

**Meeting:** Taught Academic Council

**Place:** 3WN 3.7

**Date and Time:** Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017

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**Present** *Add from automated system*

### Attending

#### 1. Introduction from SU Education and Postgraduate Officers

The SU Education and SU Postgraduate officers gave an introduction to the third Taught Academic Council of the year, and the last one of this semester.

In this meeting, a new sign in system was introduced so that academic reps can sign in using their library cards. For future meetings, academic reps should make sure that they bring their library cards for this purpose.

#### 2. Update from the SU Education Officer

The SU Education Officer recently went to an NUS workshop in Birmingham which looked at the quality code for universities which lays out quality expectations and regulations. The Students' Union is currently drafting a response to this new quality code to voice their opinions about some of the changes. For instance, in the new code, student engagement has been changed from a core practice to a supplementary practice, something that the SU would like to argue against.

The cost of printing within the University has recently been reduced in a really positive step towards tackling the SU Top 10 issue regarding printing. The SU Education Officer is now collecting information from different faculties and departments to try and understand where there may be a particularly high need for printing. They are continuing to work towards reducing this cost for students further.

The Students' Union is also currently redrafting the SU Environmental Policy, in line with the SU top 10 issue, "Embed sustainability within the formal curriculum and wider university environmental practices". The aim is to make the Environmental Policy more modern and comprehensive.

The SU Officers are currently planning the education awards. This was a really successful event last year and they hope to make this year's event even bigger and better. This will be happening at the end of semester 2 and they will be asking for nominations of academic reps for awards.

The campaigns coordinator gave an update regarding the recent SU referendum. Students voted on two motions; "*I have no confidence in the Vice Chancellor*" and "*I have no confidence in the University Governance in relation to Council and Remuneration Committee*". In total, 2748 students (around 15% of all students) voted in the referendum. At the close of the referendum, students had overwhelmingly voted no confidence in both motions. The SU is now looking into how the results of the referendum and the opinions of the students can be taken forward.

### **3. Update from the SU Postgraduate Officer**

The first Postgraduate forum of this academic year will be held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December from 17:15. The theme of this forum is looking at how more postgraduate students can get involved with sports, societies and the students' union in general.

The SU Postgraduate officer has a meeting coming up with the pro-vice chancellor, Peter Lambert, to get his feedback about the departmental postgraduate TES survey responses.

In early February, focus groups will be arranged for taught postgraduate academic reps to see how student engagement can be improved going forward, as well as seeing how the students' union can better support and represent the postgraduate academic reps.

With regards to the Top 10 issue, "*Enhance the conditions, training, and development opportunities for postgraduates who teach*", the Postgraduate officer is currently working with the doctoral college to try and improve the training and development opportunities for graduate teaching assistants. They are hoping that the improved training will improve the quality of teaching for undergraduates who are taught by graduate teaching assistants.

### **4. Responses to the Q&A with Peter Lambert from the previous meeting**

In the previous taught academic council, there was a question and answer session with the Peter Lambert, the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Learning and Teaching. The SU Education Officer passed on answers to some of the



questions that were not answered in the session.

### Scaling

The Pro-Vice Chancellor has talked to the chair of the Faculty of Science in the FLTQC. In the past information has been shared with students regarding scaling. With the chair, he is trying to determine a solution so that this information is consistent and clear. An update will be given to the science faculty representatives.

### Panopto

A new, updated version of Panopto will be introduced in the next academic year which should make it easier for lecturers to record lectures. In the meantime, a paper is being published to staff and lecturers to deliver some of the facts about Panopto, the benefits of using it and to encourage staff to use it. This will address key issues about staff editing, ownership and copyright. The Pro-Vice Chancellor will continue to highlight the need for recordings in departmental meetings, and hopefully with these updates, more lectures will be recorded.

### Pharmacy

In the previous meeting, a pharmacy representative discussed how their course can be very intense with a large number of contact hours, coupled with large assessment periods. The Pro-Vice Chancellor has spoken to some of the departmental staff and they plan to make a focus group and would like some more feedback about this from students in the department.

