

uea|su Student Experience Report 2016

Student Experience Committee 8 February 2017  
Agenda Item A2 – SEC16D22

	Recommendation	Response	Notes [Lead on response]
<b>A</b>	<b>Organisation and Management</b>		
<b>1</b>	A <u>consistency and standards review</u> should be carried out across hubs, to include an audit of the training and support for staff in all 3 hubs. The review should include work across Student Support Services, uea su and the hubs themselves to ensure that there is consistency and shared information when signposting students.	Agreed - The work of Hubs is regularly reviewed and co-ordinated to ensure consistency. During 2015/16 there was a problem of high staff turnover among LTS staff which risked compromising the quality of the service to students. The Job Descriptions for front desk staff have been reviewed and regraded and some extra staff appointments have been made, and staff turnover has reduced as a result. It would be helpful to establish a more formalised approach to sharing information on processes to ensure consistency of advice across Students Services, LTS and the Students' Union	AB
<b>2</b>	<u>Schools</u> with satisfaction levels below 80% satisfaction for <u>communication</u> should be caused to investigate this and report back on their findings and actions.	Agreed - We will look at responses to NSS Questions 17 and 25 in the summer and require the relevant Schools to put in place improvement plans where satisfaction levels do not meet our benchmarks. We will also disseminate the good practice used by Schools with high satisfaction levels and explore developing a system of School student communication plans.	CM
<b>3</b>	UEA should commit to working towards a <u>student-centred timetabling</u> system which allows for students to more easily plan ahead and balance commitments. Examples of action within such an approach could include timetables being released at least 2 weeks prior to the start of each semester and/or to have the dates and times of modules confirmed when students make their module choices.	Agreed in part - The University's approach to timetabling is under continual review. Our aspiration is to release timetables as early as possible, although providing a guarantee of two weeks ahead of the start of each semester is not possible, because of pressure on rooming.	AB with CS
<b>4</b>	In any event to develop systems to urgently eradicate " <u>back to back</u> " lectures on different sides of campus.	Agreed - We will look to reduce back-to-back lectures on different sides of campus to the absolute minimum and our aspiration would be to eradicate this problem if possible.	CS
<b>5</b>	UEA's Business Intelligence Unit and uea su should carry out a joint project on examining the experience of <u>students with caring responsibilities</u> to identify potential barriers based around current O&M	Agreed - Students with caring responsibilities were included in the BIU's Tracker Project run in the academic year 2015/16 with the results specifically used as case studies in the reporting to the Widening Participation Committee. This project will be run again in 2017/18 and the	RP

	practice.	new WP Manager will work with the BIU to ensure that the Widening Participation Committee (including SU) are fully involved in its design, including increasing the numbers of students with caring responsibilities in the sample. The WP Manager will also be working with the BIU to ensure that WP profiling questions, including whether students have caring responsibilities, are added to student surveys where appropriate and possible so that the results around organisation and management, and other areas of the student experience, can be analysed by these groups.	
<b>6</b>	UEA and uea su will be carrying out joint investigations into <u>HSC placements</u> to establish students' expectations, realities, recommendations to improve the placement experience.	<p>Agreed - We welcome this initiative. The BIU are working with colleagues in LTS and FMH on both rolling surveys with students returning from placement and placement providers and the Union are working on focus groups to probe further. All are working to share the information gathered and plan actions.</p> <p>There has already been substantial investment by HSC in ensuring there is good understanding of challenges facing students in the practice context. The senior academic role of Director of Placements has been in place for many years and recent additional investment in an Associate Director role offers further assurance of the commitment by HSC to providing the best possible practice experiences. Navigating the demands of PSRB expectations alongside the operational challenges of working regionally with multiple placement providers is at the forefront of a rolling project of work designed to maximise the quality of practice learning. The student voice is an integral part of this undertaking and will continue to inform our work</p>	AD L&T FMH (ES)
<b>B</b>	<b>Resources</b>		
<b>1</b>	Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) should dedicate time to reviewing the provision of <u>Joint and Triple Honours</u> degrees and ensure that all students have access to the same relevant information regardless of which is their home school.	Agreed - This is not currently required under the Code of Practice on Student Representation, but the Code of Practice could be updated to codify this.	CM
<b>2</b>	Courses, particularly those highlighted in graph 5, should do further investigation into specific <u>specialised equipment, facilities</u> of rooms and circulate responses to relevant students. Training for staff on tech and room equipment should be	Agreed - The relatively low satisfaction scores are a due to a mix of factors. Some of these subject areas do not use specialist facilities. With others (e.g. Nursing) we do have specialist facilities, but there may be relatively low satisfaction due to either how they are used, or with the facilities themselves (e.g. Clinical Skills Training Rooms). This issue will be pursued	AB, CM & NW  NSS Q18: I have been able to access

