

Minutes of a Meeting of the Educational Character Committee
held at 4pm on Wednesday, 9 May 2013
in Room 1B27, Technpark, London Road, London SE1

Present

Steve Balmont	Chair
Barbara Ahland	
Anisa Ali	SU President
Douglas Denham St Pinnock	
Andrew Owen	

In attendance

Prof Martin Earwicker	Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive
Dr Phil Cardew	Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic)
Prof Mike Molan	Executive Dean, Arts and Human Sciences
James Stevenson	University Secretary and Clerk to the Board of Governors
Michael Broadway	Governance Officer

Welcome and Apologies

1. Apologies had been received from Prof Hilary McCallion.
2. The Chairman reported that the committee members had just had an informative pre-meeting with the Student Union and that he would circulate his comments on the meeting to members via email.

Minutes of the last meeting

3. The minutes of the meeting of 13 February 2013 were confirmed as a correct record (paper **EC.07(13)**). The minutes were approved for publication.

Matters Arising

4. There were no matters arising which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Faculty Pro Formas

5. The committee discussed the updated faculty pro formas which included a SWOT analysis and key deliverables and risks for the current academic year

2012/13 (paper **EC.08(13)**). The committee welcomed the new structure of the form and requested that each is updated ahead of the committee's faculty visits.

HESA Key Performance Indicators

6. The committee noted an update on Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) key performance indicators (paper **EC.09(13)**). It was reported that the university performed well in widening participation indicators and was meeting its widening participation targets as set out in its OFFA access agreement. The challenge for the university was student retention and work was being focused on improving level 4-5 progression.

Postgraduate Faculty Monitoring

7. The committee discussed the postgraduate faculty monitoring report (paper **EC.10(13)**). It was reported that these reports were reviewed by the Quality and Standards Committee to ensure academic standards remain high across the university and that external quality requirements are met. The committee requested an overview report in the future.
8. It was reported that all faculties expressed concern about postgraduate recruitment because of the external environment. It was noted students increasingly wanted a specialist postgraduate qualification and that the challenge for the faculties was to ensure variety in their courses without them being too specialist.

Annual Report of Academic Misconduct and Appeals

9. The committee noted the annual report on academic misconduct and appeals (paper **EC.11(13)**). It was reported that progress had been made on delivering consistent decisions across the university on academic misconduct and appeals cases.

Annual committee plan

10. The committee noted its annual plan (paper **EC.12(13)**).

Any other business

11. In response to a question it was reported that it was unlikely that the Schools Direct Training Programme would impact on the University's education provision.

12. The committee discussed the Student Experience Survey as reported in the Times Higher. It was reported that the survey, which had a sample of 50 students, was not representative of the student population and that the National Student Survey is a much better indicator of student experience and satisfaction.

Next Meeting

13. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 4th December 2013 at 4pm, preceded by a visit to Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences.

Confirmed as a correct record

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Chair