### Other topics

There were no other topics that academic representatives were expecting feedback from.

## **5. Introduction of the SU International Student Coordinator**

Tess Thomas has recently started working with the Students' Union as the International Student Coordinator, she works alongside the Student Representation Team and the International Students Association. She introduced herself and said that she was happy to help international students with any non-academic issues that they encounter. Issues raised at SSLC meetings will also be passed back to her.

## **6. Plagiarism Top Ten**

In the first taught academic council, the SU Education Officer collected opinions and thoughts about the printing Top 10 issue. This was really successful so this was done again for the Top 10 issue regarding plagiarism: *"Review current processes to ensure students have an effective understanding of plagiarism"*.

Four questions were posed to the group and the academic representatives



split into small groups to discuss the topic. The questions were:

- What do you think of the academic integrity test?
- How would you like to see that information presented?
- Do you think you have a good grasp on what plagiarism is and how to avoid it?
- What can be done to improve plagiarism training?

Feedback was given both verbally within the session and as written feedback in the form of the post it notes.

Generally, students saw the test as useful but not sufficient for providing training about plagiarism, to the extent where they felt comfortable in submitting coursework that was not plagiarised.

The two main issues that were commonly voiced by academic representatives was that the test should be improved and given on a departmental basis, so that they can be given more in-depth training that relates to their subject and the practices that they will have to perform for their subjects. The other main opinion was that there should be a recap provided for students on an annual basis, or perhaps just for the final year, particularly after placement. So that students have a fresh understanding of what plagiarism is and how to avoid it before completing their dissertations.

Furthermore, students thought that information should be available and easily accessible all the time, not just at the time of the test in first year. This would allow them to access the information and clear up any queries they may have. Another point that was raised was that avoiding plagiarism was particularly challenging for international students, who may find it more difficult to paraphrase when it is not in their native language. Students suggested having particular training for international students that can help them with this.

Other suggestions were to provide workshops or lecturers that teach about good practice and how to avoid plagiarism and reference appropriately. Students also wanted to be able to see what the Turnitin page looks like for markers, this would give them a better understanding of the information they are given, and make it less stressful when they have a high Turnitin score. In addition, giving students more information about the consequences of plagiarism, the context within which plagiarism happens and an understanding of the different levels of severity of plagiarism was popular with the academic representatives. Representatives also wanted better signposting about where they could seek clarity on their questions.

## **7. Feedback from the Floor**

In a recent Maths departmental SSLC information was given about education reforms and curriculum transformations, these seemed largely negative and were poorly received by students. More clarity needs to be given within this

department so that students are able to feedback on what they believe will be successful and what they do not think would work.

An academic representative from Natural Sciences said that a lot of Natural Sciences lectures are grouped with other subjects, e.g. biology or chemistry. Where widespread departmental changes are being made they need to consider all of the students in those particular modules, otherwise some students will be left at a large disadvantage compared to others.

There has also been some discussion in the Chemistry department regarding second year exams, which might be changed to being all in the second semester, as opposed to being split between January and June. The SU Education officer is going to get more information about this and the opinions of the students regarding this topic.

## 8. SU Policy Round

Five policies are currently submitted, these are regarding:

- Student groups endorsing SU Officer candidates
- Smoking on campus
- University Governance reform
- Support Trade Unions
- Free Education

Each policy will be debated in 1E 2.1 at 12:15 on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and voting will then be open from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December at 13:05 until Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 11am. Academic representatives were encouraged to vote and encourage the students in their cohorts to do the same.

The SU Education Officer also encouraged students to complete the online module and course evaluations for this academic term. She highlighted the importance of doing so, and noted that the evaluation system has been changed recently so that they are shorter for students to fill in. It will also be easier for staff to respond to the feedback given and demonstrate how the feedback is being taken on and how changes are being implemented.

