19/06/2019 LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORTS

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LEADERSHIP GROUP – **19 JUNE 2019**

REPORT ON FINDINGS FROM THE STUDENT LIFE PULSE DATA TO DATE

PURPOSE

To update Officers and Senior Management Team on the findings from the Student Life Pulse surveys for pulse 1 and pulse 2.

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. The SU is currently mid-way through a three year research project with external research providers Alterline.

1.2. The Student Life Pulse surveys all students registered at the University of Bath (The SU Bath members) over the course of a nine month period, with the student population divided into representative samples for each month. Between October and June all students will receive one email inviting them to participate in a survey.

1.3. The Student Life Pulse remains The SU's primary survey used to gather evidence of student satisfaction with services and opportunities provided by The SU.

1.4. Data is released by Alterline on a 'pulse' basis in addition to an end of year report which compares The SU Bath to other students' unions participating in the project; Bristol SU, Hull University Union, Lancaster University Students' Union, Leeds Beckett Students' Union, Leicester Students' Union, Lincoln Students' Union, Liverpool Guild of Students, Oxford SU, The University of Surrey Students' Union, Solent Students' Union, Christ Church Students' Union, University of West London Students' Union, University of Birmingham Guild of Students and University of Westminster Students' Union.

1.5. Survey questions have not changed between year one and year two of the project to allow for year on year tracking and comparisons with the other participating students' unions. This does restrict what The SU Bath are able to include in the survey and the wording and terminology used for questions.

1.6. Reports provided by Alterline are limited to top line results only (no demographic reporting) and do not compare pulses on a year to year basis. However, raw data is provided to allow for internal analysis of data.

1.7. The Student Life Pulse survey is still live and the final fieldwork stage will be complete on 30th June 2019 for the current academic year. It is expected that pulse 3 and year end data will be made available to The SU in July and a workshop is scheduled for the end of August with all participating students' unions to discuss common themes.

1.8. Response rates continue to be in line with rates to previous student satisfaction surveys conducted by The SU (e.g. Student Opinion Survey) with 1064 completed responses October – March this academic year. The response rate was lower in pulse 1 this year compared with last year due to the survey being launched later in October due to late signing off of the questions.

1.9. Current dissemination of results to SU areas has involved presentations at team meetings, advising Heads of services of questions/data which can be used as area KPIs and providing ad hoc data to individuals to support reports or planning.

1.10. The SU is contracted into a further year with Alterline, therefore discussions will take place during the 2019/20 year with regards to bringing this survey in-house to allow for a more bespoke survey and to bring the wording and tone of the survey in-line with The SU's new vision and strategy.

2. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

2.1. Data presented in Appendix 1 refers to Pulse 1 (P1) October – December and Pulse 2 (P2) January – March, and only refers to University of Bath respondents.

2.2. 63% of respondents are satisfied with their students' union.

2.3. 66% of respondents agreed that they are getting the most out of their time at university.

2.4. 53% of UG respondents agreed that The SU effectively represents students' academic interests.

2.5. Of the SU values respondents mostly agreed that The SU is Student Led (74%) and least agreed that The SU is Empowering (52%).

2.6. 57% of respondents agreed The SU represents the views of students effectively.

2.7. 31% of respondents agreed that students can influence decisions made by The SU. 27% agreed that students know how to influence decisions made by The SU.

2.8. 60% of respondents know who the SU Officers are but 30% are aware of their achievements.

2.9. 66% of respondents identified at least one skill The SU had helped them to develop, an increase from 50% in the previous year.

ACTIONS FOR LEADERSHIP GROUP

3. Leadership Group is asked to consider the data presented from the Student Life Pulse.

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Appendix 1: Student Life Pulse Survey

2018-19: Pulse 1 and 2

Overall satisfaction and KPIs

Core questions covering overall satisfaction with The SU, students getting the most out of the time at university and agreement that The SU effectively represents on academic interests (NSS question 26) are included in the surveys to enable reporting for strategy updates.