	available and encouraged.	<p>during detailed discussions with those Schools during 2016/17. On Nursing, the problem is known and the issue under consideration is how any refurbishment and redesign might be prioritised and resourced.</p> <p>HSC have invested in a project to fully understand the requirements of skills facilities through detailed scoping activity. An additional related project of work in collaboration with practice partners commenced last year to maximising opportunities for students to have exposure to timely, high quality skills preparation.</p> <p>[It would be useful to have more specific information from the SU about which facilities are seen as problematic].</p>	<p>specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I needed to</p> <p>(Nursing; Man'ment; Eng American Lit; Bus &amp; Info Systems)</p>
3	UEA should invest in a standardised and regulated amount of <u>printing credit</u> for each student at the start of each academic year, and ensure staff are promoting the free printers in Union House.	This question was given considerable and careful consideration during 2013/14 and 2014/15. We are not minded to introduce a system of free printing for students. We are, however, happy to promote the SU printers in Union House.	NW & JCF
4	UEA Estates should develop a system for students and staff to quickly and <u>easily report issues</u> with inappropriate teaching and learning spaces and satisfaction monitoring should be carried out amongst academics.	Agreed – this is being developed through the Learning & Teaching Spaces Group. In addition, the BIU are already running the Non-Academic Experience survey with students and an Estates customer satisfaction survey with staff in this academic year which will provide insight on this issue.	AB & EST
5	UEA Estates should <u>review all room capacities</u> and ensure enough suitable seating matches those capacities and review all spaces marked for lectures to ensure suitability for that purpose.	Agreed – This is part of routine work by Estates	JS@EST
6	In the context of changing student needs and a growing student population, the University should identify short, medium and long term needs in conjunction with students, quantify them and develop clear plans to meet expectations - with particular reference to identified "pinch points". A <u>facilities and services plan</u> should then be published which addresses pressure on facilities, services and space.	Agreed - Facilities and services are being reviewed in the context of student numbers. There are several component covering: academic services; welfare services; learning & teaching spaces; library and IT services; Student Union services; accommodation (on and off-campus); campus and catering; transport.	NW & AB

