



Academic Board

## LEARNING, TEACHING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2024 in Room 2Q050/51 on Frenchay Campus.

**Present:** Jo Midgley (Chair), Umar Abbasi, Abdullahi Arabo, David Barrett, Georgie Benford, Jackie Chelin, Fiona Cottrell, Rachel Cowie, Bernhard Gross, James Hazzard, Antony Hill, Khadiza Hossain, Clay Johnson (alternate for Chief Information Officer), Moya Lerigo-Sampson, Rachael Miles, Cathy Minett-Smith, Gerry Rice, Jackie Rogers, Lucy Scott, Lloyd Williams, Jonathan Winfield, Osman Yukselturk

**Apologies:** Amanda Coffey, Maria Casado-Diaz, Miltos Hadjosif, Heather Moyes

**In attendance:** Sarah Garlick (item 2.1), Nicky Pavitt (items 6.1 to 6.3), Ian Stratton (Secretary), Harriet Castor Jeffery (Secretary from November), Theresa Viner (Officer), David Young (Officer)

### LTSEC.24.09.1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

LTSEC.24.09.1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. New members were introduced, including the new SU Vice Presidents, the new School Directors of Learning and Teaching, the EDI Data and Impact Lead as co-opted member, and those guests in attendance for this meeting. Apologies were noted.

LTSEC.24.09.1.2 No declarations of interest were received.

### LTSEC.24.09.2 DEEP DIVE PRESENTATION

**LTSEC.24.09.2.1 University Mental Health Charter**  
*Presentation / Paper LTSEC.24.09.01 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.2.1.1 Sarah Garlick gave a presentation on the University Mental Health Charter (UMHC), noting how UWE Bristol is currently the only university to have achieved merit status, and reporting on the

need to adopt a “whole-university” approach to mental health and wellbeing, where the focus is on non-clinical outcomes and the most responsive higher education providers are seen to go through three stages of generational change.

LTSEC.24.09.2.1.2 The Dean for Students continued the presentation by discussing what will be required for our institution to progress to UMHC distinction status.

LTSEC.24.09.2.1.3 The Chair welcomed the presentation and commented that, while the University should take pride in its achievements in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of students, there is clearly more to do.

LTSEC.24.09.2.1.4 In discussion, members commented that:

1. UWE Bristol has an opportunity, with its merit status, to lead the sector on mental health.
2. The University needs to demonstrate its positive impacts on student wellbeing in all aspects of its activity, including learning and teaching, and assessment.
3. Students should be active and creative voices in this process.
4. The embedding of student wellbeing in assessment and having student participation at the core of new course creation are both important aspects of the “Flourishing by Design” philosophy of UWE Programmes.

The SSOS Director of Learning and Teaching left the meeting.

### **LTSEC.24.09.3 LTSEC 2024/25 BUSINESS**

#### **LTSEC.24.09.3.1 LTSEC terms of reference and membership**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.02 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.3.1.1 The Chair introduced the terms of reference and membership, reminding the Committee that two-thirds of the School Directors of Learning and Teaching will be members of LTSEC, with the remaining one-third represented on the University Quality and Standards Sub-Committee, on a rotational basis.

It was confirmed that the lead student representatives would be joining the November meeting of LTSEC once they have received the appropriate committee training.

- LTSEC.24.09.3.1.2 The Chair noted that two positions on the membership list remain vacant:
1. A representative for Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity. Fiona Cottrell, Data and Impact Lead, was nominated as EDI representative going forward.
  2. A technical representative post. The Director of Learning & Teaching in the School of Arts recommended Richard Falle, Technical Resource Manager - Make/Physical Making (CATE).
- LTSEC.24.09.3.1.3 LTSEC terms of reference were endorsed, noting that matters may arise from the Governance review.
- [ACTION: Deputy Registrar to update LTSEC on any changes relating to the terms of reference following the Governance review].**
- LTSEC.24.09.3.1.4 The Chair commented that the boardpack, despite commendable reductions made by the Secretary, was still too long. This is likely to hinder members in engaging with the papers and could impact the effectiveness of the committee.
- LTSEC.24.09.3.1.5 In discussion, specific members made the following comments:
1. A facility could be introduced to allow members to make comments directly onto the papers prior to the meeting (CHSS Dean of Learning and Teaching).
  1. The soon-to-be-published external governance review is due to address this issue of paperwork (Deputy Registrar).
  2. It is important that executive summaries are clear and brief (CATE Dean of Learning and Teaching).
- More guidance, including wordcount, for executive summary authors would be helpful (EDI Data and Impact Lead).
- LTSEC.24.09.3.2 LTSEC Business Plan**  
*Paper LTSEC.24.09.03 was received.*
- LTSEC.24.09.3.2.1 The Secretary introduced the indicative business plan for 2024/25, noting that it is a live document which helps to manage the business flow over the upcoming academic year. Data reporting cycles and APP reporting have been factored into the business plan. It will be updated on SharePoint.