Overall satisfaction with The SU remains constant at a mean average of 63% between 2017-18 and 2018-19 in the periods October – March. However, satisfaction in 2018-19 appears to be more consistent between pulse points compared to the previous year where there was an eight percentage point drop from P1 to P2.
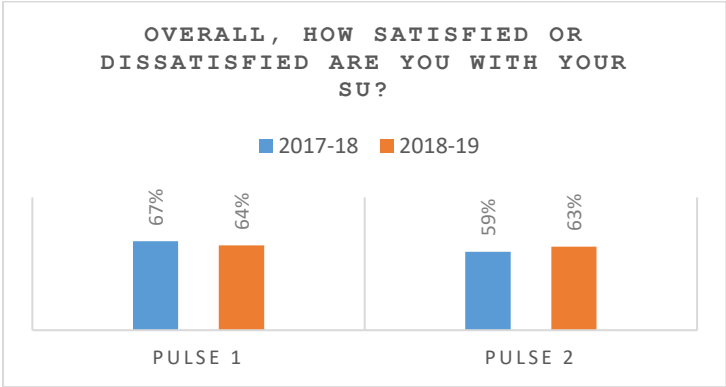

OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR SU?

■ 2017-18 ■ 2018-19

PULSE 1: 67%, 64%
PULSE 2: 59%, 63%

Table 1.

Students agreeing that they are getting the most out of their time at university was introduced as a new KPI to sit alongside The SU's current strategy. Year to date data again shows consistency between the two years with a mean average of 66%. As above, there is less of a difference between P1 and P2 in the 2018-19 academic year.
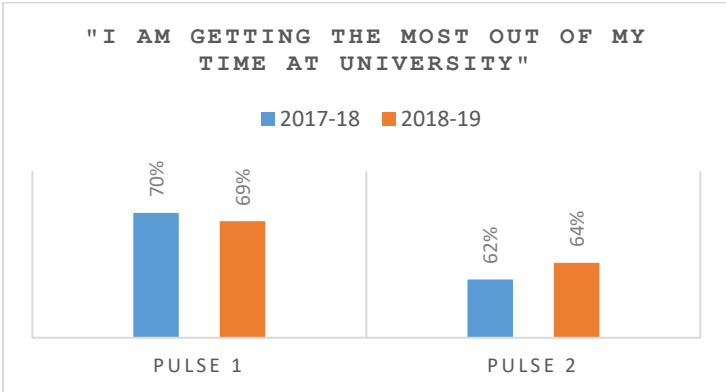

"I AM GETTING THE MOST OUT OF MY TIME AT UNIVERSITY"

■ 2017-18 ■ 2018-19

PULSE 1: 70%, 69%
PULSE 2: 62%, 64%

Table 2.

Students agreeing that The SU effectively represents students' academic interests (NSS question 26) shows a marked decrease between the two years. When considering the mean average across P1 and P2 there is a 5.5 percentage point decrease between the years. The data below is reflective of all respondents, the National Student Survey (NSS) is only completed by final year undergraduates. On analysing the data by undergraduate students only (unable to specifically look at final year due to the differences between