## 9. Shadowing opportunities for SU officers

Nominations are now open for SU officers for the 2018-2019 academic year. The current SU officers are offering shadowing opportunities for students to gain a better understanding and insight into the SU officer roles. Officers are also more than happy to answer questions about their own role or other officer roles. The nominations are open until February which gives students time to consider the role and write their manifesto and create a campaign team.

Both the Education and Postgraduate Officers encouraged students to run as officers, they said that the experience is extremely valuable and that they

have really enjoyed being able to contribute to improving student experience.

One academic representation raised a question about international students running for positions in the SU. The campaigns officer confirmed that international students are able to run for positions and there are FAQs on the website specifically regarding this matter.

## 11. Merry Christmas!

The next Taught Academic Council will be held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February at both 12:15 and 13:15. The topic of technology enhanced learning will be discussed at this meeting, suggestions of particular software or technology that is currently being used in lectures are welcomed from academic representations. Please send suggestions to the SU Education Officer ([sueducation@bath.ac.uk](mailto:sueducation@bath.ac.uk)) in advance of the next meeting.

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### Feedback from Post It notes about plagiarism

#### Positive Feedback

- Informative coming in as a PGT (SoM MSc). The Bath website on citations is difficult to understand and doesn't provide examples for twitter or other news media, but the librarians are amazing at answering questions.
- It helps students to clarify what kind of behaviour is plagiarism and to avoid it. The scenario quiz is fun to answer, maybe also combine with questions on theory
- I did the test in 2015, before that I didn't know much about how to avoid plagiarism but it helped me so much, including when I've had to give public talks, so I think that the test and resources were perfect.
- Generally, it gives a good introduction to plagiarism
- The test is enough
- Do the test!
- Great, very clear, interesting videos, maybe provide more methods about how to build upon your own ideas.
- Having the test at the start of the year is very good. Should shorten the time available to complete the test as the knowledge is necessary throughout the time at University.
- Useful, clearly defines different aspects of plagiarism.
- Useful, information available on the website
- Good, I think a test is much more impressive.
- I see no problem with the Academic Integrity Test or the way that it is presented. As I recalal, the library provides plenty of material to new students about the rules and regulations about plagiarism. If students choose not to take any notice of these (or do silly things like cheating on the integrity test) then it is their own fault if they are caught. Personal tutors could help direct students to the library resources if requested. The only suggestion I would make is that any plagiarism test/training material should discourage students

from relying too much on the Internet and web-based resources. When I have done coursework (admittedly not much!) I preferred to use paper-based materials, e.g. books and physical journal articles. I find these easier to reference correctly and more trustworthy.

### Issues with the Academic Integrity Test

- Because it was open book you could pass the test and not know the information. If it was closed book, you would have to remember what was said.
- Good potential, too superficial and not sufficiently in depth.
- "I've recently done it and feel it did not properly inform us"
- The Academic Integrity Test seems very simple and can mostly be answered with a little common sense. Personally, I don't feel this is sufficient as a check, especially for those who have not referenced before. I would prefer to see it assessed in terms of summarising points from a few sources, which is then checked for accuracy and plagiarism. Also, there was a lot of information to read through, maybe this could be made more interactive, with a series of interactive practice opportunities following each step, so that one can check their understanding before moving on. It would be helpful if the test focused more on topics relevant to my course.
- Good but not enough, should give a lecture to judge situations of plagiarism
- Not very helpful, needs to be more applicable
- Not too helpful to students but maybe helpful for the university
- Doesn't remember the test, should have training specific to the course. Often find that for certain lab reports/coursework a small selection of references (sometimes just the lab manual) are given, so everyone has the same sources to write from, this leads to a high Turnitin percentage.
- Personally found it to be quite a condescending task to have to do at a postgraduate level. Understand the importance of it but I think that it is predominantly an international student issue, understand that this is not always the case and couldn't just get international students to do the test.
- Feedback is not given on your answers, need more examples and scenarios.
- Academic integrity test was pointless. It is over-emphasised and stressed by staff although it doesn't appear to be an issue thereafter. Clear distinction between para-phrasing and plagiarism.
- The test is a bit rubbish, it is mostly based on common sense questions. To improve plagiarism training maybe have a harder test and also a workshop/lecture about it. Maybe refreshers every year? I have a decent grasp on plagiarism.

