



Academic Board

LEARNING, TEACHING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2024 in Room 7X111, Frenchay Campus.

Present: Amanda Coffey (Chair), David Barrett, Sarah Bateman, Georgie Benford, Emily Boland, Maria Casado-Diaz, Jackie Chelin, Mark Coombs, Rachel Cowie, Bernhard Gross, James Hazzard, Antony Hill, Sabiha Khan, Natalia Kida, Moya Lerigo-Sampson, Kwan Mak, Cathy Minett-Smith, Heather Moyes, Jackie Rogers, Rachel Vallely (alternate for Hannah Mathias), Lloyd Williams, Jonathan Winfield, Asia Yekeen

Apologies: Delia Fairburn, Miltos Hadjosif, Hannah Mathias, Jo Midgley, Callum Reilly, Gerry Rice, Lucy Scott

In attendance: Sally Clark (Items 5.2 and 5.3), James Cooke (Item 2.1), Fiona Cottrell (Item 6.1), Chris Evans (Item 2.1), Ian Stratton (Secretary)

LTSEC.24.02.1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

LTSEC.24.02.1.1 Members were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were noted.

LTSEC.24.02.1.2 No declarations of interest were received.

LTSEC.24.02.2 PRESENTATION

LTSEC.24.02.2.1 Non-continuation data, 2022/23

LTSEC.24.02.2.1.1 The Deputy Director of Planning and Business Intelligence (PBI) gave a presentation, which covered the following:

1. This follow-up to the deep dive presented in November including the most recent data.
2. It was reiterated that non-continuation is the proportion of students no longer enrolled 12 months after initial registration.

3. The internal report looks at the data on a more granular level.
4. It was noted that there has been a steady increase in non-continuation over the period from 2014/15 to 2022/23.
5. To meet Strategy 2030 targets overall non-continuation needs to be reduced from the current 800 withdrawals to around 400.
6. Performance across the colleges is variable although overall non-continuation is increasing.
7. Performance at programme level is also variable with some programmes performing well. It was noted that there are very few programmes performing at the extremes.
8. Programme size has a weighted impact on overall outcomes with large programmes in CATE and CBL influencing overall non-continuation.
9. It was noted however that some larger CBL programmes are performing above the average.
10. Overall, the focus needs to be on improving the non-continuation rates for a lot of programmes rather than focusing on the overall trends.
11. It was noted that there are small demographic data gaps, an exception being in the disability data. This gap has doubled overall to 2.3% with 'multiple disabilities' and 'mental health' having the biggest impact.
12. MyEngagement data have been mapped to the non-continuation data. The data show that the more alerts a student gets the more likely they are to withdraw. Further work is needed to assess the impact on non-continuation of lower levels of alerts.
13. Currently, UWE is performing just above the benchmark for non-continuation.
14. It was noted that there has been a recent change in the methodology for the student count going forward The withdrawal window (without impacting on non-continuation rates) has been reduced from 50 days to 15.
15. Finally, it was noted that there was more work to do to more fully understand reasons for withdrawal.

LTSEC.24.02.2.1.2

In discussion, members commented that:

1. The clear corporate KPI for non-continuation to be at 6%. This is ambitious.
2. It was noted that non-continuation has a financial impact on students, and on the University; but that there is also the fact that UWE has failed the students who leave.

3. The approach to support students seeking to drop out should focus on how we might support them to stay. For example, by being more permissive about course changes.
4. To 'do the right thing for students for whom things are not right', we should focus on how we create a space where all of our students can succeed.
5. Given the moral, financial and regulatory issues, non-continuation should be within our mindset all the time.
6. The assumption that programme leaders know why students leave could be challenged, noting that most exiting students meet with Student Support Advisors rather than programme leaders.
7. In addition to the internal factors, there was a question about sector-wide issues and the sector impact. Overall, it was noted that the sector rate is quite flat.
8. Nottingham Trent University was noted as a sector leader for non-continuation with an approach based around 'right place, just not the right course'. This positive campaign lets Nottingham Trent work with students to find the right course. This approach requires more decisions and support around entry and places an onus on the university to support students once they have arrived and enrolled.
9. There is a need to track responses to alerts and understand the impact MyEngagement is having.
10. Professional courses experience high non-continuation, highlighting the need to understand the course offer and requirements as there is always some difference in understanding between subjects.
11. A question was asked about the number of students who are not continuing because of the regulations. It was felt important to gain an understanding of the impact that regulatory inability to progress has on non-continuation.
12. The reasons for withdrawal vary across different courses and it may be possible to see localised trends if the right data are available.
13. There was a suggestion that Starting Block could be reordered with the programmatic induction, taking place in week one to hook or flag students for early intervention.
ACTION: Review the sequencing of Starting Block to place programmatic induction ahead of institutional induction.
ACTION: Circulate slides to LTSEC and DLTs.