courses of what constitutes a final year of a course) there is a decrease of 5 percentage points on the mean average of P1 and P2.
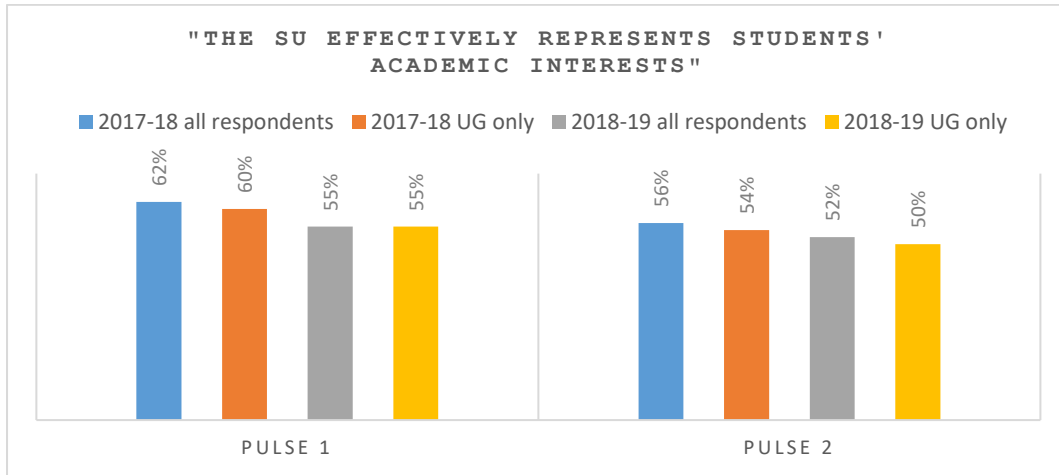
"THE SU EFFECTIVELY REPRESENTS STUDENTS' ACADEMIC INTERESTS"

Legend: ■ 2017-18 all respondents ■ 2017-18 UG only ■ 2018-19 all respondents ■ 2018-19 UG only

PULSE 1: 62%, 60%, 55%, 55%
PULSE 2: 56%, 54%, 52%, 50%

Table 3.

SU Values

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with The SU being student-led, empowering, supportive, fun and inclusive.

The below table shows comparisons between the two years with P1 and P2 combined for ease of reading. Month by month detail is available although most are broadly within a ten percent range. Empowering is the value which students agree less with and across both years P2 showed lower agreement that P1.
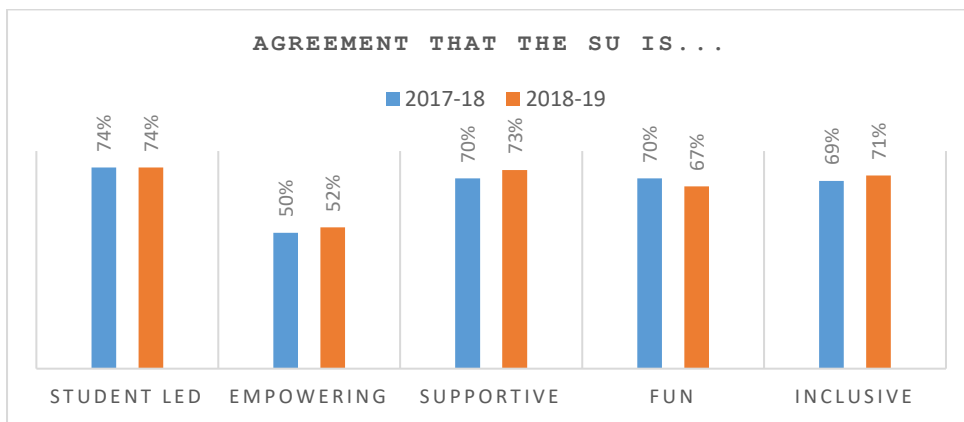
AGREEMENT THAT THE SU IS...

Legend: ■ 2017-18 ■ 2018-19

STUDENT LED: 74%, 74%
EMPOWERING: 50%, 52%
SUPPORTIVE: 70%, 73%
FUN: 70%, 67%
INCLUSIVE: 69%, 71%

Table 4.

Student Voice

Questions relating to student voice appear throughout the surveys in multiple sections. For ease of reporting all questions are grouped under this heading.