<b>C</b>	<b>Teaching and Assessment Quality</b>		
1	The University should identify specific work to <u>promote diversity and inclusivity in teaching curriculums</u> in higher education.	Agreed - We are now much more systematically monitoring student academic performance by student characteristics. The appointment of a new Widening Participation Manager and Academic Director for WP will give greater momentum to this work. (It would be useful to know what sort of specific work the SU have in mind on curriculum content. The WP manager would be happy to meet with the SU to discuss further).	CM & RP
2	While the University is already an Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) member, it is not a member of ECU's Race Equality Charter. We recommend that the University make full use of ECU's consultancy service, and aim to become an <u>ECU Race Equality Charter</u> member within the next two years, and an <u>ECU Race Equality Charter</u> award holder within the next five years. This should align with the University's commitment to Athena SWAN and Equality and Diversity more broadly.	Engagement with the ECU's Race Equality Charter is kept under review by the Equality and Diversity Committee, and the finite resources available for E&D are currently focussed on Athena Swan. However, some additional resource is being allocated to the E&D Team.	NW
3	UEA should carry out research on the <u>satisfaction levels of international BME students and home BME students</u> , in order to investigate why the achievement gap is such a stark issue.	Agreed - The achievement gap has narrowed by over a third over the last five years (from 29 percentage points in 2011/12 to 17.7 percentage points in 2015/16). The nature of the problem and the effectiveness of the actions are well understood. We would anticipate the achievement gap, which is common in HEIs across the sector, will continue to narrow at UEA. Additional analysis could be carried out on some existing surveys where data are available and robust base sizes exist.	NW & RP
4	UEA should work to implement and monitor take up of standardized <u>online marking</u> to ensure that feedback on assessment in of consistent quality and easily accessed by students.	Agreed – uptake on online marking is being carefully monitored and is being encouraged through management meetings with Schools.	HG
5	UEA should follow up on investing in <u>student course reviewers</u> .	Agreed - This is in hand as part of the Internal Quality Review, which the SU are represented on. Paying Course Reviewers was one of the principles guiding the review agreed by LTC.	LT
6	All schools should be required to have a <u>teaching practice development strategy</u> , working in conjunction with UEA's teaching awards and uea su's Transforming Teaching Awards	This is an interesting proposal and will be considered alongside the outcomes of the discussions with each School about student satisfaction and TEF preparedness during 2016/17. The University's Learning & Teaching Strategy commits to the development of communities of practice	NW, with HG & CM

		in learning & teaching, but a teaching practice development strategy may be a more systematic and planned approach. We need to consider how the peer observation of teaching might inform such an approach.	
7	Whilst the timeliness of assessment and feedback has improved, there is no discernible work going on to systematically identify improvements that could be made to <u>quality of assessment</u> and feedback and perceptions of assessment fairness. Utilising the NUS Assessment and Feedback benchmarking tool, work should be developed school by school to ensure that this is done.	Agreed - There is work underway to improve the aspects of satisfaction with feedback other than timeliness with all Schools, on a School-by-School basis through meetings between the PVC-ACAD, Ac Directors TP & LTE and key role holders in Schools. Each School is required to hold an Annual Review of Assessment & Feedback, which examines issues in the round and not just timeliness of feedback return.	NW, with HG & CM
<b>D</b>	<b>Student Welfare, Support and Community</b>		
1	UEA should fulfil its pledge to develop a <u>mental health plan</u> , outlining specific support services for UEA students.	Agreed – a mental health plan is in the final stages of preparation, which incorporates but goes beyond our commitments under the Time to Change pledge.	JS
2	UEA and uea su should lead on a community-based <u>student safety project</u> , taking into account the recommendations of the Light Up Campus report.	Agreed - A group will be set up under the aegis of the UUK Taskforce Implementation Group.	JS
3	UEA should acknowledge the crisis of student cost of living by: i. Establishing a previously promised <u>student financial support group</u> and widening its terms of reference Student Cost of Living group ii. Following up on the recommendations of uea su's 'Real Cost of Study' report to look at <u>wider average costs</u> of participation rather than mere "charges" iii. Conduct an investigation on different types of students with different <u>financial circumstances</u> , providing information as to their avenues for support and their ability to participate.	A Student Financial Support Group is being established by SSS.	JS
4	UEA should work with the SU to ensure that <u>off-campus accommodation</u> is sustainable and appropriate, in terms of quality and price and availability.	What, specifically, would this joint working involve? SSS does work closely with community representatives and with HomeRun, but it would not be feasible or appropriate for the University to control any and all private developments off campus that might house students. Where there is a willingness on the part of Landlords/ development companies to engage we	JS