LTSEC.24.02.3.1**Previous minutes**

Paper LTSEC.24.02.01 was received.

LTSEC.24.02.3.1.1

Members approved the minutes of the meeting on 15 November 2023.

LTSEC.24.02.3.2**Chair's actions**

Paper LTSEC.24.02.02 was received.

LTSEC.24.02.3.2.1

Members noted the approval of the University's joint commitment to students on sexual violence and harassment and of the revised Audio/Video Recording for Educational Activities policy.

LTSEC.24.02.3.3**Action sheet and matters arising**

LTSEC.24.02.3.3.1

The action sheet was noted.

LTSEC.24.02.4**STANDING AGENDA ITEMS****LTSEC.24.02.4.1****Chair's report**

Paper LTSEC.24.02.03 was received.

LTSEC.24.02.4.1.1

Members noted the report for information.

LTSEC.24.02.4.2**The Students' Union report**

Paper LTSEC.24.02.04 was received.

LTSEC.24.02.4.2.1

The Students' Union Vice Presidents summarised the report, highlighting:

1. Student representative work was ongoing, with most places filled. The Students' Union would be working with School Directors of Learning and Teaching on posts for which applications were not received.
2. Speak Week raised an issue where concerns are being reported back with no evidence of action being taken or supported: for example, support for students' IT equipment issues.
3. The Reimagining Student Representation project is progressing with meetings to set a framework to help shape the next phase.
4. The Vice President raised a question about university payment plans and the impact that international currency fluctuation had on students' ability to pay, noting that work was ongoing with credit control.

- LTSEC.24.02.4.2.2 In discussion, members commented on:
1. The disappointing progress being made in relation to issues raised through Speak Week.
ACTION: To convene a small group to review Speak Week issues.
 2. A conversation about the collection and monitoring of assessment offence data going through School Boards of Study. It was noted that work looking at academic integrity training was ongoing.
 3. Work looking at timetables, which would be undertaken as part of UWE Programmes. It was noted that timetables are being released earlier than before and there is some work going back into Schools about local and last-minute changes.

LTSEC.24.02.4.3 Policy update tracker

- LTSEC.24.02.4.3.1 The tracker was noted for information

LTSEC.24.02.5 QUALITY, STANDARDS AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

LTSEC.24.05.5.1 UWE Programmes principles
Paper LTSEC.24.02.05 was received.

- LTSEC.24.05.5.1.1 The Deputy Registrar introduced the paper, noting that:
1. The principles were presented for noting.
 2. The paper reflected the outputs of recent work, which seeks to reduce the amount of complexity in academic programmes.
 3. The paper also helps to focus programme design on the unique characteristics of a particular programme at UWE.

- LTSEC.24.05.5.1.2 In discussion, members commented that:
1. There is a need for career management skills to be integral to our programmes.
 2. The UWE Programmes work would be progressed under the Enterprise Target Operating Model (ETOM) umbrella.
ACTION: Membership to pass any further suggestions to the Deputy Registrar.

LTSEC.24.02.5.4 Academic Engagement and Attendance Policy

Paper LTSEC.24.02.06 was received.

LTSEC.24.02.5.4.1 The Head of Student Administration introduced the paper, noting that:

1. The paper presented a technical update to the policy to align it with UKVI policies and terminology.
2. A further comprehensive review is taking place and the revised policy will be presented to a later meeting of LTSEC for approval.

LTSEC.24.02.5.4.2 In discussion, members commented that the tracked changes were helpful in reviewing the actual changes made.