Agreement that students know *how to* (table 7) influence decisions made by The SU and agreement that students *can* (table 6) influence decisions remains low across both years and across both pulses. In the last Student Opinion Survey (2015-16) students were asked to rate their agreement to the statement 'Your SU does a good job of representing students and promoting change', whilst not an exact comparison with table 5 this does provide some level of comparison. In 2015-16 87% of respondents (1154 students) agreed with this statement, in 2018-19 across P1 and P2 an average of 57% agreed with a similar statement (table 5).
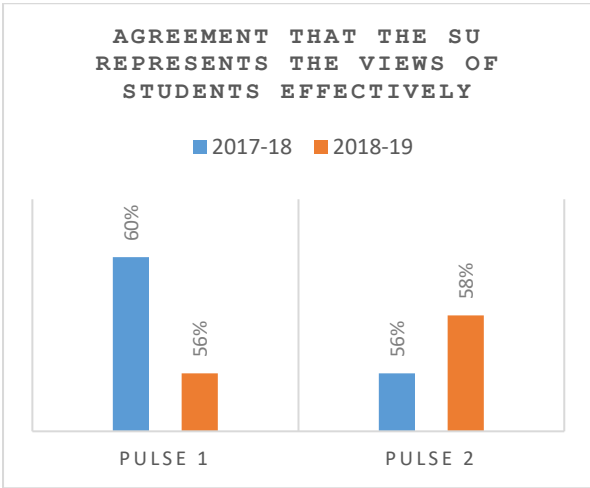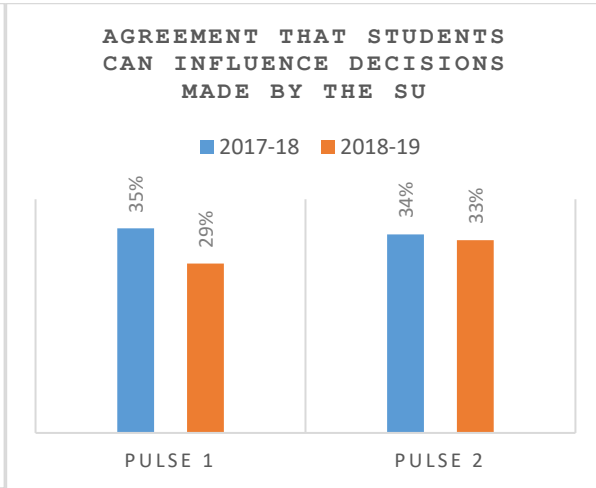
AGREEMENT THAT THE SU REPRESENTS THE VIEWS OF STUDENTS EFFECTIVELY

■ 2017-18 ■ 2018-19

PULSE 1: 60%, 56%
PULSE 2: 56%, 58%

Table 5.

AGREEMENT THAT STUDENTS CAN INFLUENCE DECISIONS MADE BY THE SU

■ 2017-18 ■ 2018-19

PULSE 1: 35%, 29%
PULSE 2: 34%, 33%

Table 6.

AGREEMENT THAT STUDENTS KNOW HOW TO INFLUENCE DECISIONS MADE BY THE SU

■ 2017-18 ■ 2018-19

PULSE 1: 30%, 21%
PULSE 2: 29%, 32%

Table 7.

