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Minutes of Academic Council

Held at 10:15am and 5:15pm on Friday 11 March 2016 at University House, Meeting Room 1

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

1 Apologies

Please ask EC for apologies

2 Welcome

Welcome from VPE

3 Approval of minutes

Minutes approved

4 Course Rep Investigate

- i) Student Engagement and the Library (Mike Ewen and Alison Craig, Student Engagement Team, BJL)



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The Library Team wanted feedback on how students used the library, encompassing questions such as: how is the library used? How and where do students use the books? And how do students make use of the space within the library? The Library Team were keen to receive emotive feedback rather than just another survey. Course reps were invited to split into groups and write a 'love' letter or 'break-up' letter about the things they loved or hated about the library. The purpose was to identify the trends in how people used the library. The Library Team are prioritising engagement with students; previously, in developing the library, staff assumed what students wanted. This presents a concerted effort by staff to include students in development plans.

Topics discussed by students included: AV rooms, printers, stairs, the reading room, air conditioning and even water fountains.

ii) Representative Structures (Matt Evans, VPE)

The VPE guided attendees on how HUU represents its students and how this system can be improved. The recent elections – which had a disappointing turnout – reminded members, representatives and staff on how crucial it is to engage with students and ensure their participation and representation. VPE elaborated on the structures currently in place and how they are less than satisfactory. The Union needs to keep evolving to maintain its relevance to members. The categories in which students are currently represented were presented to AC and it was explained that students are best represented through academic lines; the one thing all students have in common is that they are on a course.

VPE provided an analysis on the current system and discussed the varying roles of representation, including Department Reps, Academic Council Reps, Councillor for Scrutiny and Faculty Coordinators; at the moment, their purpose is vague and ill-defined. Representatives themselves are not sure of what they should be doing. There are around 18,000 students at the University; currently, only 10% of members visit the Union. The Annual General Meeting of the Union, open to all members, garnered poor attendance. Consequently, the way the Union works needs to change.

VPE explained that two years ago a review was undertaken by the Union to examine structures and governance while also detailing what students care about. VPE also highlighted the key principles from this Governance Survey which included, but was not limited to, these results:

- 77% of students said they wanted to be consulted by reps before decisions were made.
- 53% of students wanted decisions to be made through online poll.
- 64% of students wanted representatives to be elected by cross-candidate ballot.



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If we stay stagnant and do not update our structures how do we remain relevant? VPE then went through the proposed Union representative structures of next year taking into account the proposed changes to the University. There will be four Faculty Coordinators with three School Reps in each (apart from Business and Law). Students will be represented in a better and more efficient manner and we would have a greater number of contested positions. Therefore, students would be represented by academic lines, rather than by a demographic or another representative channel such as activities or welfare. For instance, why should International Students be solely represented by the Activities Zone? In essence, students should not be pigeonholed.

Students had questions such as:

- How would Part time students be represented? VPE: Rather than be represented by course reps, or a particular officer, students would liaise with a School Rep.
- Where does PPIS and other courses fit in the new system?

Generally, students voiced their approval, noting that the changes would facilitate greater integration between University and Union.

5 Course Rep Issues

Please see pages 5-8 of these minutes for the Course Rep Action Register

6 Any other business

- i) Students were invited to suggest a different name for the Panopto software currently called Lecture Capture. Panopto allows for the simultaneous capture of audio, video and whatever appears on the projector screen during teaching sessions e.g. PowerPoint slides, Excel spreadsheets, web sites. The recording is then made available to students after the session through the virtual learning environment, i.e. Canvas or eBridge. Staff and students can also use Panopto to record short presentations outside a formal teaching session. Staff might use it to introduce a formal teaching session or supplement a session. Students might use it to record individual or group presentation as part of a learning activity. Many Universities call such software lecture capture. However, we wondered if there was a better name that might be used to describe the Panopto software for the University of Hull. Students were invited to e-mail hUU-representation@hull.ac.uk with their suggestions.



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7 The final meeting will be – 15.15-16:30 Friday 9th May, Meeting Room 1, Hull University Union.

Course Rep Action Register

Theme	Issue	Action required (VPE and committee/directorate and other notes)	Progress
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 the ceiling whilst it was in use – room evacuated. Health and Safety concerns were raised.		
	University-wide (Including Students' Union building) – Clocks!		
	Students would like more clocks and those that are about the campus to be set to the right time and working!		
	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.	VPE to take up with Estates Directorate	
	Loten building – students are resorting to writing on their laps – more tables requested.		
	Heating in Applied Sciences – too cold		
	Larkin LTG quality needs improvements, also over-crowding in lecture theatres. Microphones and laser pointers are not working appropriately.		
Wilberforce LT 1&2 Microphones.			
Wilberforce LT 15 Right hand screen isn't working			

Course Rep Action Register

	Larkin Building 24 hour study space was referred to as 'unhygienic'		
	01/02/16 Venn building automatic doors regularly break down.		
	During a lecture a chair collapsed within the Allam LT whilst a student was using it.		
	11/03/2016 Hygiene is not great in the 24/7 Internet café. Toilets in bad condition with no seat cover.	VPE to chase up Estates team.	
Signage	More needs to be done to advertise the microwaves within the students' union.	VPE will work with President and Director of Commercial Services to improve signage.	Completed!
	01/02/16 Signage needs to be clearer in the permit holders' car park, as the two signs are very small.	The President has been meeting with the Estates Directorate. VP-E to get report and inform course reps of contents.	VPE liaised with President. The Presidents' Review is ongoing as this is a staff issue. 21.03.16
Kettles	Kettles within the Union was raised as something that students would like.	President to follow up after students came in to see him regarding this issue.	Completed – Health and Safety will not allow this. 21.03.16
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.	VPE to liaise with Student Admin Services and Estates Directorate.	
	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 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		VPE has picked this up with the department. It will strive to avoid such clashes in the future. Completed. 21.03.16

Course Rep Action Register

	applications for internships that are due in around the same time.		
	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 Sportshall 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 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	VPE Feedback Campaign	Complete 21.03.16

Course Rep Action Register

	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.		
	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
	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.

Course Rep Action Register

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 and numbers. Alternatively, students can ask at SSC.	Complete
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



Course Rep Action Register

	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