**LTSEC.24.09.3.3 Sub-committee terms of reference**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.04 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.3.3.1 The terms of reference for the University Quality and Standards Sub-Committee (UQSSC) (including membership) and the School Boards of Studies were noted.

**LTSEC.24.09.4 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

**LTSEC.24.09.4.1 Previous minutes**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.05 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.4.1.1 Members approved the minutes of the meeting on 12 June 2024.

**LTSEC.24.09.4.2 \*Action sheet**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.06 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.4.2.1 Starred item. It was noted that the action tracker has been updated.

**LTSEC.24.09.4.3 \*Chair's actions**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.08 was received.*

1. Officer's exercise report: Roll-out of LLM Global Business and Finance Law at Villa College and BIBM.
2. Officer's exercise report: FdSc Assistant Practitioner (Occupational Therapy) at UCW, UCS and CoBC.
3. Officer's exercise report: Roll-out to GlosColl (sent on behalf of Partnerships) BSc (Hons) Digital Media [Top Up] GlosCol.
4. Revised Complaints Policy – minor revisions for the academic year 2024/25.
5. Revised Assessment and Feedback Policy amendments.

**LTSEC.24.09.5 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

**LTSEC.24.09.5.1 \*Chair's report**

*Continuation of LTSEC.24.09.08.*

LTSEC.24.09.5.1.1 Members noted the following report for information, and were informed there were no matters arising.  
Chairs actions are noted under LTSEC.24.09.04.3

**LTSEC.24.09.5.2 The Students' Union report**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.09 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.5.2.1 The Students' Union Vice Presidents highlighted the following from the report:

1. The principles of academic representation have been updated. Applying to all staff, these five revised core principles will guide the Students' Union and UWE Bristol in their approach to academic representation for all students: inclusivity, partnership, effectiveness, transparency and ambition.
2. The VP Education commented that the Students' Union worked productively with the Deputy Director (Policy Development and Student Experience) Student and Academic Services, as well as the Deputy Registrar, on the Reimagining Student Representation Group.

LTSEC.24.09.5.2.2 The Chair welcomed the presentation and commented that it was an excellent piece of work. LTSEC endorsed the principles.

LTSEC.24.09.5.2.3 In discussion, the Head of the Doctoral Academy commented that, when the Student Voice is considered, postgraduate research students should be specifically considered.

**LTSEC.24.09.5.3** **\*Policy update tracker**  
*Paper LTSEC.24.09.10 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.5.3.1 The progress of policy updates under the Policy Governance Framework was noted.

LTSEC.24.09.5.3.2 In discussion, the Head of the Doctoral Academy again wished it to be noted that PGR students need to be incorporated into mainstream activity.

## **LTSEC.24.09.6** **QUALITY, STANDARDS AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

**LTSEC.24.09.6.1** **Student Surveys Outcomes – NSS/PTES**  
*Paper LTSEC.24.09.11 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.6.1.1 Nicky Pavitt, the Student Voice and Academic Policy Team Manager, introduced the paper, noting that:

1. The 2024 results were published in July and Programmes, Schools and Colleges have had two months to review and digest results and consider any actions.

2. The University is working with the Students' Union to engage with lead school reps to help them understand the data earlier and more comprehensively.

LTSEC.24.09.6.1.2 The Chair welcomed the presentation and commented that a considerable amount of work has already been undertaken on this data.

