

Meeting:	Taught Academic Council
Location:	1 East Meeting Room
Date & Time:	Wednesday 31st October 2018 at 12.15 pm and 13:15 pm
Present:	
Jack Kitchen	Education Officer
Jiani Zhou	Postgraduate Officer
Ryan Myles	Academic Representation Coordinator
Amy Young	Engagement & Quality Co-ordinator
Gregory Noakes	SU Governance and Executive Support Manager
Item	
1.	Register Attendance Registration was completed.
2.	Matters arising from 2017/18 There were no matters arising to discuss.
3.	Notice of Any Other Business No items were identified for discussion under any other business.
4.	Students' Union Education Officer and Postgraduate Officer The Education Officer and Postgraduate Officer gave an update on the work they had done to date.
5.	Priority issues for 2018/19 The Education Officer explained that two priority issues for 2018/19 were to improve the current library space provision and ensure that students have input into the curriculum transformation programme.
6.	Library and Study space The Education Officer asked for all in attendance to discuss the library and study space and record feedback to give to the Education Officer. See Appendix 1 for a summary of the comments raised.
7.	Feedback from the floor The Academic reps were asked to raise any issues they had within their areas. The following issues were raised: 1) IMEE – Robotics course A second year academic rep raised that students on this programme have expressed concerns over the amount of time they are spending on hand drawings which they feel is not appropriate in the digital age where companies are likely to be using software to this. 2) Computer room classes An academic representative noted that they could not see the lecturer's screen during computer labs, which made following along very difficult.

3) Marking to 100%

A psychology representative raised the issue of upper marks, as it was impossible for students to get above 85%, leaving 15% of the mark unused. There were also questions around scaling methods, as some will do proportional scaling, whereas others will change marks by a fixed number of marks.

4) Undergraduate numbers

An Academic rep asked if undergraduate numbers had increased as there seemed to be more on campus. The Education Officer confirmed that undergraduate numbers had been stabilised, although the University's strategy was to grow the number of Postgraduate Taught and Research students. Current spaces issues on campus were explained to be likely the result of the ongoing bus issues, which meant more students were staying on campus to work.

5) Timetabling

It was requested that MyTimetable use clearer titles and more detail for lessons, as it was unclear in Physics when problems classes were, compared to regular lectures. This was on Moodle, but not on MyTimetable.

6) Careers in Virgil Building

An academic representative mentioned that CV checks by careers service were currently 15-minute drop-in appointments in the Virgil Building, although it was difficult to get down there. It was requested that CV appointments be brought to campus. Some reported issues with going to VB just to give their name for a mock interview and requested this be made digital.

7) Library resources

Dissertation resources were reported to be limited by a Politics representative, who stated that there were some journal restrictions which inhibited their ability to reference.

8) Bus route changes

An Academic rep asked if the bus routes were changing again. The Education Officer confirmed that the bus routes would be changing again after Christmas. The U1 route is being changed back to how it was in 2017/18. A U1X route would continue on the current route at peak times.

9) Increased group assessment work

An Academic rep asked if an increase in student numbers had resulted in the use of more group assessments as opposed to individual assessments. The Education Officer confirmed that the volume of group work has been an issue for several years, and guidance produced at the University's Group Work Working Group. It is intended that Curriculum Transformation will address this over the coming years, although there are efforts to reduce the burden of assessment currently ongoing.

10) Virgil Building opening hours

Several student representatives noted that, due to current issues with the buses, it was infeasible to travel to campus to study. Representatives requested that the Virgil Building opening hours be extended to midnight, to allow for longer studying time.

11) Study spaces during exams

An Academic rep from Biology asked if departments could open up more study spaces within exam periods. The Education Officer explained that this was something that they would need to suggest to their departments and that the University did open up several spaces (e.g. Fountain Canteen, Virgil Building longer hours) at peak periods during the year.

12) Vending Machines in 10 West

	<p>A representative flagged that the vending machines on the 5th floor only had unhealthy foods (e.g. flapjacks) which were not always suitable. Another rep requested that Parade Bar open for longer.</p> <p>13) Consistency in marking It was reported that some reps felt that individual lecturers had different standards for marking, and representatives wanted departments to make sure that there was consistency among lecturers.</p> <p>14) Curriculum transformation programme An Academic rep raised that some departments were keen to begin the curriculum transformation programme but were not receiving clear communication from the University on what the timeline for this was.</p> <p>15) Bus action An Academic rep raised that they felt that the university should be doing more to address the issue of the buses due to the impact this was having on students. Another rep requested that the SU be notified when there are diversions on bus routes (e.g. the U2) and that this message is then relayed to students.</p> <p>16) Hanging up coats An academic representative requested that there is space given in classrooms to hang up coats.</p> <p>17) Lockers Some students requested lockers be installed for students to store items.</p> <p>18) Virgil Building temperature It was reported that the basement in the Virgil Building was cold during the winter months.</p>
8.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>The following items were raised for discussion:</p> <p>1) Virgil Building</p> <p>The Education Officer noted for the attention of the Academic reps that they have access to student hub in the Virgil Building to use as a study space.</p> <p>2) Academic Conference</p> <p>The Education Officer reminded Academic reps that the conference was taking place on Saturday 3rd November.</p>
<p>The meeting ended at 1.15pm.</p>	

APPENDIX ONE: LIBRARY FEEDBACK

Representatives were asked to write down feedback on the current Library provision on Post-it notes, and this was then summarised and collated below.

The key issues emerging from academic representatives were:

- The current amount of study space in the library is inadequate, particularly the amount of group space available.
- Many students requested an extension to library opening hours in the Virgil Building, especially as travelling to/from campus at night is challenging with the current bus situation.
- The temperature in the library often fluctuated, with cold spots in certain areas and it is too cold on the lower floors, while higher-up floors had poor ventilation.
- Representatives requested power to every desk in the library, as there was often a 'bunching' issue.
- Toilet provision was flagged as an issue, with no toilets on Level One and single-gender toilets on Levels Two and Three.

The Education Officer has used this feedback to write a report to 'Council, Senate, Students' Union' committee, chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching, to address the issues flagged by Academic Representatives. The meeting is on 6th December, and the Education Officer will give an update after the meeting about the actions to be taken.

Area	Negative comments	Positive comments	Suggestions for improvements
Adequacy of study space	2		20
Temperature variability	13	1	
Power to desks	12	1	
Lack of group space	1		9
Toilet provision	10		
Library opening hours		1	8
Available online resources	7		
Computer provision	1		5
Departmental study space	1		3
Learning common visibility/locations			4
Lighting in the library	3		1
Lunch space in the library			3
Library food provision			3
Café in the Library			2
Sound levels in quiet areas	2		
Printers on every floor			2
Misuse of space	1		1
A chair-finder app			2
Virgil Building usage		2	
10W – vending machines		2	
Water provision	2		
Amount of individual space			1
Library accessibility	1		
Sleeping area			1

Cleanliness of library	1		
VB food provision			1
Computer blocking (with laptops)	1		
Resource provision	1		
Book availability	1		
Library induction			1
Departmental space usage		1	
Request for a Café			1
Chairs	1		
Lockers			1
Quiet area disruption	1		
Desk blocking	1		
Silent space	1		
Microwaves			1
Soft seating availability	1		
Eating in library			1
Keep Cups		1	
Noise levels on all floors	1		
Laptop borrowing facilities			1
Norwood Learning Commons		1	
VB Café	1		
VB room booking availability	1		
Individual space	1		
Library maps/labelling	1		
Library room booking			1