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Minutes of Academic Council

Held at 15:15pm on Monday 9 May 2016 at University House, Meeting Room 1

Date of meeting	2/11/15	17/11/15	1/2/16	11/03/16	09/05/16
Attendance	115 Attendees 32 Apologies	95 Attendees 31 Apologies	72 Attendees 75 Apologies	41 Attendees 60 Apologies	40 Attendees 45 Apologies

Please ask EC for apologies

1. Welcome

Welcome from VPE to the last Academic Council of the year.

2. Approval of minutes

Minutes approved.

3. Action Register

VPE went through the action register, informing students of the actions that had been taken in response to the concerns that had been raised throughout the year. With the introduction of the Action Register this year it has been easier to keep track of student concerns and what needs to be done. Students were invited to look through the updated register by accessing it on Canvas.



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VPE announced that, thanks to course rep feedback and the input of HUU, the University has set up a Learning Spaces Advisory Group (LSAG) which will work to solve issues concerned with student space, such as issues with microphones and lecture rooms.

4 Shape and Size Update

VPE is looking into how the Shape and Size proposals are communicated to students. The University has sometimes communicated changes through a language staff can understand, which can be hard for students to follow. VPE will have input on the creation and approval of communications.

The big news to report is that the changes to Faculty structure will be phased throughout the academic year rather than everything happening right away. A big committee of Faculty stakeholders will feed through any issues in the changes.

5 Review of the Year

VPE described how the year has been a challenging one with lots of changes introduced by both the government and University that has changed the representative structures and the role of HUU. The government outlined new proposals for the Higher Education sector with the 'green paper' which proposed a variety of recommendations, including student fees determined by the Teaching Excellence Framework ranking, and streamlining the procedures in which private providers can become a University. The green paper also outlined government moves to increase accountability and transparency in SUs, and VPE explained the importance of HUU in the face of these challenges.

VPE talked about internal pressures and a lot of negativity this year. With the omnipresence of social media pervading all aspects of student life, it has become easy and simple for students to attack each other anonymously. VPE recounted how he had never experienced this in Hull before and emphasised how such actions by individuals on social media have contributed to the rise of mental health issues.

Despite these concerns, students, particularly course reps, have made a positive impact this year. Reps are engaging with the University in many different ways, contributing to the look of the new VLE, to panels on student engagement, to feedback sessions on ASTs. Education is transformative and a powerful beast of change, making lives better. Course reps are a massive part of this, ensuring that Hull continues to thrive for all the right reasons.



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6 Course Rep Issues

Please see pages 4-8 of these minutes for the Course Rep Action Register.

7 Any other business

- i) Students were invited to complete the Education Survey placed on seats.
- ii) Tomorrow (10/05/16) there will be a debate on the EU referendum in HUU. All welcome.
- iii) As an appreciation for the hard work course reps have done this year VPE drew attention to the Course Rep t-shirts available to those present in Academic Council.

8 Thanks

VPE expressed his appreciation for the work done by EC and for the amazing work done in departments, HUU, and the University by the course reps.

