

Minutes of a Meeting of the Educational Character Committee  
held at 4pm on Wednesday, 4 December 2013  
in Room T209, Student Centre, Borough Road, London SE1

**Present**

Steve Balmont	Chair
Barbara Ahland	SU President
Douglas Denham St Pinnock	
Hilary McCallion	
Mee Ling Ng	
Andrew Owen	

**In attendance**

Prof Martin Earwicker	Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive
Dr Phil Cardew	Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic)
Stephen Hackett	Director of Student Services
Prof Mike Molan	Executive Dean, Arts and Human Sciences
Kirsty Palmer	Head of Employability Service
James Stevenson	University Secretary and Clerk to the Board of Governors
Ruth Sutton	Governance Assistant

**Welcome and Apologies**

1. The committee welcomed Mee Ling Ng to her first meeting of the committee.
2. No apologies had been received.
3. Barbara Ahland joined the meeting.

**Minutes of the last meeting**

4. The minutes of the meeting of 9 May 2013 were approved for publication with no redactions.

## **Matters Arising**

5. The Chairman circulated notes from the previous pre-meeting of the last meeting, which had been with the Students' Union.
6. The Chairman reported that the committee members had just had a productive pre-meeting with the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences and that brief notes would be circulated to members via email.

## **Membership of the Committee**

7. The Committee noted that the original plan for the Committee was to rotate its membership. Accordingly, Steve Balmont and Andrew Owen would step down from the Committee (see minute 8). It was noted that the Board had agreed for Douglas Denham St Pinnock to take the Chair and for Mee Ling join the Committee.
8. The Committee discussed the length of membership, as detailed in the Terms of Reference. It was resolved that the two year term would be increased to three years and that Steve Balmont would remain on the Committee as a member to give continuity.

## **Terms of Reference**

9. The Committee resolved to amend paragraph 2.4 in the Terms of Reference to extend membership of the Committee from 2 years to 3 years.
10. The committee recommended its amended terms of reference to the Board for approval (paper **EC.23(13)**).

## **Equality Act**

11. The Committee noted the Equality Act assurance update (paper **EC.15(13)**), which had previously been discussed by the Board. The purpose of the paper coming to this committee was to focus on how the Equality Act related to LSBU's students. The Committee requested a further breakdown of the data on students' ethnicity.
12. The Committee noted the actions being taken to meet the public sector equality duty in relation to students. LSBU's equality and diversity action plan for 2012/13 as reported to HEFCE was also noted. The Committee agreed to monitor progress against the action plan.

## **Academic Key Performance Indicators**

13. The committee noted and discussed the academic key performance indicators (KPI's) (paper **EC.16(13)**) which had been approved by the Board on 21 November 2013 (paper **BG.71(13)**) and reviewed at the Executive meeting on 3 December 2013.

## **National Student Survey**

14. The committee noted the overview of the National Student Survey results (paper **EC.17(13)**). LSBU's overall satisfaction rate was 82% for 2013 (19% up on 2012; sector 86%). The Committee requested the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic) to circulate the related action plan to all members of the Committee.

## **Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey Results**

15. The committee noted the report on Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey 2011/12 results (paper **EC.18(13)**). LSBU's employment performance indicator was 77.45% (78.1% in 2010/11) and the bottom of the table. The Director of Student Services and the Head of Employability Services took the Committee through the results.
16. The committee noted the extensive programme in place to improve the University's DLHE survey results including the work of the Employability team in the Student Centre and plans to conduct the survey in-house. This included an extensive Winter internship programme.

*The Director of Student Services and the Head of Employability left the meeting*

## **Validations Report**

17. The committee noted the validations report for 2012/13 (paper **EC.19(13)**).

## **Internal Audit Report**

18. The committee discussed in detail and noted PwC's report of October 2013 on extenuating circumstances and academic appeals that could result in an OIA case (paper **EC.20(13)**). The VC explained that there was a need to

simplify processes and communicate better to students. Some cases were very complex. The actions in the report were being addressed.

### **OIA Annual Letter**

19. The committee noted the annual letter of September 2013 from the OIA (paper **EC.21(13)**) and a letter of November 2013 that explained how fees would be related to volume that accompanied it.

### **Committee Annual Plan**

20. The committee approved its annual business plan (paper **EC.22(13)**), which was intended to cover the constituent topics in the annual report of the Academic Board during the year.

### **Next Meeting**

21. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 12 February 2014 at 4pm, preceded by a visit to the Faculty of Business.

### **Confirmed as a correct record**

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**Chair**