LEARNING, TEACHING AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee held on Wednesday 8 June 2022.

Present: Amanda Coffey (Chair), David Barrett, Tim Brailsford, Jacqueline Butler, Suzanne Carrie, Jacqueline Chelin, Peter Clegg, Rachel Cowie, Laura Harrison, Antony Hill, Helen King, Vanique Kruger, Hannah Mathias, Jo Midgley, Cathy Minett-Smith, Heather Moyes, Dami Okeyoyin, Jeanette Sakel, Simon Scarle, Richard Strange, Ian Stratton (Secretary), Neil Willey.

In attendance: Nick Button (Officer), Nicky Pavitt (item 4.8).

Apologies: Jennifer Dye, Nadine Fry, Selen Kars, Jackie Rogers, Thomas Wild.

LTSEC22.06.1	**WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**
LTSEC22.06.1.1	The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies received. The Chair also thanked the student representatives and the Students' Union Presidents for their contribution to LTSEC over the previous year.
LTSEC22.06.1.2	The Chair noted there were no declarations of interest.
LTSEC22.06.2	**MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**
LTSEC22.06.2.1	**Previous Minutes** *Paper LTSEC22.06.01 was received*
LTSEC22.06.2.1.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2022 were approved as a true and accurate record of discussions.
LTSEC22.06.2.2	***Action Sheet and Matters Arising** *Paper LTSEC22.06.02 was received*
LTSEC22.06.2.2.1	Members noted the updated action sheet, and the Chair confirmed that the Committee was working on the degree awarding algorithm, including learning from practice at other institutions, that would be brought back to a future meeting. It was also noted that the action relating to an update on the CCC pilot was on the agenda for this meeting.
LTSEC22.06.2.3	***Chair's Actions**
LTSEC22.06.2.3.1	The Chair confirmed there had been no Chair's Action since the last meeting on 6 April.
LTSEC22.06.3	**STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

LTSEC22.06.3.1	***Chair's Report**
	Paper LTSEC22.06.03 was received
LTSEC22.06.3.1.1	Members noted the Chair's report for information. It was also noted that a University Alliance award had been given to the Centre for Music.
LTSEC22.06.3.2	**Students' Union Report**
	Paper LTSEC22.06.04 was received
LTSEC22.06.3.2.1	The VP Education presented the report, noting activity from the previous months including the Cultural Conference, expansion of the Cultural Hall of Fame, the SU Awards Nights, the transition to a new set of SU Presidents, mental health, and future speaker events.
LTSEC22.06.3.2.2	The Chair noted the wide breadth of activities and thanked all SU colleagues on behalf of LTSEC for all the hard work and commitment of the SU officers throughout 21/22.
LTSEC22.06.4	**QUALITY, STANDARDS AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**
LTSEC22.06.4.1	**Teaching Excellence Framework**
	Paper LTSEC22.06.05 was received
LTSEC22.06.4.1.1	The Deputy Director SAS (Policy Development & Student Experience) provided an update on the University's preparations for the 2022/23 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission. Attention was drawn to the following: i) It was expected that the new specification and accompanying data would be released in September 2022 and the University would draft its submission in the early part of the next academic year. ii) The TEF remained a single institutional submission but would also have an accompanying student submission. iii) There would be a new "Requires Improvement" award that had proven controversial within the sector given its association with Ofsted ratings. iv) The TEF would continue to assess student experience and student outcomes but would no longer look at LEO data. The data would no longer have flags. v) The inclusion of B3 indicators meant there were many more data points than in previous versions. vi) It will be important when the data are available to carefully consider areas of strength and weakness, and identify clear action plans to address weaknesses.
LTSEC22.06.4.1.2	During discussion, LTSEC noted: i) The call was currently out for members of the TEF panel and colleagues were encouraged to put themselves forward, including potential student members. The deadline was 13 July 2022.