Course Rep Action Register

Theme	Issue	Action required (VPE and committee/directorate and other notes)	Progress
09/05/16 The Library Space	Raised by many course reps: There is not enough space dedicated to silent study in exam period. Although floor 2 is silent over exam period there are not many seats. There was a feeling that staff could be more proactive in cracking down on unreasonably noisy students. Students agreed that there should be a few more floors dedicated to silent study.	VPE to raise issue with library and remind staff to be vigilant for those who do not use the library for its intended purpose.	
09/05/16 Exams and Assessments	Nursing: The exam takes place the next working day after the module finishes, leaving just the weekend for revision time. Other students agreed this a concern across University.	VPE to bring concern to University.	
09/05/16 HUU Events	While students found the housing fair useful, many felt it was the wrong side of Christmas.	VPE emphasised this is a misconception brought about by landlords pressuring students to make a decision.	Students urged to talk to HullStars and Accommodation services. 09/05/16
09/05/16 TEL	Canvas will be coming next year – will there be any online training for those on placement? On e-Bridge students can see the modules they will take for next year – Canvas does not seem to have this capability. What is the policy of Lecture Capture for students who have a disability?	While student interns will be trained to run workshops for staff. VPE to talk to Chris Turnock on this.	
09/05/16 Estates and Welfare	Bike racks between music building and Salmon Grove woodland do not have CCTV. A few bikes have been stolen. The woodland does not have CCTV and some students have felt intimidated walking through there at night.	EC to report this to Welfare Officer.	Done!
Microphone usage	Lectures use of microphone – clip on microphones not working, leading to lecturers shouting.	VPE to follow up with LEAP	Ongoing (Updated 21.03.16)
	URGENT 17/11/15: Microphones in the Allam LT are being high jacked during lectures and profanities are being broadcast to entire lecture theatres.		This has been completed (21.03.16)
Facilities	Room capacity for HUBS students – students are sitting on the stairs in lectures.	VPE to take up with Estates Directorate	VPE has contacted Chris Paget (Director of Estates) regarding all the facilities based queries. VPE will follow up again to make sure Estates are working on the concerns raised by students. (21.03.16)
	Room temperature in Wilberforce LT1 is too hot.		
	Languages students have been put in rooms for 14 people when there are 16 students on the course.	VPE to take up with Room Bookings/Timetabling (SAS)	
	FOSS LT – Desks moving when people are writing on them (suspected they are not secured appropriately). Furthermore and incident was reported that a ceiling fan detached from		

Course Rep Action Register

	<p>the ceiling whilst it was in use – room evacuated. Health and Safety concerns were raised.</p> <p>University-wide (Including Students' Union building) – Clocks!</p> <p>Students would like more clocks and those that are about the campus to be set to the right time and working!</p> <p>Left-handed students are at a disadvantage as buildings are only providing arm chair desks for right handed people. This is particularly a problem within the Ferens building. – Student noted that there were 9 students on their course that are left handed and are unable to use the facilities available.</p> <p>Loten building – students are resorting to writing on their laps – more tables requested.</p> <p>Heating in Applied Sciences – too cold</p> <p>Larkin LTG quality needs improvements, also over-crowding in lecture theatres. Microphones and laser pointers are not working appropriately.</p> <p>Wilberforce LT 1&2 Microphones.</p> <p>Wilberforce LT 15 Right hand screen isn't working</p> <p>Larkin Building 24 hour study space was referred to as 'unhygienic'</p> <p>01/02/16 Venn building automatic doors regularly break down.</p> <p>During a lecture a chair collapsed within the Allam LT whilst a student was using it.</p> <p>11/03/2016 Hygiene is not great in the 24/7 Internet café. Toilets in bad condition with no seat cover.</p>	<p>VPE to take up with Estates Directorate</p> <p>VPE to chase up Estates team.</p>	
Signage	<p>More needs to be done to advertise the microwaves within the students' union.</p> <p>01/02/16 Signage needs to be clearer in the permit holders' car park, as the two signs are very small.</p>	<p>VPE will work with President and Director of Commercial Services to improve signage.</p> <p>The President has been meeting with the Estates Directorate. VP-E to get report and inform course reps of contents.</p>	<p>Completed!</p> <p>VPE liaised with President. The Presidents' Review is ongoing as this is a staff issue. 21.03.16</p>
Kettles	<p>Kettles within the Union was raised as something that students would like.</p>	<p>President to follow up after students came in to see him regarding this issue.</p>	<p>Completed – Health and Safety will not allow this. 21.03.16</p>