AGREEMENT THAT THE SU HAS HELPED TO CHANGE SOMETHING THEY WERE UNHAPPY WITH

■ 2017-18 ■ 2018-19

PULSE 1: 20%, 18%
PULSE 2: 23%, 25%
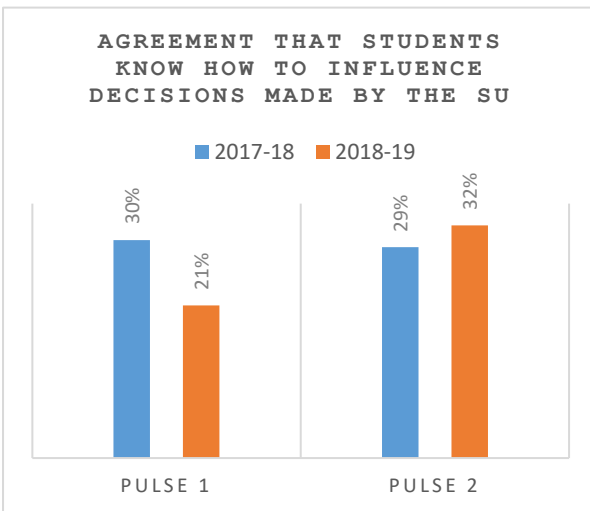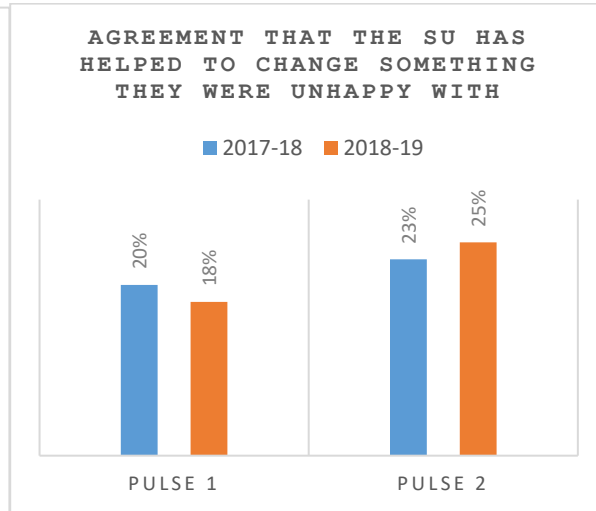
Table 8.

Students were asked for their feedback regarding The SU's role in representing student interests on a number of grouped issues. Whilst there are no significant changes in student agreement that The SU fulfils this function an increase can be seen in 2018-19 regarding *local issues*. It is likely that this is due to the increased work of The SU and SU Officers in responding to anti-student rhetoric in public forums such as social media. Regarding international student issues, when looking at just overseas (including EU) respondents P1 and P2 combined for 2018-19 50% agree compared with 45% of all respondents to year 1 of the research.
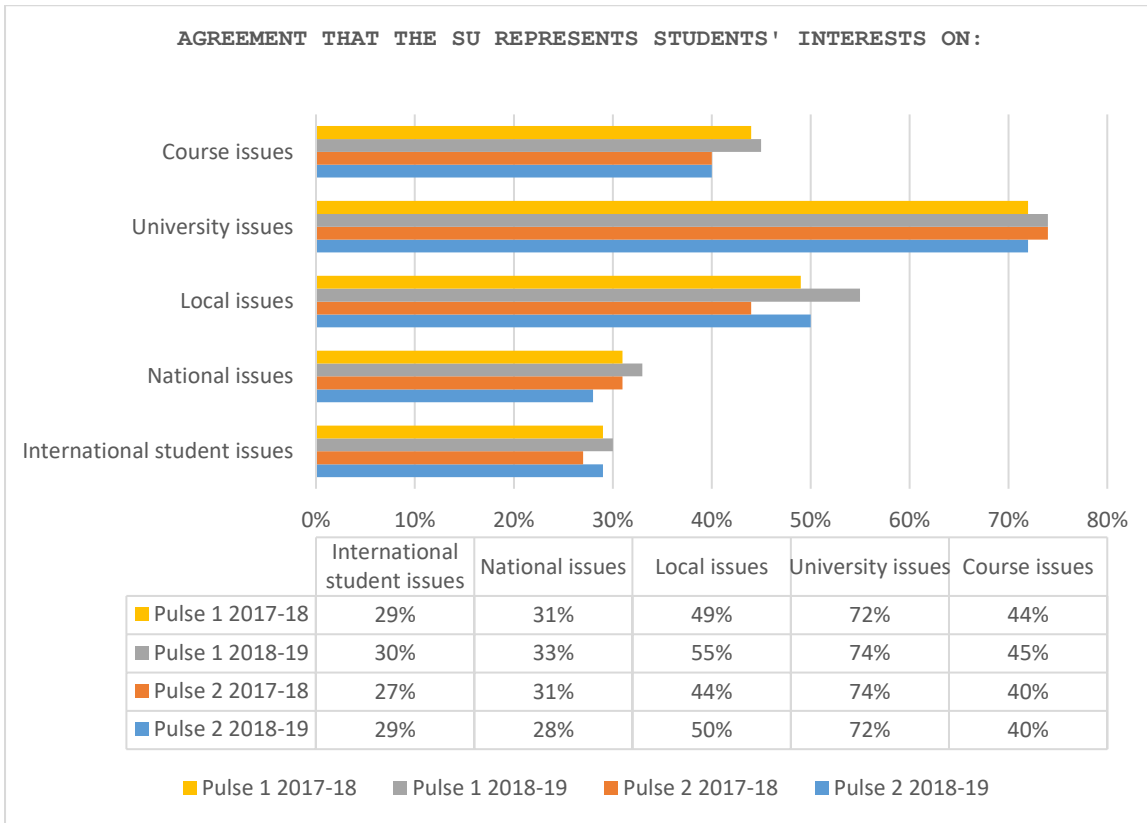
AGREEMENT THAT THE SU REPRESENTS STUDENTS' INTERESTS ON:

	International student issues	National issues	Local issues	University issues	Course issues
Pulse 1 2017-18	29%	31%	49%	72%	44%
Pulse 1 2018-19	30%	33%	55%	74%	45%
Pulse 2 2017-18	27%	31%	44%	74%	40%
Pulse 2 2018-19	29%	28%	50%	72%	40%

Pulse 1 2017-18   Pulse 1 2018-19   Pulse 2 2017-18   Pulse 2 2018-19

Table 9.

Students' Union Officers

There is a clear decrease in this set of questions from *knowing who SU Officers are* to *knowing the achievement of the SU Officers* across both pulses in both years. Whilst knowing the achievements of SU Officers during the current academic year is expected in P1 (Oct-Dec) it would be anticipated that this should increase as the year progresses. It would also be reasonable to expect understanding of what SU Officers do to increase or remain stable between P1 and P2 due to promotion at the beginning of the year of the new Officer team and promotion in P2 for SU Officer elections. However, the data shows that there is a small decrease between pulses of student understanding.

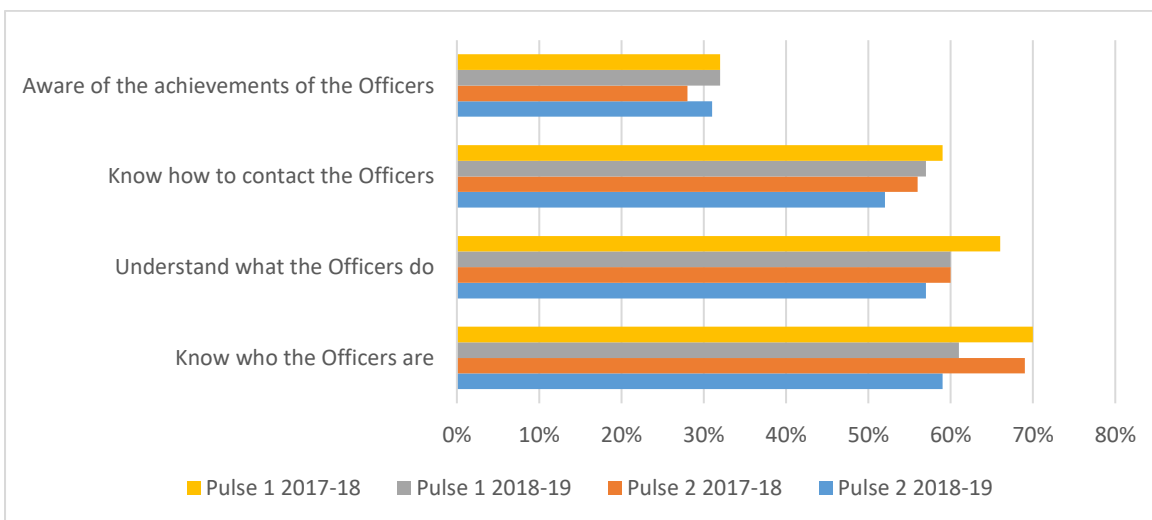Pulse 1 2017-18   Pulse 1 2018-19   Pulse 2 2017-18   Pulse 2 2018-19

Table 10.