**LTSEC.24.09.6.2 Course Survey Strategy 24/25**  
*Paper LTSEC.24.09.12 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.6.2.1 Nicky Pavitt, the Student Voice and Academic Policy Team Manager, introduced the paper, noting that:

1. Programme teams are being contacted to inform them that the window for the survey is now between January and March.
2. Programme teams can launch the survey anytime during this three-month period.
3. No official promotion will take place until March.
4. The results will be published in April.
5. Programme teams will receive all necessary support.

LTSEC.24.09.6.2.2 In discussion, the CHSS Dean of Learning and Teaching commented that a regular cycle for this survey will be beneficial, and the Chair confirmed that the membership was happy with the timescale.

**LTSEC.24.09.6.3 Institutional themes from student surveys 2023/24**  
*Paper LTSEC.24.09.13 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.6.3.1 Nicky Pavitt, the Student Voice and Academic Policy Team Manager, introduced the paper, noting that:

1. A new software application [MLY] enables themes across all levels of study to emerge from student surveys.
2. Interesting comments were noted on the following areas:
  - "Friendship"
  - "Positive engagement with staff"
  - "Cost of living"
  - "Teaching methods"
  - "Mode of study" – noteworthy here was the lack of consistency in whether online or in-person was preferred.

LTSEC.24.09.6.3.2 In discussion, members commented that:

1. Particularly in areas such as the “mapping out” of assessment, UWE Programmes is endeavouring to use this same thematic information.
2. Feedback on teaching styles and methods can be incorporated into the School Workload Model reviews.

LTSEC.24.09.6.3.3 The Chair agreed that UWE Programmes is an opportunity for being effective and innovative. However, the Chair cautioned against seeking further analyses if existing information bases are sufficient.

**LTSEC.24.09.6.4 \*Changes to the undergraduate degree classification algorithm update**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.14 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.6.4.1 Starred item was requested by LTSEC for final assurance. The Secretary noted that the algorithm is doing as expected and there is no current cause for concern.

**LTSEC.24.09.6.5 \*Escalated items**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.16 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.6.5.1 It was noted that no escalated items had been received from either the UQSSC and Annual Quality Cycle or the School Board of Studies.

**LTSEC.24.09.7 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY**

**LTSEC.24.09.7.1 APP Update**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.17 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.7.1.1 The EDI Data and Impact Lead presented the paper, highlighting that:

1. The APP (Access and Participation Plan) is a regulatory requirement of OfS. All HE providers must have an approved plan if they want to charge the higher tuition fee.
2. The plan identifies rules and sets targets, indicating how the money from higher fees will be invested.
3. The APP cycle lasts for 4 years, and the University is now in Year 1 of the 4-year plan.
4. In a recent OfS data release, including data on the 7 APP targets, the analysis shows that six of the seven APP gap-

based targets are narrowing, although one metric is increasing.

5. There are five Intervention Strategies, with School Plans one part of the inclusive learning experience strand.
6. There are three different Lead Indicators, including data evaluation.
7. The APP Monitoring Group feeds into LTSEC.

LTSEC.24.09.7.1.2 In discussion, the clear and efficient use of data was debated, with the need for the School Plan to be “smarter,” with less possibility for an inefficient data overlap with the School Roadmap.

LTSEC.24.09.7.1.3 The Chair commended the APP report but noted that it contains several acronyms with which the members of Academic Board may not be familiar.

**[ACTION: EDI Data and Impact Lead / Officer to Academic Board to include a glossary when the APP paper is submitted to Academic Board].**

## **LTSEC.24.09.8 ASSURANCE REPORTING**

### **LTSEC.24.09.8.1 OIA Annual Provider Report 2023** *Paper LTSEC.24.09.18 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.8.1.1 The Secretary introduced the report, noting the following:

1. The number of UWE complaints received by the OIA is low relative to other HE providers in the same OIA band (13 in 2023, as opposed to a median of 31 in other providers).
2. 17 UWE complaints were closed by the OIA (38 is the median score in other comparative providers).
3. 143 Completion of Procedures (COP) letters were issued by UWE Bristol in 2023, which represents a doubling of the workload.
4. Turnaround time remains long due to the size of evidence that must be supplied in the representation packs.