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Timetabling	Issues with MSc Applied Social Research – clashes with optional.	VPE to take up with Timetabling in Student Admin Services (SAS)	None	
	History - WISE Centre and Hull campus based lectures are not being scheduled with appropriate time in-between. Also noted that when signing up for a module, the WISE Centre is not within the module description. Noted within the Patterns of prejudice module.		All students and course reps are advised to speak to department as soon as issues arise.	
	LLB Students have requested that more non-assessed essays take place on the course in order to give students more practice.		VPE is currently working on a timetabling project with the University at present to improve service. The roll out will be 2016/17.	
	01/02/16 Social Work – Timetables have been issued only a week before semester. Students are also struggling to get feedback on essays because of staff leave.			
	01/02/16 Accounting – Students attend a 2 hour lecture but have to relocate to a different building after an hour.			
	01/02/16 With the timetabling at quarter past the hour, this makes it more expensive to commute on bus from Doncaster because of the childcare prices.	VPE to liaise with Student Admin Services and Estates Directorate.		
	01/02/16 Within nursing some students are bringing their children with them because of short notice for timetabling.	VPE is liaising with University on changing timetable structure.		
11/03/16 Within nursing some students are bringing their children with them because of short notice for timetabling.	VPE to work with University on the most common pathways.			
Assessments	Politics students noted that they have three deadlines for one day (30 November). Furthermore there are also applications for internships that are due in around the same time.		VPE has picked this up with the department. It will strive to avoid such clashes in the future. Completed. 21.03.16	
	Film a lot of assessment types that are writing and no real help with practical film making.		None	
	01/02/16 – There was a 50 minute delay for a Biomedical exam because the wrong papers were handed out twice. This also affected students on various other courses.		Some students have been contacted by the Advice Centre. Others encouraged to talk to the Advice Centre and fill out a mitigating circumstances form. Completed. 21.03.16	
	01/02/16 Geology – Not enough emphasis on bringing Student identification to exams. Many observed that regulations were not being followed and that students did not keep phones under desk or in bags. The Sports hall was also too cold.		Exam briefing needs looking at: VPE picked this up with Exams officer who will look into the way in which students are communicated with. Completed 21.03.16	
	01/02/16 Physics – Many interruptions in exams, some of which came from invigilators. Other students noted that students distracted other students, while some exams were			

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	too close together meaning there was not enough time to revise for each one.		
	01/02/16 Chinese Foundation Year – Level of test was very hard. Characters were used which students were not familiar with. Students not given much time to revise.	VPE to discuss with University Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee (ULTAC).	Completed.
	01/02/16 Disabilities – For exams in the Wilberforce building there was no organisation and students were unaware that seats were set out by surname over two rooms.	VPE to look into it. Students encouraged to contact the Advice Centre.	VPE informed Exam Review. Completed 21.03.16
	01/02/16 – Some students were dissatisfied with the conduct of invigilators, finding them off-putting and distracting. Some found other students to be equally as distracting.		
Communication	Computer Science students noted that the new communication policies and regulations are not appropriate for their department.		Ongoing.
Learning and Teaching	Computer Science students noted that there is an issue with the programme module. Several students are having difficulty with the way in which the module is being taught 1) Problem is introduced during lecture 2) Concept is explored however no examples of how to solve the problem are solved 3) Coding challenge takes place Students who are newer to coding are struggling with this exercise, furthermore it was raised that there is little to no feedback on these activities.	VPE Feedback Campaign	Complete 21.03.16
	01/02/16 In Computer Science there is a poor staff/student ratio, with 320 students to a lecturer in one instance.	To Raise at SSC. VP-E to discuss with Faculty Manager and Dean.	Shape Review Ongoing
	Languages students noted that the beginner's classes were going too quickly – a lot of grammar but not enough vocabulary.	VPE to work with Faculty Co-ordinator and raise through Faculty Learning Teaching & Assessment	Complete
	International students are having trouble keeping up with tutors	VPE noted that the provision of teaching English to International students will be increased over the summer period.	Complete