### General Suggestions

- A video would be better than a written explanation
- Need a more explicit explanation or workshop on how to avoid plagiarism/plagiarism processing software available to students before they submit.
- Workshops in library sessions and handouts
- Explain endnote better
- Make the Academic Integrity Test more challenging



- Explanation of what needs referencing and what does not, the student thinks that they reference too much
- Give more information about consequences of plagiarism and examples of past students who have plagiarised.
- If not already done, plagiarism offenders should re-take the academic integrity test, otherwise the current system does suffice
- The students in my department have issues more with referencing than plagiarism, due to use of online citation tools. If this could be discouraged and use of library referencing guides more encouraged and promoted.
- The test explains plagiarism well (in SPS). I think that apathy towards plagiarism is probably the problem because plenty of help is offered throughout the year and across year groups.
- People have mentioned that Turn It In is petty and overly picky, and a high score often scares students, even if they haven't plagiarised. Maybe show students what the marker sees on Turn It In to ease anxiety.
- Provide the link of information about plagiarism in the coursework.
- More information on Turnitin.
- More opt-in training, especially for international students
- More time spent on clarifying how to paraphrase other people's work, need a reference page to go back to, need department specific guidance
- The academic integrity test is very important, but I think that it could be further addressed in a more straight forward way, for example, to what extent a modified sentence is deemed as non-plagiarism way of writing, when the ideas are basically the same. For overseas students, English writing is an issue every time they try to convert an opinion in their own words.
- Support in the library
- I don't think that the test is very effective. We could maybe have one/a couple of lectures at the start of first year on what plagiarism is specifically and how to avoid it. Refresher lectures at the end of first year.
- I still haven't taken the test. I would find it helpful if departments have a compulsory talk on plagiarism in the context of the course. I think I have a good grasp of what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, although the line between referencing and plagiarism is still unclear.
- A taught session to go over the information and then go over the rest after
- Compulsory seminar in fresher's week
- Would be good to have experience using Turnitin before submitting long drafts and realising you need to rewrite loads. The first time I used it was when I submitted my draft dissertation, which was a bit late
- Can submit any work until passed
- A tutorial of the referencing system at Bath Uni too.
- Paraphrase tests
- Provide sessions on plagiarism so that questions can be asked, rather than an online test
- Suggest using checking websites
- It's a long time since test when in fourth year, perhaps a refresher would be good. Personally, I feel anxious when writing essays that something might be flagged even though I'm sure it isn't plagiarism and I cite. So refresher/examples of Turnitin would reassure.



- See Turnitin reports that is generated for a submission so you can understand what is flagged up. Do an example page of coursework to submit as part of training (1st year and for all other years for the first time), you can then be shown what is a 'fail' and 'pass'.
- More information on the exact consequences, what happens if Turnitin says you have plagiarised? Does it give different severities? Do students or staff have the ability to rationalise it is not plagiarism and ignore it? There is obviously a difference between extreme plagiarism and some work, more information is needed on outcomes.
- Please mention Wikipedia: Some postgraduate students are still copy/pasting sentences to presentations without seeing the wrong (international students), maybe see the dangers for your groupmates if you plagiarise during group work. This test should be done earlier, first week or even before and compulsory, after we don't have time. More method and ideas on how to avoid it (practical and examples)
- Provide more recent videos of (final year?) students explaining plagiarism and their top tips, the current videos are outdated.
- A well-designed poster, table or chart would be useful.
- Have a course page on moodle to be able to see the information again, have a FAQ and query system.
- Workshops and seminars throughout the course would be more useful.
- Show the Turnitin percentages. This was done at my UG university and it was much easier.
- More like a comprehension test, just a tick box. Better in lectures. I do have three sessions, one for the rest, one during the lecture and one through e-learning. Quite clear about it.
- Exercises where you paraphrase an article and it is tested on Turnitin. Help on different forms of referencing, e.g. for pictures, videos and podcasts.
- The test is pretty easy, mostly common sense. Interactive workshop where the demonstrator gives a statement, group votes, if it is plagiarism the group explains the votes and the demonstrator allows the chance to change the vote before giving the final answer and explaining this.

