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| Meeting: | | **Academic Council** | |
| Location: | | **Teams** | |
| Date & Time: | | **10th November 2021 12:15–13:45** | |
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| **Present: [elected reps]** | | | |
| Name | | | Role |
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| **In attendance: [any staff or SU Officers present]** | | | |
| Jacob Withington | | | SU Education Officer |
| Siddharth Singh | | | SU Postgraduate Officer |
| Ryan Lucas | | | SU Education Manager |
| Callie Edwards | | | SU Academic Representation Coordinator |
| Polly McGuigan | | | Chair of the Assessment and Feedback Working Group |
| Amy Young | | | Insight & Engagement Manager |
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| Item |  | | |
|  | **Apologies** | | |
|  | **Notice of Any Other Business (A.O.B)**  None | | |
|  | **Minutes from previous meeting (Date of last meeting)**  N/A | | |
|  | **Actions from the last meeting(s)**  N/A | | |
|  | **Assessment and Feedback**  Jacob W. introduces Polly McGuigan, Chair of the Assessment and Feedback Working group. Polly gives an overview on the remit of assessment and feedback within the university and how the working group came about. Following the National Student Survey (NSS), the university wanted to address the effectiveness in assessment and feedback to students as the scores have been declining over the years. Apart of this, Polly explains the different type of feedback and the purpose of the working group to propose solutions for the current poor satisfaction.  To evaluate each departments’ assessment and feedback experience, the academic council is split up into breakout rooms in accordance to their departments.  Break room 1: PG  This breakroom discussed  Break room 2: Engineer & Design  This breakroom expressed that  Breakout room: Science  HSS  Managements  When feedback to the Academic Council, the key themes that were recurring across all departments were but not limited to; prompt timing on the turnaround of feedback between essays, the need for marking criteria to be explained in context of the feedback given to the individual student and more detailed feedback rather than generalized feedback that can apply for the whole co-hort. Furthermore, there was an overall consensus that at times the summative feedback was just the grade and thus, students needed further clarity on what was done well and what could be improved in time for next assignment due date.  A suggestion form the Sciences breakroom that was noted was a reminder of how feedback would be received at the beginning of the course and placed on Moodle so the students can use it for reference. HSS break out room echoed this sentiment and also highlighted the potential of peer-led feedback to be troublesome when it can be used as a replacement to official feedback from tutors or lecturers. However the PGT facility was praised with reps recognizing that bi-weekly surveys by professors were a good indication of feedback. Similarly, the School of Management had a system that within some of their modules, students were able to talk through their one-page outline with their lecturer and students found that beneficial.  Polly thanked the Council for their time and gave her closing statement on how this would help the working group in understanding how students are receiving feedback in their assessments and how the university can be better guided on what feedback practices are best to engage with students. | | |
|  | **Online Feedback Tool to Support Academic Reps**  Jacob W. moves on to talking about one of his key items on his manifesto; online feedback tool. Jacob explains the premise of this online feedback tool as a way of facilitating engagement between the reps and students in a streamlined process that would help get feedback more efficiently.  Breakout room 1  Breakout room 2  Breakout room 3  Breakout room 4  Breakout room 5  Following the breakout rooms, there was an appetite for the tool across the entire council however some shared their reservations one the tool. While the tool would be useful in having the data available in one place and replying back to individual, there was a need to integrate the tool into systems that were already in place.  Similarly, another breakout room expressed their reservation of the tool as it could been seen as a way of making the role of academic rep redundant if streamlined in such a way.  However, a number of helpful suggestions were presented such as the ability for the user to categorise their topic so that the reps could see the trends within their departments, default setting to give names but receive a response regardless if anonymous or not, fully accessible to those with learning difficulties and the integration of the tool with current system.  Ryan Lucas makes an interesting point that in the aftermath of the pandemic, people would like more person to person interaction and that the tool can provide that in a way that is conducive to the current systems in place. | | |
|  | **Officer updates & Questions for the Education & Postgraduate Officer & Feedback from the floor**  Jacob gives an update of what he is currently doing as the SU Education Officer. He was been working on the online feedback tool, working with the Center for learning and teaching about improving lecture content and international students placements with visa issues given that some employers were suggesting that they do not sponsor visas. Another issue that Jacob is working on is graduation and the joining of Life Sciences.  Sid also gives an update on the research that is currently being conducted on the experiences of PGT students as well as the fees pertaining international PGT on placement and international student arrivals.  The floor is then opened to question time. A rep raises an issue on how to engage with international students on their transition into the university culture – adjustment to life, coursework pressure and deadline and in turn recognize the students who need attention like this and reach out personally. Callie. E provides some advice by suggesting that they would flag it to their SSLC meeting on how international students are being supported as well as signposting to student services and the peer mentor scheme to aid that transition.  Another rep in the department of Mechanical Engineering raises that their department has informed them that they would have a two hour exam with a half hour time span for uploading it onto the system. The rep highlighted that students within their course had raised this concern to SSLC however was told that the it was above SSLC when the decision was made.  Jacob W. recognizes the rep’s concerns and explains that the decision should a departmental one with the main reason behind it being collusion but students should of be consulted. As it seems that students were not heard, Jacob will upscale this matter in the faculty meeting and even higher if the case needs to be. | | |
|  | **Any Other business**  None. | | |
| **The meeting ended at [14:10].** | | | |
| **Item number** | **Action** | | |
|  | Actions to be listed here. | | |
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