



Academic Board

## LEARNING, TEACHING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2024.

**Present:** Amanda Coffey (Chair), David Barrett, Sarah Bateman, Georgie Benford, Emily Boland, Maria Casado-Diaz, Jackie Chelin, Fiona Cottrell, Rachel Cowie, Bethel Ekaette, Delia Fairburn, Bernhard Gross, Miltos Hadjiosif, Laura Harrison, James Hazzard, Antony Hill, Sabiha Khan, Natalia Kida, Harry Marcks, Jo Midgley (items 1.1 to 4.5), Cathy Minett-Smith, Gerry Rice, Jackie Rogers, Lucy Scott, Lloyd Williams, Jonathan Winfield, Asia Yekeen

**Apologies:** Mark Coombs, Moya Lerigo-Sampson, Hannah Mathias, Heather Moyes

**In attendance:** Callum Reilly (Officer), Krishna Singh (items 1.1 to 4.2), Ian Stratton (Secretary)

**Observers:** Rachel Colley, Theresa Viner (shadowing)

### LTSEC.24.04.1 INTERACTIVE SESSION

#### LTSEC.24.04.1.1 Transformation Programme: student and campus life journey mapping

*Digital copies of the UWE experience map and UWE student journey maps were available to view.*

LTSEC.24.04.1.1.1 Members participated in an interactive UWE experience and student journey mapping activity to gather insight and data to inform future development of the University. This included identifying "pain points", gaps in capabilities and opportunities to improve. Members noted that the outcomes would feed into the ongoing Transformation Programme work.

### LTSEC.24.04.2 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

LTSEC.24.04.2.1 Members were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were noted.

LTSEC.24.04.2.2 In relation to declarations of interest, members noted that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar is a member of Weston College's Governing Body.

### **LTSEC.24.04.3 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

#### **LTSEC.24.04.3.1 Previous minutes**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.01 was received.*

LTSEC.24.04.3.1.1 Members approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2024.

#### **LTSEC.24.04.3.2 Action sheet and matters arising**

*A digital copy of the action sheet was received and noted.*

#### **LTSEC.24.04.3.3 Chair's actions**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.02 was received.*

LTSEC.24.04.3.3.1 Members noted the approval of the external examining principles mapping document, which had been shared with Academic Board and the University Quality and Standards Sub-Committee (UQSSC).

### **LTSEC.24.04.4 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

#### **LTSEC.24.04.4.1 Chair's report**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.03 was received.*

LTSEC.24.04.4.1 Members commented on Weston College receiving OfS funding to promote growth in degree apprenticeships. Members heard that this was not expected to threaten the University's strategic partnership with Weston College, since the funds apply for level 6 apprenticeships, on which UWE partners with the College.

#### **LTSEC.24.04.4.2 The Students' Union report**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.04 was received.*

LTSEC.24.04.4.2.1 The Vice President Sports and Health, in attendance at the meeting and with the prior agreement of the Chair, introduced the paper, drawing attention to the issue of personalised timetables and setting out an agenda for using this to improve the student experience.

LTSEC.24.04.4.2.2 Members heard that:

1. Personalised timetables have the potential to benefit not just those who participate in campus sports but also those with caring or family responsibilities and those with part-time work commitments. This would also support better space utilisation across the teaching week.
2. The SU is seeking the University to reaffirm its commitment not to schedule lectures (and where possible teaching activity more generally) on Wednesday afternoons.
3. It is also seeking a commitment to ensuring lectures are recorded through Lecture Capture so that those unable to attend due to other commitments are not disadvantaged.
4. Data from student surveys regarding the issue of activity timetabled on Wednesday afternoon is appended to the paper, including students' comments.

LTSEC.24.04.4.2.3 The Chair welcomed the report; it was noted that focusing discussion on a specific issue was a useful approach to engaging with LTSEC.

LTSEC.24.04.4.2.4 Members commented that:

1. Though not a new commitment, it is important for the University to acknowledge the challenge of personalising timetables and work towards addressing it.
2. Parallel work had been undertaken as part of a Student Developer Project to gather student views of and potential problems with using the full teaching week.
3. Timetabling is being reviewed as part of the UWE Programmes work to make it more student-centred; students will be consulted as part of this.
4. Initial data on Wednesday afternoon teaching activities indicates that very few undergraduate lectures are being scheduled during this time; the majority of such activities are optional/ part of a suite of options but may not be labelled as such on students' timetables.
5. While the commitment to minimise teaching activities timetabled on Wednesday afternoons primarily applies to undergraduate students, there may be some demand for this from postgraduate taught students.
6. The School of Arts had consulted on the use of facilities at Bower Ashton, with indications that students wish to have access to practice-based facilities for an extended period. This would also be important for the School of Applied Sciences.