In 2017-18 73% of respondents to P2 understood how SU Officers are appointed, this has decreased to 64% in 2018-19.

When asked in P2 about SU Officer elections in 2017-18 49% responded that they were interested in the SU Officer candidates and what they stood for, this decreased to 40% in 2018-19.

Other key findings from the data

Year to date (P1 and P2 average) 2018-19 data shows that:

- In a similar vein to the SU Officers set of results, for respondent knowledge and understanding of Academic Reps there is a clear decrease from *knowing who my course rep is* (59%) to awareness *of the achievements of my course rep this year* (19%).
- Positively, there has been a decrease of respondents saying that The SU *has not helped me to develop any of these skills* when presented with a list of key transferable skills, from 50% in 2017-18 to 44% in 2018-19.
- There has been a slight increase in respondents saying that The SU has a *positive impact on my wellbeing* from 46% in 2017-18 to 50% in 2018-19.
- 70% of respondents agreed that they are *getting the social experience they want from university life*.
- 61% of respondents agreed that The SU has a *positive impact on my social life*.
- 4% of respondents are unaware of The SU providing *sports clubs*. 85% of those who have used the sports clubs are satisfied.
- 3% of respondents are unaware of The SU providing *societies*. 83% of those who have used societies are satisfied.
- 77% are unaware of *how the profits from commercial services are used by The SU*.

Meeting:	**Leadership Committee**
Location:	**1 East Meeting Room 3.20**
Date & Time:	**Wednesday 22nd May 2019 at 9pm**

Present:	
Jack Kitchen	Education Officer (Chair)
Andy Galloway	Sport Officer
Eve Alcock	President
Jiani Zhou	Postgraduate

In attendance:	
Gregory Noakes	Governance & Executive Support Manager (Secretary)
Andrew McLaughlin	Chief Executive
Mandy Wilson-Garner	Deputy Chief Executive

Item	
1.	**Presentation** The planned presentation was deferred to the next meeting. The committee noted that there had been an error in the distribution of papers for this meeting and the reports had not been circulated with the agenda. These reports were shared with the committee at the meeting.
2.	**Apologies for absence**

Name	Reason	Accepted
Kimberley Pickett-McAtackney	Illness	Yes
Alisha Lobo	Unknown	Yes

Item	
3.	**Notice of any other business** No items were identified for discussion under any other business.
4.	**Declaration of conflict of interest** No committee members declared a conflict of interest in any item on the agenda. Committee members were reminded to declare any conflict of interest if it arose during the course of the meeting.
5.	**Minutes of previous meeting** The minutes of the previous meetings were approved and signed by the Chair.
5.1.	**Matters arising from previous meeting** The committee noted that there had been no matters arising from the previous meeting.
6.	**Decisions without a meeting** The committee formerly noted that they had made the following decision without a meeting *(see R2 of the committee reports)*: They had agreed to renew The SU Transport Fleet lease for a further three years.

