Date and Time:** Thursday 18 February 2021 at 2.15pm

**Venue:** Via MS Teams

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Present:

Prof I White (Chair)	Vice-Chancellor and President
Dr M Harney	Appointed by Council
Mr T Hollingsworth	Appointed by Council
Professor P Lambert	Pro-Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
Ms K Maluta	Student Representative
Mr F Masala	President, The SU - until minute 1254
Ms C Morgan	Student Representative
Ms K Robinson	Elected by Senate
Dr J Troyer	Elected by Senate
Ms A Willingham	Education Officer, The SU

In Attendance:

Mrs G Eggleston	Assistant Director of Academic Registry
Mr A Payne	Director of Student Services
Ms E Pollinger	Secretary
Mr T Sawko	Sports Officer, The SU - from minute 1256
Ms C Slack	Head of Student Voice and Engagement, The SU
Dr C Wilson	Vice President, Student Experience
Mr K Zimmerman	Chief Operating Officer

Apologies:

Mr G Barnstaple	Student Representative
Mrs J Loveys	Director of Accommodation and Hospitality Services
Ms J Medland	Project Manager (Learning, Teaching and Student Experience)
Ms R Sheer	Acting Director of Academic Registry

**1247. CHAIR'S WELCOME**

**ACTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, he noted that the SU had appointed a new Chief Executive, Nicky Passmore, and said that he very much hoped that she would be able to attend the April meeting of CSSU.

**1248. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Members confirmed that they had no conflicts of interest to declare apart from all being students, staff or Council members of the University.

**1249. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2020 (Paper CSSU20/21-019) were APPROVED as a correct record.

**1250. MATTERS ARISING**

- Minute 1243 – Student Voice Framework review

Charlie Slack updated that the review was progressing well. The key priority for Semester 2 2020/21 was a review of the academic representation system (including SSLCs). Initial activity would focus on obtaining feedback from stakeholders about the effectiveness of the current system and reviewing alternative models across the sector. By September 2021, a revised Student Academic Representation system would be in place and fit for purpose based on the feedback of the student and staff community. To achieve this, proposals would be brought to the June meeting of Senate.

**1251. STUDENT'S UNION BUSINESS**

- (1) Top Ten issue: Decolonising the curriculum

Annie Willingham presented an update on progress against the 2020/21 Top Ten issue: "Create and commit to a specific action plan for decolonising the curriculum". (Paper CSSU20/21-020). She noted that this Top Ten item responded to significant student demand and that work is underway to create a project plan with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) and the Vice-President Student Experience. This would include communicating to students about progress achieved to date as well as future work.

The Committee discussed whether the term 'decolonisation' was universally understood and noted that the Centre for Learning and Teaching was distributing materials that clarified this definition. Tim Hollingsworth, Council member, noted that this work was politically significant both in terms of anti-racism and decolonisation and could inform a wider Council work stream that was looking at how to become a more inclusive University.

The Chair welcomed the collaborative approach between students and academic staff evidenced by this project.

**Recommendation 1**

For the C/S/SU committee to discuss and note the level of progress this Top Ten issue has made.

The Committee NOTED the report.

**Recommendation 2**

For the C/S/SU committee to consider giving their support towards increased University communications regarding inclusive curriculum work.

The Committee NOTED that the project plan would include increased communications on progress achieved to date as well as future work.

**Recommendation 3**

For the C/S/SU committee to discuss any additional steps that could be taken by the committee, or Council or Senate, to encourage further specific progress in this area.

The Committee RECOMMENDED this paper to Council for its consideration. **Sec.**

**1252. PROGRESS AGAINST TOP TEN ISSUES**

The Vice-President Student Experience presented a table updating on progress against the 2020/21 Top Ten issues (Paper CSSU20/21-021). The Committee noted that this was the first year that UEB leads had been allocated to Top Ten issues and that progress had been tracked across the ten issues in regular meetings of the project group. The SU noted that this had been a helpful approach.

The Vice-President Student Experience noted that the next meeting of the Top Ten project group would be considering how to carry over work into the next academic year when ten new issues would also be chosen.

The Committee NOTED the report.

**1253. STUDENT EXPERIENCE PROJECT TEAM (SEPT)**

The Vice-President Student Experience gave an oral report that the Student Experience Project Team (SEPT) had been formed as part of the University's response to coronavirus restrictions. SEPT had oversight as to how coronavirus restrictions impact student experience and worked to mitigate this impact where possible.

