



Minutes of Academic Council

Held at 3:15pm on Thursday 7th November 2013 at University House, Meeting Room 1

Date of meeting	30/10/12
Number of Attendees	101 Attendees 65 Apologies

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted

2. Welcome

VPE welcomed Reps to the first Academic Council

3. Approval of minutes

Minutes approved

4. Approval of actions

All actions were completed by VPE

5. Election of Academic Council Representatives

There were six candidates for Academic Council Representative;

Glen Burgon

Matt Evans

Yunxiao Guo

Sam McKay

Matthew Walker

Jessica Mahathevan

Questions to candidates from VPE, Faculty Co-ordinator for Arts and Social Sciences, a Course Rep and a Councillor of Scrutiny.

A majority was not reached in the first round so the candidates with the two candidates with the least number of votes were eliminated: Matthew Walker and Jessica Mahathevan.

Another round of votes occurred, again a majority was not reached, the candidate with the least number of votes was eliminated: Yunxiao Guo

Another round of votes occurred the winners were: Matt Evans and Sam McKay.

6. Discussion points from the University

VPE asked for feedback on the Library Redevelopment.

- Course Reps disliked the fact that students can no longer eat and drink in the tower and reading room. This point was raised several times and supported by all present.
- Noise travels when the reading room doors are left open.
- Security guards are sometimes rude to students
- There needs to be instructions for new equipment for both staff and students
- The reading room was praised for being a pleasant space to work in with particular regard to how bright it is now.
- Students are struggling with only one kiosk to top up printer credits. Printer credits are no longer displayed on the computer screen, could this be changed?
- Students really like the ability to loan laptops
- There are some noise problems on the tower floors.
- A Student had noticed a book disappear from the library catalogue and wondered if some updates had gone wrong.
- Students would like more communication if there is going to be drilling directly above where they are working.
- There are sometimes queues for the computers and printers on the ground floor
- More alternative spaces are advised for during exam time.
- A mixed response was given about the standard duplex printing that now occurs, students would have liked a better prior warning as some departments do not accept work printed double sided. Other students were pleased about the amount of paper it is saving.
- Students were pleased there are no longer stacks of left behind paper at printers
- Some student cards do not currently work in the Library
- No first years have had the printing system explained to them

Students would like to be able to return books on all floors as well as taking them out.

6. Course Rep Investigate

VPE gave Course Reps the recommendations from each board of Curriculum Reform and asked them to say positives, negatives and areas that need more consultation on.

Group 1

Liked:

-4.1 Develop (by the end of 2013) a vision and strategy for a Virtual Campus, including a Technology-Enhanced Learning Strategy

It is intended to enhance the central support for Technology-Enhanced Learning. The Virtual Campus vision will go beyond e-Learning, and encompass a vision for the delivery of services and support for online learners and for others who may want to access services

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from a distance, and it will consider how our processes and systems support the development of virtual activity.

Disliked:

-2.6 Reduce the floating Easter break to 2 weeks, but retain the 3-week Christmas break.

Thought more consultation was needed on:

-2.1 Divide the university year into 3 trimesters, formalising the summer period as an additional teaching period available for use.

Students were concerned about having less time for work and study during Easter.

One postgraduate student didn't want the amount of quiet time on campus to be reduced.

Students were concerned about having to study across the summer and how much two year degrees would be implemented.

Group 2

Liked:

Technology-Enhanced learning

Disliked:

-1.5 Understand and treat the entire first year of study as a transition period.

Undergraduate students do not enter the University as fully functioning undergraduates – there must be a transition period that begins before entry and lasts for the first year of study, and there must be a focus in this period on developing the skills needed to become a functioning undergraduate. Transition activities should also be designed at the start of each succeeding year – this applies to the transition to postgraduate study as well. The Project 3 report contains detailed recommendations with regard to transition

More consultation needed on:

-1.1 Remove long-thin modules from the standard framework.

Students felt that it wasn't necessary for the entire of first year to be treated as transition, they felt it would be reductive and they just wanted to get stuck in to work.

Students were concerned about the lack of continuity if long thins were removed and the potential for long thin modules to be squashed into short fat modules.

Group 3

Liked:

-The language of the Hull Awards 6.1 Recognise the achievement of higher levels of graduate attributes through the Hull Awards.

All graduates should have the opportunity to develop graduate attributes to a higher level, whether through their programmes of study, through extra-programmatic activities, or through a combination of the two

Disliked:

-2.7 Consider the division of the teaching day into 3 periods - morning, afternoon and evening.