7.	**Student Union Proposed Changes** The Chief Executive went through their report *(See confidential R3 of the committee reports)* explaining the proposed changes to the Student Union staffing structure. The committee noted that the Bath Award scheme would continue for one more year and that it would be impossible to predict how many students would take up the scheme for its final year. They also noted that the student enterprise groups could have a transition arrangement, such as allowing two years to move across to a student constitution in line with other student groups. The committee noted that the closing of the information point would require alternative arrangements to be made for the post room. They discussed some initial suggestions but raised some concerns about disruption of any team that took this on. The committee discussed the fixed-term term-time only grade 4 Finance Assistant role and some concerns were expressed over whether there would be difficulty in recruiting to such a role. The committee noted the specific roles that had been ring fenced for specific existing staff, losing jobs as part of restructure, to apply for first. The Chief Executive explained that there would be a 30-day staff consultation beginning Monday 3rd June and ending Tuesday 2nd July 2019. The Deputy Chief Executive noted that these changes could affect staff morale across The SU, especially within the Virgil Building where the changes would be most significant. The committee discussed The SU rooms in the Virgil Building and agreed that whatever happened this space should be saved for student use.
8.	**Elections Report** The committee noted the elections report *(See R4 of the committee reports)*.
9.	**Events Report** The committee noted that there had been no student organised events approved since their previous meeting in March.
10.	**Any other business** No items had been previously identified for discussion.
The meeting ended at 10.08pm.	

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE – **20 JUNE 2019**

REVIEW PANEL REPORT

PURPOSE

To propose that the review panel is disbanded and replaced with a review process that utilises existing student representation and officer support mechanisms.

CONTENTS

REPORT

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. According to its terms of reference from 2011, the purposes of review panel are:
- To ensure that the sabbatical officers are progressing the student unions' (SU) top ten actions and strategic plan.
- To review the performance and effectiveness of Officers.

1.2. The panel is chaired by a former officer and meets 3 times per year, for approximately six hours each time. Has become incorrectly associated with accountability, which in governance terms can only be held by students and the board, and not any specific panel, committee or group.

1.3. A year ago, the Student Voice Manager presented the previous officer team with a series of alternative options for how Officers could be reviewed. In the end the Officers chose to continue with a Review Panel but operating slightly differently.

1.4. General informal feedback from Officers this year is very similar to feedback given last year indicating that, in short, the Review Panel is still not working. Officers neither feel challenged nor supported by the panel.

2. ISSUES

2.1. Over the last three years, officers have expressed concern over the format of review panel, saying:
- The panel had incomplete understanding of roles
- Feedback was rarely meaningful or actionable
- The panel could be seen to be vindictive in its approach, with scant concern for officers' wellbeing, or over-praising, but rarely seen as independent
- A lot of duplicated effort is involved in preparing for the meeting
- It contributed to an idea of accountability far beyond that which a member of parliament receives in their role

2.2. Feedback from panel members has also said:
- The meeting is a huge commitment that was detrimental to their ability to attend lectures
- There is no meaningful impact through censure or commendation

3. **PROPOSAL**

3.1. This report proposes that the Review Panel should be disbanded for the simple reason that it is not working and after eight years of trying to make it work it might be time to try something different.

3.2. The SU has a governance structure in place that, in theory, should already be able to provide Officers with regular challenge, scrutiny and feedback. A large part of this can be done through the Executive committees, for example.

3.3. The most notable exception to this is the President but this may be addressed through a cause-related union council-like vehicle to assemble a broader view on how the president, and The SU In general, is doing.

3.4. There are several ways that the Executive committees could review Officer performance but at its simplest, a section of the Executive committee meetings could be reserved for discussion about Officer performance.

3.5. The intention would be to give regular 'informal' feedback to Officers, via the support mechanism provided by their area manager contact, to allow them to improve naturally between meetings. This will allow the area manager to allow for any broader considerations, and to work with the officer to improve performance.

3.6. The officer report to the Board of Trustees can contain reference to the feedback and actions in place.

3.7. Going forward a mechanism might be built into the Executive committees terms of reference (constitutions) to allow them publically declare that they have lost confidence with their Officer, for example.

3.8. Much of what is being proposed here could be formerly written into Executive committees terms of references as part of the next phase of The SU governance reform. However, this does not prevent this from being put to practice from start of the next academic year with the agreement of the Executive committees themselves.

ACTIONS FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

4. The Leadership committee are asked to discuss the report and determine if:

   a) They wish to continue with the Review Panel

   b) They wish to invest resources in implementing this alternative approach to Officer review

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