7. Views across the student body would be needed in order to make an informed decision on whether to extend teaching activity later into the evenings, if Wednesday afternoons are to be avoided.
8. There is a need to balance an authentic student experience against the needs of students, particularly in the current economic climate – in relation to their other responsibilities and also different learning preferences.
9. Students are supportive of recording lectures, which particularly helps neurodiverse individuals. However, it is noted that viewing recorded lectures does not necessarily offer the same learning experience as in-person attendance.
10. For modules running with multiple groups, students could ideally be given an option of which timetabled class to attend, though there are significant resource constraints on this.
11. Similarly, compressed timetables were particularly useful for commuting students, in minimising the number of days expected to be on campus. However, it is acknowledged that it would be a challenge to implement this widely.

#### **LTSEC.24.04.4.3**

#### **Policy update tracker**

*A digital copy of the policies tracker was received and noted.*

#### **LTSEC.24.04.5**

#### **QUALITY, STANDARDS AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

#### **LTSEC.24.04.5.1**

#### **Reimagining Student Representation update**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.05 was received.*

##### LTSEC.24.04.5.1.1

The Deputy Registrar briefly introduced the paper (in the absence of the Academic Registrar), noting that the work is being overseen by the UWE/SU Partnership Board. The workstream draws on sector practice elsewhere and positive progress has already been made. For example, the project has enabled the earlier identification of student representatives at levels 5 and 6, in response to this Committee's concerns about the timelines for recruitment and training.

##### LTSEC.24.04.5.1.2

Members welcomed the update and acknowledged that baseline work was necessary. Clarity was sought on the overall vision for the work and the narratives that this could produce, particularly in readiness for the next Teaching Excellence Framework exercise.

##### LTSEC.24.04.5.1.3

In particular, members emphasised the need to articulate how success will be measured, what good or outstanding practice will look like and how academics would be consulted on Schools' engagement with Lead School Representatives.

**[ACTION: Deputy Registrar/Academic Registrar to consider how to articulate an overall vision for Reimagining Student Representation]**

#### **LTSEC.24.04.5.2**

##### **Interim casework report**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.06 was received.*

#### LTSEC.24.04.5.2.1

The Secretary introduced the paper, noting that the full annual student casework report is scheduled to be presented to LTSEC in September 2024. It was hoped that the interim report would enable trends to be identified and responded to earlier in the cycle.

#### LTSEC.24.04.5.2.2

Members heard that:

1. A group complaint relating to the marking and assessment boycott, involving approximately 100 students, was being examined on a cohort basis. The Student Casework team is liaising with the School in question to address and manage this and it is hoped that it will be reviewed and completed by the time the final 2023/24 casework report is submitted in September 2024.
2. The report shows a significant increase in reports of discrimination and hate compared with the previous academic year; much of this relates to the conflict in Gaza. The reports have been investigated; though few have been progressed into formal cases, students affected have been directed towards appropriate support and local resolution.
3. The Student Casework team is currently moving towards a new casework management system, which will enable more robust reporting. Tracking of case closures has just begun and the final report is expected to include data on how far cases are being resolved in the stated timelines.
4. There is a growing trend elsewhere in the sector to investigate "anonymous" reports where individuals are otherwise identifiable. Since the University does not currently do this, the Student Casework team would consult with EDI colleagues on reviewing the UWE approach.

#### **LTSEC.24.04.5.3**

##### **Student Drugs including Alcohol Policy**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.07 was received.*

LTSEC.24.04.5.3.1 The Dean for Students introduced the paper, which has already been approved by the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Group, and highlighted that:

1. The revised policy reframes the University's commitment to harm reduction (as opposed to zero tolerance) in order to better align policy with practice, establishing clear obligations and lines of sight. It further differentiates between the treatment of cases of students taking drugs as opposed to dealing them.
2. The University has worked closely with the SU on drugs and alcohol issues more generally, including successfully receiving National Drug and Alcohol Impact Accreditation; there is confidence that the University will be re-accredited next year.
3. In general, fewer students appear to be using drugs but those that do are experiencing more significant dependency problems, reflecting a wider societal trend.