Students did not want to be taught in the evenings

Group 4

Liked:

-4.3 Require that departments, when reviewing their programmes as part of the portfolio review [Project 4], give consideration to identifying further opportunities for the delivery of on-line distance learning or blended programmes.

Disliked:

-6.3 Use 'Digital badges', sometimes known as 'open badges', to recognise achievements.

The collection of digital badges will be the means by which awards are gained. The ability to evidence and articulate graduate attributes will be a key component of the definition of graduate skills; all graduates will be expected to develop this ability, and they will be expected to develop it to a high level to qualify for a Hull Award – the University will provide the means through an effective e-Portfolio system.

Students felt collecting badges seemed quite childish like being back at scouts or brownies.

Group 5

Liked:

-5.6- Consider offering all undergraduates the opportunity to engage in language study outside their programme of study, without extra fees being charged.

Disliked:

-2.1 Divide the university year into 3 trimesters, formalising the summer period as an additional teaching period available for use.

More Consultation needed on:

-1.1 Remove long-thin modules from the standard framework.

Nursing students particularly favoured the ability to engage in language study

Reasons given for dislike were the same as above.

Group 6

Liked:

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-6.4 Systematise and market strongly the range of extra-programmatic activities available to students, through which, if they want, they can gain recognition to qualify for Hull Awards, as a distinctive feature of the Hull University experience.

These extra-programmatic activities include additional learning opportunities (language-learning, for example), skills classes, career management activities, volunteering with the University, volunteering with the HUU, other activity in the community independent of the University, and employment. The creation of a systematic portfolio of extra-programmatic activities would fit well with the proposal to create a formal third semester in the summer (Project 1).

Disliked:

-1.1 Remove long-thin modules from the standard framework.

More consultation needed on:

-4.1 Develop (by the end of 2013) a vision and strategy for a Virtual Campus, including a Technology-Enhanced Learning Strategy

It is intended to enhance the central support for Technology-Enhanced Learning. The Virtual Campus vision will go beyond e-Learning, and encompass a vision for the delivery of services and support for online learners and for others who may want to access services from a distance, and it will consider how our processes and systems support the development of virtual activity.

Students were concerned about everything being online and removing the need for them to physically come to campus, which they enjoy doing.

Group 7

Liked:

7.1 Review its undergraduate programme portfolio (UG curriculum content) and its PFT portfolio across all academic areas by the end of 2013.

Disliked:

-1.2 Remove options from level 4 study.

Students highly favoured being able to chose some form of study in their first year.

7. Course Rep Issues

Course Reps raised concerns with the size of lecture rooms. A class of 80 students, was in a room fit for 50 students.

Eduroam connection on Android phones and devices were a concern, VPE explained the process by which the Wifi has been improved and the changes that are being made to rectify this problem.



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Timetabling was an issue that Course Reps raised, teaching after 6.15pm until 8pm. VPE is looking into it and explained to Course Reps that teaching after 6pm is outside of the standard Academic Day and would require special permission.

Course Reps praised the releasing of the timetable early. However, they felt it was difficult to put it all together, as they had to select each module at a time. Course Reps said it would be more beneficial to select all modules at once time. Several reps commented that on Macintosh computers they could not see the times of the lectures, VPE suggested that this could have been because of pop up blockers.

One Course Rep raised the issue that there are not enough water fountains on campus.

A course has had timetables released but due to the modules being on different days meant that they could not arrange placement. VPE explained the process of timetabling and how it is incredibly difficult for the time table to be put together.

In relation to exams and special circumstances, Portal does not update, it simply says "you have special circumstances" students need to keep their letter with them at all times. If they lose this letter then they face an issue. This was supported by several Course Reps.

Students have asked Course Reps to raise an issue at Academic Council: the quality of food across the University has gone down. VPE asked if it was anywhere in particular, the course rep felt quality had declined at both university and union outlets.

Lighting issues within the Wilberforce building are affecting students, the lights are too bright.

Course Reps raised the issue that feedback on assessments has been highlighted as being slow within the psychology department.

The ICT department in the Applied Sciences building needs more advertising as students are not as aware of it as they could be. This was felt to be a shame as on visiting, students found the staff incredible helpful.

One course rep was concerned that the clocks are placed on the wrong wall in many of the teaching spaces causing lecturers to run over without noticing. Another counteracted by suggesting the clock is in the right place but lecturers are not paying attention.

8. Any other business

Reps have raised issues with training, in that some did not receive emails or just missed the training.



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ERC to run more sessions (information already on Hullstudent:
<http://hullstudent.com/representation/academic/course-reps>)

9. Next Meeting of Academic Council will be Wednesday 4th December 2013,
12:15pm in Meeting Room 1.