The Student Experience Board (SEB) was due to have replaced the SEPT but with the announcement of the January 2021 national lockdown it was decided that SEPT should continue in its current form to consider the impact of restrictions in the remainder of the academic year 20/21 and the beginning of the academic year 21/22.

SEPT had discussed the principles for the next academic year and the vision of what the University is trying to achieve in terms of student choice and full availability of campus services even if remaining restrictions mean that in-person teaching might not fully be possible.

**1254. SUPPORT FOR YEAR ABROAD, ERASMUS AND PLACEMENT STUDENTS**

The Chair noted that Dr Nathalia Gjersoe, Chair of the Placement Resilience Task Group had provided the content for paper CSSU20/21-022 with input from Ms Lily Rumsey Director of International Relations.

The Committee considered the paper and noted the work that had taken place to support students. Annie Willingham noted that the SU had recently collated

feedback from placement students that showed they were feeling very well supported.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) noted that paper was relevant to the Top Ten issue on support for placement students that he was UEB lead for. He noted that all the work described in the paper was being undertaken by small, lean teams of staff who were doing an outstanding job.

The Committee NOTED the report.

The Chair thanked staff undertaking work to support Year Abroad, Placement and Erasmus students, and noted the positive feedback received by the SU.

#### **1255. ACCOMMODATION REBATES**

The Chair noted that the University had agreed to extend the rent rebate for university accommodation to 8 March 2021 and that the student FAQs on the University website had been updated accordingly.

The Committee NOTED paper CSSU20/21-023 which was a letter to private landlords written jointly by the two universities and their two student unions outlining the financial pressures that students are under.

#### **1256. SCENARIO PLANNING FOR SEMESTER 2 AND THE 2021/22 ACADEMIC YEAR**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) gave an oral report that the University expected further Government guidance to be announced on 22 February and that learning would continue to be delivered online until at least 8 March except for the MPharm course. Students would return when it is safe and legal to do so and the University would give staff and students at least one week's notice before recommencing campus activities.

The University had been planning for a range of scenarios prioritising cohorts and key spaces such as labs for staggered return dates. Plans had been put in place for additional labs in Science in June and catch up labs next year if necessary.

Some other universities had announced no further in-person teaching before Easter or for rest of the semester which had the advantage of giving certainty. However, the University had decided that in-person teaching should be offered if possible as this will support students both academically and in terms of wellbeing.

For the academic year 21/22 the scenarios being explored are continued social distancing, no restrictions, and another lockdown. In each case the University was looking at how to give more flexibility to departments and how to take forward lessons learned from the Bath Blend including online assessments and Live Online Interactive Learning sessions.

The Chief Operating Officer noted that the University would ensure that campus is ready for any of the scenarios and that the experience of managing campus last term was that it was safe with no recorded transmissions of the virus within in-person teaching sessions.

He noted that capacity on campus would be increased for the academic year 21/22 but that the most important priority was that rigorous planning would allow the University to move flexibly between scenarios as the situation demands.

Lead times would be compressed if the University had to respond to late guidance from government, however, space on campus could be reconfigured swiftly and the University was optimistic in its aims.

The Committee discussed the wider student experience under different scenarios and noted that SEB and SEPT were undertaking similar scenario planning.

The Chair thanked all staff involved in scenario planning and risk assessment.

#### **1257. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS**

The last meeting of the academic year was noted as Tuesday 20 April 2021 at 2.15pm.

#### **1258. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Tom Sawko presented a tabled paper from the SU showing the January data from the SU monthly Student Life Survey. He noted that 10% of the student population were asked to participate each month and that the response rate was approximately 10%.

The Committee discussed the data in response to the question "How concerned have you been about your career prospects in the last two weeks?" showing that 60% of students had responded that they were concerned or very concerned.

The Chair asked if these concerns were in response to a lack of invitations to interview. Annie Willingham noted that students were often not hearing back after submitting job applications and the perception is that the competition is very high.

The Committee noted that these concerns could reflect concerns expressed more widely in society, however, Ghislaine Dell, adviser in the Careers Service had expressed optimism about the career prospects and success rates of University of Bath graduates.

The Committee NOTED the report.

The Chair noted that nominations for SU officer elections were open and that the results of the elections would be announced on Friday 5 March 2021.

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The meeting concluded at 3.37 pm

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