## **LTSEC.24.04.6 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY**

### **LTSEC.24.04.6.1 Access and Participation Plan update**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.08 was received.*

LTSEC.24.04.6.1.1 The Data and Impact Lead introduced the paper, highlighting that:

1. Responsibility for monitoring progress against the University's access and participation plan is delegated to the APP Monitoring Group, chaired by the Academic Registrar.
2. Included is a summary of feedback on individual School plans, which the School Directors of Learning and Teaching (SDLT) presented at a recent meeting of the Group.
3. Recommendations include:
  - a. Ensuring activities are clearly aligned with data gaps.
  - b. Avoiding a deficit model by articulating interventions more inclusively for all students.
  - c. Enhancing evaluation, which is acknowledged to be in the earlier stages of development.
  - d. Strengthening consistency in the formatting of plans to enable the monitoring group to scrutinise them more effectively.
  - e. Encouraging Schools to embed coaching opportunities where the biggest impact on awarding

gaps can be made; this should align with wider work on coaching approaches across the University.

4. Schools would be invited to an evaluation workshop in spring/summer 2024 to strengthen evaluation approaches; evaluation is a crucial component of the new OfS framework for APPs.
5. It is recommended that each School submits a revised plan by 1 July 2024, in preparation for institutional reporting to the OfS.

LTSEC.24.04.6.1.2 Members noted that the Committee's role is to gain assurance that APP actions are being progressed in the right way and that they are supported by appropriate data.

LTSEC.24.04.6.1.3 In discussion, members commented that:

1. There are a number of cross-cutting areas of the University's activity, including apprenticeships and the Future Quest programme, which do not belong to a particular School. These could also benefit from enhanced evaluation.

**[ACTION: Data and Impact Lead to consider developing further evaluation workshops for cross-cutting areas]**

2. It would be helpful for SDLTs to be provided with clear criteria against which the Monitoring Group assesses their plans.

**[ACTION: Data and Impact Lead to seek clear criteria for the review of School-level APPs from the Monitoring Group]**

## **LTSEC.24.04.7 ASSURANCE REPORTING**

### **LTSEC.24.04.7.1 Risks**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.09 was received.*

LTSEC.24.04.7.1.1 Members noted the paper for information. The paper includes an update on corporate scorecard KPIs and academic risks for student outcomes, student experience and student recruitment.

## **LTSEC.24.04.8 SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTING**

### **LTSEC.24.04.8.1 University Quality and Standards Sub-Committee**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.10 was received.*

LTSEC.24.04.8.1.1 The Chair of UQSSC gave a brief update noting that members of the Committee would be working with Partnership Leads to identify barriers to the timely completion of Partnership Lead reports.

**LTSEC.24.04.8.2 School Boards of Studies**

*Verbal update*

LTSEC.24.04.8.2.1 Members noted that UQSSC would aim to collate common themes raised by the School Boards of Studies, highlighting anything for escalation to either LTSEC or UQSSC as appropriate.

**LTSEC.24.04.9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**LTSEC.24.04.9.1 Timeline for implementation of the new quality cycle: proposed amendment**

*Paper LTSEC.24.04.11 was received.*

LTSEC.24.04.9.1.1 The Chair of UQSSC introduced the paper noting that:

1. The Committee had previously approved a new annual quality cycle for implementation in 2023/24. However, due to prioritisation of UWE Programmes, a revised timeline and interim approach are proposed.
2. The interim approach is to continue with existing practice, based on module reports and the Annual Programme Review (supported by the Continuous Improvement Tool), with some additional enhancement work proposed.
3. Schools will be given the option to trial the introduction of a learning and teaching enhancement day in autumn 2024, while the School of Health and Social Wellbeing will trial the introduction of Enhancement Boards.
4. The aim is therefore to implement fully the new quality cycle from the 2024/25 academic year.

LTSEC.24.04.9.1.2 Members approved the proposal.

**LTSEC.24.04.9.2 University Mental Health Charter status**

*Verbal update*

LTSEC.24.04.9.2.1 Members were reminded that the University was recently awarded University Mental Health Charter status, receiving a merit and becoming the first university to achieve this. This is a great achievement and thanks were extended to all those who led on and contributed to the award.



**LTSEC.24.04.10****DATE(S) OF NEXT MEETING(S)**

LTSEC.24.04.10.1

Next meeting dates for academic year 2023/24:

- Wednesday 12 June 2024.