#### Department Specific

- Make it more departmentally specific. Student in Maths who is yet to do any referencing and is in third year
- Difficult to understand for particular coursework (e.g. lab reports, procedure sections). Dependent on the course.
- Make it more core focused, as an MSc student, I don't need to know about how to quote literature I need to know about methodologies and results as these are so hard not to plagiarise.
- Suggested by 9 students

#### Availability



- A detailed leaflet/handbook with rules/tips would be more useful as then it can always be referred back to as many peers say they have forgotten what plagiarism is

### Recap

- Repeat the Academic Integrity Test at the start of final year, recap of Harvard Bath
- Academic integrity test is useful in first year, maybe should be a requirement for every year or at least after coming back from placement or in final year for the dissertation where it is relevant
- Redo the test every year.
- The academic integrity test is a good idea but could be good to have a refresher course at the beginning of each year, perhaps optional for those who feel that they need a reminding.
- Suggested by 13 students.



## **Attendees**

James Fossey  
Tamara Reid  
Yuwen Sheng  
Vasileia Filippou  
Samuel Evans  
Soul Pierce  
Kieran Warwick  
Yunshu Li  
Isabella Harrison-Wan  
Kin Wong  
Jack Beadle  
Willow Wyatt  
Munshur Ali  
Jack Clark  
Kimberly Pretorius  
Amelie Green  
Jacob Morris  
Liam Pugh  
Ieuan Marks-Venables  
Adam Hughes  
Marianne Aspbury  
Lisanne Heinz  
Robert Tyrrell  
Stefan Garcia  
Naimeesh Mistry  
Zhuo Mei  
Hannah-Jade Parker  
Amelia Noonan  
Juliette Duplanil-Weill  
Emma Robinson  
Nwabunor Chinye  
Nikita Hadavale  
Lauryn Taylor  
Louis Jamieson  
George Jones  
William Caley

Elizabeth Clark  
Jiaxin Sun  
Asama Pulges  
Oliver Holt  
Aurora Widawati  
Yewen Zhang  
Xuan Li  
Leah White  
Qian Wang  
Nefeli Poyiatzi  
Samuel Thomas  
Maya Khurana  
Aage Voigt Noble  
Kimberly Russell  
Alexandra Brosens-Doy  
Sarah Woodley  
Yifang Yang  
Emma Mcfarland  
Harriet Evans  
Ryan Yeoh  
Sofya Morozova  
Bianca Galimberti  
Marc Fouad  
Georgina Waterworth  
Callum Morrison  
Charlotte Cook  
Roman Xia  
Yunpeng Li  
Helen Mylne  
Kaja Vassbotten  
Haicong Peng  
Zhanna Nazarenko  
Eleanor Giles-Thomson  
Zornitsa Belcheva  
Jack Kitchen  
Ellen Devereux  
Robert Critchlow

Dhruv Gupta  
Angela Baufeldt  
Andrew Buglass  
Muhammad Farhan  
Hazel Mellamphy  
Foteini Nikolopoulou  
Amelia Rees  
Carl Bescoby  
Kieron Cardall  
Sachin Janagal  
Sua Cho  
Yunming Liu  
Alex O'Neill  
Tingyu Liu  
Smaranda Balu  
Tilly Walters  
Jerrica Hallinan  
Hannah Parker  
Abhishek Jain  
James Kay  
Jessica Mullett  
Muyun Wu  
Edwina Baiden  
Yuxuan Wu  
Leen Saeed