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	Chemistry – Not given lecture notes, department has gone paperless, this is causing an issue due to the high level of equations required for this.		Complete. VPE met with course reps and Director of Teaching and Learning from Department.
Academic Support Tuition (Personal Supervisors)	Education – Masters Level students.		None
	Maths –few more example answers needed		None
Practicals	Biological, Biomedical and Environmental Sciences – 60 students to a practical, not enough support for the group and too many people. Suggested group sizes to be made smaller (30).		Completed at SSC.
Students' Union	First few weeks Sports and Society memberships took too long to obtain.		Complete! This moved online and students are getting used to this. Better from now.
	17/11/2015 A sofa in Retreat was reported as damaged and in fact caused a health & safety concern	VPE and ERC worked with HUU's facilities team to have said sofa removed.	Completed!
	17/11/2015 Toilets within University House several of the toilet doors were un-available and the others were not useable for hygienic reasons.		
Mentors	Mentors wanted for first year law students. Law and Legislative studies student noted this.	Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)	Complete!
Student Wellbeing/Welfare	Disabilities, nothing in place in the first few weeks.		Complete! Induction project ongoing.
Office Hours	Hull University Business School (HUBS) Undergraduate office closes before lectures finish, hence students cannot speak to anyone in the office once their lecture is over.		Ongoing – HUBS faculty coordinator looking into this.
	17/11/2015 It was noted that enough office hours were being given for strategic management- lecturer is spread over two campuses and is offering two hours of office time per week for module, assignment and academic support tuition		
	FASS Hub – issues with students not being helped.		Complete – Due to busy periods
	More seminars requested for what is being studied.		
Students' Union	Ground floor feedback was positive.	VPE to pass on to Commercial Director of HUU	Complete
Technology Enhanced Learning	Psychology Course Reps noted that in their lectures certain types of media can't be played.		Complete
	Room sizes in Larkin are not suitable, 11 students and a lot have to have their backs facing the wall.		Complete – Learning Spaces Group
	A lot of modules on e-bridge have not been named and it is difficult to find the numbers.	VP-E notified course reps on courses.ac.uk. This handbook will have all module names	Complete

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		and numbers. Alternatively, students can ask at SSC.	
Library	Library study skills announcements interrupting lectures.	VPE to speak to Director of LLI	Complete
	01/02/16 Fines for late laptops return. Students are being fined out of hours even if they have a receipt.	This can be sorted on an individual basis and the library is reimbursing students. VPE to liaise with Richard Heseltine.	Complete
	01/02/16 Some sockets in library are not working, particularly on the second floor.		
Resources	Physics software is unavailable, however Engineering students are able to have the software for free (MacLab)	Raise at SSC	
Shape and Size Review	11/03/2016 Under shape and Size, Physics, Maths and Engineering will be joined together. Students are strongly against this.	VPE eased fears and talked about the benefits on inter-disciplinarity and administrators joining together. VPE to communicate concerns to the University.	Completed! HUU response sent to all students.
Elections	11/03/2016 People who have a year abroad or on placement are struggling to put their own names forward for elections.	VPE to liaise and pass on information to VPA.	RAG chair elect studied abroad but still won.
	11/03/2016 A lot of people did not know what they were voting for in the elections.	The structures of the Union will change the elections for the better.	Ongoing process to be implemented in September 2016. Feedback passed to marketing.
	11/03/2016 If people are going to run for elections, there needs to be more information from the Union about the job.	More communication will be made from those in elected positions and those running for it.	Complete – fed back to marketing/returning officer team
	11/03/2016 Students in Health and Social Care did not feel part of the Union during the elections because students work outside typical hours.	VPE will work with Democracy and Governance Coordinator to improve student engagement.	VPE and DGC developing strategies for student engagement for next year.
	11/03/2016 There was a general apathy among mature students with many not understanding the marketing.	VPE will work with Democracy and Governance Coordinator and Marketing to improve on communicating elections	Discussions have already started.
	11/03/2016 No place for effective course rep elections to take place	VPE, ERC and others will meet to discuss changing the infrastructure.	Ongoing