LTSEC.24.09.8.1.2 In discussion, members were resolved on the following points:

1. That UWE Bristol has fewer complaints because the University is competent at resolving complaints locally.
2. The significant portion of complaints being about academic appeals (Charts 5 and 6) is due to subjective differences in academic judgement not being resolvable in internal academic appeals, hence they escalate to the OIA.



3. The University dealt with 34 group-based complaints involving 250 students.

**LTSEC.24.09.8.2 Student Casework Report 23/24**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.19 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.8.2.1 The Secretary, in his capacity as the Head of Student and Academic Policy Enhancement, introduced the report, noting the following:

1. Repositioned casework is now more integrated.
2. The Casework team is seeing fewer cases because of quicker local intervention. The average wait for "first intervention" has been reduced from 46 days to 14 days.
3. Casework success is as much about providing support as dealing with the specifics of the case.
4. All academic appeals were adjudicated prior to the resit boards, reducing pressure on students at the challenging time.
5. The backlog in the casework tracker has been reduced to there being only around 10 cases at any one time.
6. More female students appear in early reports, but more male students appear in cases overall.
7. There are plans for website and training development.

LTSEC.24.09.8.2.2 The Chair welcomed the presentation, and thanks were extended on behalf of LTSEC to the Student Casework Operations Manager and the Head of Student and Academic Policy Enhancement for their hard work, and the progress made in Casework.

LTSEC.24.09.8.2.3 In discussion, the Head of the Doctoral Academy noted that PGR students are not mentioned in the tables. It would helpful if they were specified, even if there is no data to report.

**[ACTION: PGR student data to be clarified on the Casework Report prior to submission to Academic Board (Secretary / Officer to Academic Board)].**

**LTSEC.24.09.9 SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTING**

**LTSEC.24.09.9.1 \*University Quality and Standards Sub-Committee**

*Paper LTSEC.24.09.20 was received.*

LTSEC.24.09.9.1.1 The minutes of the meeting on 28 May 2024 and the summary report of the meeting in June 2024 were noted.

**LTSEC.24.09.10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**LTSEC.24.09.10.1 Reasonable Adjustments**

*Verbal*

LTSEC.24.09.10.1.1 The VP Education appreciated the conversations that the Deputy Registrar had with the Students' Union and other colleagues within the working group over the summer on this matter. The Deputy Registrar confirmed to the membership that these are reasonable adjustments to deadline rather than reasonable adjustments that are put in place to help students with disabilities. This is a system that provides students who are disabled, carers of a disabled person, those covered by the Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption and Partner policy, or those experiencing a significant life event, with additional time from the original deadline in which to submit their work.

LTSEC.24.09.10.1.2 This period of extra time has hitherto been 14 days, but, with effect from Friday 6 September 2024, this will be replaced by a 7-calendar day reasonable adjustment window (5 days on top of the 48 hour late window). The rationale for the change was that the longer time had potential negative impacts on the student experience, encouraging procrastination, causing students to lose focus on their next assessments, and delaying feedback for all students. It also created significant workload delays for staff marking.

LTSEC.24.09.10.1.3 The Deputy Registrar reported that approximately 11,000 applications for a reasonable adjustment to deadline were made in the summer of 2024.

LTSEC.24.09.10.1.4 In discussion, members commented that:

1. It is important to strike a balance between supporting students (particularly removing barriers for disabled students) and preparing them for future job roles where deadline flexibility is rare.
2. Too much extra time given to students can be mentally unhelpful.
3. Excessive time after an assessment deadline can also have visa implications for international students.
4. Students should be supported in the process. Even though applications have been high, there is no indication that students are "gaming" the system to unjustifiably accrue extra time. However, it was noted that the University

support systems are significantly more generous than other institutions.

5. Complaints about the new process should be sent to the School Managers.

<b>LTSEC.24.09.11</b>	<b>DATE(S) OF NEXT MEETING(S)</b>
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| LTSEC.24.09.11.1 | Next meeting dates for academic year 2024/25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 6 November 2024</li><li>• 5 February 2025</li><li>• 16 April 2025</li><li>• 5 June 2025 (Thursday)</li></ul> |
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