LTSEC.24.02.5.4.3 The revisions were approved.

LTSEC.24.02.5.7 MyEngagement project update

Paper LTSEC.24.02.07 was received.

LTSEC.24.02.5.7.1 Members noted the paper for information.

LTSEC.24.02.5.9 External examiner feedback

LTSEC.24.02.5.9.1 The Chair noted that the paper was deferred and is to be addressed through correspondence.

LTSEC.24.02.6 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

LTSEC.24.02.6.1 Access and Participation Plan (APP) and awarding gaps

Papers LTSEC.24.02.09 and LTSEC.24.02.09a were received.

LTSEC.24.02.6.1.1 Access and Participation Plan and governance arrangements
The Data and Impact Lead summarised paper LTSEC.24.02.09, highlighting that:

1. The new APP consists of 7 targets and 5 intervention strategies.
2. A new monitoring group chaired by the Academic Registrar has been established to provide LTSEC with assurance, reporting and items for escalation.
3. This is a baseline year to trial new ways of working.
4. School plans will be considered across two meetings in March.
5. A randomised control trial is planned for the summer school, assessing its outcomes and impact. It was noted

that all due process in relation to research ethics is being followed.

6. A 'Student jobs at UWE project' will consider options for employing students at the University.

LTSEC.24.02.6.1.2 In discussion, members commented on:

1. LTSEC's ownership of the APP on behalf of Academic Board (meaning LTSEC needs to be assured on behalf of the latter). A smaller group working on LTSEC's behalf and recommending to LTSEC is therefore needed.
2. The value of having the broader context of School action plans via School Boards of Study.
3. The potential value of updates on the impact of OfS money for apprenticeships directly leading into the APP: for example, in the increased engagement with employers on the recruitment of women.

LTSEC.24.02.6.1.3 Awarding gaps

The Chair summarised the remaining papers (LTSEC.24.02.09a), highlighting that:

1. The suite of papers was prepared for the Board of Governors, focusing on the work underway on closing awarding gaps. The Chair summarised the content of the pack, highlighting responsibilities at both School and College levels.
2. The pack contains a high-level summary of actions and information on how success will be measured and evaluated.
3. Work needs to be done to ensure that the interventions that are put in place are fully evaluated and their impact understood.

LTSEC.24.02.6.1.4 In discussion, members commented on:

1. The College of Health, Science and Society plan, noting a focus on embedding critical writing into some programmes and therefore building the academic skills that underpin the programme and student success.
2. Embedding skills training into programmes, which was felt to be more inclusive.
ACTION: School Directors of Learning and Teaching to follow up on plan actions across all three Colleges.

LTSEC.24.02.7 SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTING

LTSEC.24.02.7.1 University Quality and Standards Sub-Committee

Papers LTSEC.24.02.10–11 were received.

LTSEC.24.02.7.1.1 The Chair of UQSSC gave an update, including two matters for escalation to LTSEC.

LTSEC.24.02.7.1.2 Proposed change to UQSSC membership
LTSEC was asked to endorse an amendment to include within the membership as defined in the terms of reference: "Representatives of staff with responsibility for partnerships".

LTSEC.24.02.7.1.3 **LTSEC approved the recommendation.**

LTSEC.24.02.7.1.4 Completion of Partnership Lead reports
UQSSC escalated an issue with many Partnership Lead Reports either being received late or not being received at all.

LTSEC.24.02.7.1.5 There is a significant risk to UWE as a partner and there will be further scrutiny of this area of work. Due diligence on partnership assurance reporting is essential to avoid exposing the University through reporting gaps.

LTSEC.24.02.7.1.6 Collaborative provision was noted as a tactical risk and the issue around reporting may need to be included in the risk register. Schools have been alerted, underlining the importance of reporting. However, there is complexity in this due to ownership of relevant work streams.
ACTION: To identify and address issues identified within Schools, with Heads of Schools to address inconsistency.
ACTION: To work with the Schools to identify the scale of the issues and potential remedies and report progress back to LTSEC in April.

LTSEC.24.02.8 DATE(S) OF NEXT MEETING(S)

LTSEC.24.02.8.1 Next meeting dates for academic year 2023/24:

- 17 April 2024
- 12 June 2024