		will do so and would encourage such developments to be sustainable and affordable	
5	UEA and uea su should work together on tackling <u>sexual assault</u> on campus, following the guidance of the 'Light up Campus' report and the recent publication of the UUK taskforce document.	Agreed - The recommendations of the UUK Taskforce on sexual harassment are to be implemented at UEA and this will be co-ordinated by a UEA's UUK Implementation Group chaired by the Director of Student Services.	JS
6	UEA should review its system for <u>training academic advisors</u> and ensure that none can begin to practice as advisors until they have had correct, up-to-date training.	Agreed - All new advisers will be expected to work through the new Blackboard support module before they undertake advising duties.	CM
7	UEA should work with SSS to consider <u>financial hardship</u> or difficulty to be considered an extenuating circumstance.	Acute personal difficulties arising from financial hardship already count as EC. Financial hardship alone cannot be considered an extenuating circumstance.	JS
<b>E</b>	<b>PG Students</b>		
1	All schools should be required to <u>review their PGT programmes</u> in light of findings on skills development and career focus, highlighting and enhancing skills content where appropriate.	Agreed – the University will review its PGT offering across all Schools	NW & AB
2	UEA should conduct a research project on <u>PGR representation</u> within each Faculty and, from the results, compile a revised Code of Practice for PGR.	Agreed - This project is already underway with the BIU project managing but working jointly with the Union, REN and AcD PGR and PGR Exec. A kick-off meeting has already taken place and the BIU have provided a plan for the project to the stakeholders recently proposing focus groups to run in March.	Ac Director RDP
3	UEA should ensure that <u>integrated masters students</u> are able to: i. access the PG section of the library ii. take out books for 6 weeks like other PGT students iii. be invited to all masters induction talks	Agreed (in part) - We have been able to ensure that IM students will be able to access the PGT section of the Library from now on. We will work to ensure that book loan arrangements for IM students will be on a par with PGT students for the 2017/18 academic year, if SITS development time permits. We are not yet convinced that it would be appropriate for IM students to attend the same induction programmes as other PGT students. Instead, they should ideally have their own dedicated induction/transition sessions.	AB & JCF & CM
4	The SSS mental health strategy should include a specific <u>PGR mental health</u> strand to address the needs of these users.	Agreed - We acknowledge that PGR mental health is a particular issue. As part of its response to the "The Honesty Project" PGR Executive has resolved to work with uea su and SSS to source best practice from across	JS & Ac Director RDP

		the sector in supporting PGR students with mental health conditions and in promoting PGR wellbeing. Jane Lawrence is working with Vivien Eaisson (PGR) to take this forward and Jon Sharp will attend PGR Executive to give an update on progress.	
<b>5</b>	As space is a key component of PGR community, <u>PGR research space</u> should be at the heart of schools- with strategies in place both for existing buildings in the short/medium term and built into new building plans.	Agree in principle. PGR space is at the heart of the campus redevelopment plan (for the long term).  In the short/medium term the Ac Dir RDP is working with the Space Manager to encourage Faculties, where possible and within the constraints of their current space envelopes, to provide improved PGR work space and this have brought benefits in EDU and LAW, for example.	NW & Ac Director RDP
<b>6</b>	UEA to commit to facilitating <u>communication between PGR and PGT</u> students (specifically when PGTs engage in their dissertation period) to promote a wider 'research culture'.	Agreed (in part) - It is not clear what sort of communication is envisaged here, or how it flows from the findings of the Student Experience Report. We would suggest that facilitating communications between different groups of students should be the responsibility of Schools of Study. (HIS provides a model of good practice).	Ac Directors TP & RDP
<b>F</b>	<b>General</b>		
<b>1</b>	To review the <u>Student Charter</u> in light of findings from the uea su/TSEP work carried out over the summer.	Agreed - This will be reviewed during the summer 2017 / and AY 17/18	AB
<b>2</b>	To review institutional <u>financial information</u> available to students and identify ways in which student representatives might be better involved in University financial decision making	The University has responded to recommendations from the SU on this matter in previous years, and they have been considered by Council and the Chair of Council.	
<b>3</b>	To identify dedicated staff <u>capacity for student representation</u> in similar and competitor institutions with a view to identifying appropriate investment.	The University has responded to recommendations from the SU on this matter in previous years. We would like the operation of the new system of student representation, and Student Partnership Officers to be given a chance, and do not see a need for further additional University investment at this stage.	