

Minutes of Academic Council

Held at 4:15pm on Monday 02 February 2014 at University House, Meeting Room 1

Date of meeting	13/11/14	09/12/14	02/02/15
Attendance	92 Attendees 66 Apologies	52 Attendees 48 Apologies	82 Attendees 43 Apologies

1 Apologies

Please ask ERC for apologies

2 Welcome

Welcome from VPE

3 Approval of minutes

Minutes approved

4 Approval of actions

HUU is investigating engaging with students on resit times. However, VPE noted that resit results will from this year be released two weeks earlier.

5 Course Rep Investigate

This section of the meeting Council split into three groups that rotated discussions on several topics; Communications (what is considered a 'timely' response?), Changing the University lecture start times (from quarter past to on-the-hour) and Changing examination times (from half past to on-the-hour).

i) Communications

Psychology and Law were noted several times by representatives for their communications – their text messaging about the cancellation of lectures was highlighted as best practice.

Each group raised that the cancellation of lectures (where possible) should be sent an hour before the lecture via text message, support by Facebook posts and an email.

The use of social media was noted to be used for "fun" engagement with students as well as to back up messages sent out via email.

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Regarding emergencies the consensus amongst each group was that if an email marked as 'Urgent' by a student relating to something that could affect mitigating circumstances.

There was a suggestion that there be a generic emergency email address (i.e. urgent.psychology@hull.ac.uk) this email address would have an automatic response such as "Your email has been received, if you assistance in completing a mitigating circumstances, please see the Advice Centre located on the third floor of University. Your email will be responded to within a 48 hour window (unless sent over a weekend, where your email will be dealt with 48 hours from the Monday proceeding the Friday." The reason for the automatic response is so that students know that their email has been received as well as providing information regarding Welfare.

Further HUU suggests that there are also to be requirements of students to add in 'Read receipts' this in turn allows them to have peace of mind that their email has been read/actioned. One group also believed that when emailing a personal supervisor there should be a 'timely' response of 72 hours.

When messages are sent from eBridge and then an email it leads to contradicting messages, this should be avoided.

It was noted that there was one part-time lecturer that doesn't have an email address within HUBS.

Exam information within HUBS was highlighted as an area for improvement.

One student noted that they are a Postgraduate that are on all the History modules but are not on the Postgraduate page of eBridge.

Some departments highlight when students will receive a response i.e. office working hours – this was noted most in the Faculty of Education.

Psychology under use their Twitter account. It was also raised that Psychology had their own policy for communication.

Forum emails from eBridge were seen as too much.

Languages students receive several duplicate emails from the department due to being on courses that span several smaller subject areas.

ii) Quarter past or on the hour lectures

51 Course Reps wanted it to remain at quarter past
26 Course Reps wanted it to become on the hour

Course Reps asked the question "Is there an implementation plan if this were to go ahead?"

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Arguments raised for quarter past

- Quarter past means that there is some leeway in getting to University than on the hour
- Childcare concerns, additional fifteen minutes allows students the ability to get to University
- Affects of changing the time means transport and bus timetables will need to change
- There are also other learning environments that take longer to get to, removing those fifteen minutes could hinder getting to those locations

Arguments raised for on the hour

- Easier to remember
- Has a working world application
- HYMS is already working on the hour
- Sports Teams and Societies activity

iii) Exam times

- Taking two buses means that it can be a problem getting to an earlier exam
- Is it possible to swap two hour and three hour slots, three hours in the afternoon
- Can't be contacted by schools in the afternoon if starting later (Education studies students)
- Bad weather makes 9am examinations difficult
- Course Reps suggested a designated phone number to call if there is an issue with getting to an examination
- Exams at 9am would be a problem due to rush hour traffic
- More flexibility on the length of exams
- Earlier start may cause issues for those with childcare concerns i.e. the school run!
- Further concerns with childcare as if there is an issue with their child they can't be contacted by the school in the afternoon
- Some Course Reps noted that they would like the three hour slots in the afternoon instead of three hour slots in the morning
- Those who have their exams start earlier (those with disabilities) don't like starting earlier
- 2pm examinations would potentially be better for allowing students to have lunch

6 Course Rep Issues

A Law representative mentioned HYDRA past questions papers, and how answers or mark schemes were not included on HYDRA.

VPE noted that the mark schemes may not be available due to the recycling of questions.

VPE to investigate Law and it's past question papers.

Timetabling – 3 students have had clashes today.

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Psychology students submitted essays but they have not been marked yet due to the lecturer being ill – asked about peer marking. 18/12/14 submitted paper, others modules who have submitted have received feedback already. VPE noted that the reps are to wait another week (in accordance with the feedback charter) – from there come and see VPE if it does not happen.

“Biology Book club – 58128” was raised as an area of poor teaching. The present course materials are being displayed through pictures with very little text, examinations will be based around the small amount of text. VPE asked the Course Rep to talk to the individual who runs that particular module, if the problem persists after that come and see VPE.

PASS was raised a concern within HUBS, specifically Accounting and Finance. There was discussion about the fact the session is timetabled but not many students attended it. ERC explained that it is timetabled so that more students can access it, however it is not mandatory. However, ERC will pass this onto Kerry Bolton within LLI.

ERC to be in contact with Kerry Bolton.

MBA within HUBS noted that there was an error on an MEQ as Part-time and Full-time students were put together – however their feedback could be separated out and in turn the lecturer could mark the groups differently based on their feedback (this was feared). It was also noted that the Full-time students were not complimentary about including Part-time students being involved within the module.

VPE to investigate this.

7 Any other business

- i) Student Conference was advertised – Wednesday 11 February – registration begins 11:30am, more information can be found here.
- ii) Student-Led Teaching Awards are still open, closing Friday 13 March.
- iii) Postgraduate Representation is required – If you would like to sit on any of the vacant committee positions, please get in contact with ERC
- iv) National Course Rep conference – applications are now open, send them across to ERC by Wednesday 4 February at midday.
- v) Course Rep social – Friday 5 February beginning 6pm.

8 Next meeting will be – Tuesday 10 March - venue to be confirmed