	ii) There was an ongoing challenge around continuing professional development data that would be followed up. iii) Some colleagues who had contributed to previous versions of the TEF had already been contacted for input and this would continue during the drafting process.
LTSEC22.06.4.2 LTSEC22.06.4.2.1	**Shared Operating Principles** *Paper LTSEC22.06.06 was received* The Head of Student & Academic Policy Enhancement presented a paper on the Shared Operating Principles, which had been approved by the Student Life Steering Group. The proposal relating to how the University managed critical incidents involved students on or off campus as it moved towards a 24/7 student support provision. There were three SOPS in place agreed in 2018 and work had been done in identifying additional areas where principles were required to guide practice, which all related to incidents that were negatively affecting students, for example, hospitalisations or police investigations. It was important to coordinate services as events happened, as well as ensure sufficient risk assessment. This work would then be supported by the Behaviour and Health Policy.
LTSEC22.04.4.2.2	During discussion, LTSEC noted: i) The paper provided LTSEC the assurance that this issue was being taken forward and practice was continuing to be developed and improved. ii) The Group included staff members who would have first-line interactions with students. iii) For critical incidents that occurred at partner institutions, practice depended on which institutional framework the student fell under. It was noted in the Behaviour and Health Framework where responsibility lay in these situations. iv) Any ambiguity in where responsibility lay was not in the interests of students so it was important to ensure clarity. v) The work was being trialled within Student & Academic Services, and consideration would be given to how success could be measured.
LTSEC22.06.4.3 LTSEC22.06.4.3.1	**Access and Participation Plan Variation** *Paper LTSEC22.06.07 was received* The Deputy Director LCI presented the proposed variation to the existing Access and Participation Plan. Work was ongoing in response to the OfS' requirements, and it was suggested that the final version be agreed by Chair's Actions and then circulated to LTSEC for information to ensure compliance with the deadline. Attention was drawn to the following in the paper:

	i) The OfS had asked institutions to look at work on raising attainment in schools: at UWE this involved teacher CPD work, strong work at primary level focused on improving reading age, and outreach activities that had an impact on attainment. ii) A contextual admissions policy was being developed, using the multiple equality measure from UCAS. This would then transform into a programme of support, including a remodelling of available financial support in response to large numbers of students facing financial difficulties even with a family income above the level that would normally receive a bursary. iii) The apprenticeship policy had also been reviewed. iv) It was important to ensure the information contained in the variant APP was joined up with the TEF submission.
LTSEC22.06.4.3.2	During discussion, LTSEC noted: i) A recent University Alliance roundtable with John Blake (Director of Fair Access at the OfS) had revealed a focus on greater intervention at primary level, an interest in how institutions were evaluating their outreach work, and the support that students with contextual offers received once they were at university. ii) It was important to ensure that all students who received a contextual offer were given the additional support to fulfil their potential in higher education. Preparation programmes were important and had an impact on student success.
LTSEC22.06.4.3.3	LTSEC approved the proposal that the variation to the Access and Participation Plan would be approved by Chair's Actions with appropriate input sought before submission.
LTSEC22.06.4.4	**Behaviour and Health Framework**
LTSEC.22.06.4.4.1	For both proposals under this item, LTSEC were asked to approve the principle that minor amendments could be made in line with the University restructure as changes to groups and structures occurred without bringing them back to LTSEC. It was also proposed that all timeframes were listed as 'calendar days' across the policies.
LTSEC.22.06.4.4.1	**Behaviour and Health Framework Review** *Paper LTSEC.22.06.08 was received.*
LTSEC22.06.4.4.1.1	The Head of Student & Academic Policy Enhancement presented a paper on the Behaviour and Health Framework Review for endorsement of the direction of travel. The proposal brought

	together policies around Fitness to Study, Professional Suitability, and Conduct. The policy was currently out for EDI consultation and it was proposed that it would be brought back for final approval in September 2022. Attention was drawn to the following from the paper: i) The proposal allowed students to be received into the Behaviour and Health process and then their situation considered in context rather than being allocated to one of the three strands immediately. ii) A change at Level 1 would minimise the use of formal processes and put students into a support process. This did not remove the ability to intervene more formally at that level but allowed the University to manage it contextually. iii) Current processes around Professional Accreditation would broadly be maintained. iv) Conduct would be more closely linked to the anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy. v) Opinion was split on whether it should refer to 'Health' or 'Wellbeing'. vi) Consideration was being given to the ability to impose a temporary suspension without Directorate approval. vii) It was intended to expand the number of colleagues that could be brought into panel hearings to ensure they could convene more quickly, including considering whether Students' Union reps would be appropriate for some panels.
LTSEC22.06.4.4.1.2	During discussion, LTSEC noted: i) There should be links to the different sections at the top of the document to ease use by students, alongside the ongoing work to create diagrams that would simply explain the process. ii) The Level 1 proposals would help manage the caseload for colleagues in terms of escalation. Work was ongoing on infrastructure to better manage unnecessary duplication. iii) A devolved approach required an understanding of who had responsibility for ensuring that processes were followed, with case tracking through the Shared Operating Model. iv) International students may require a separate section, with the global centre featured in this strand of work as appropriate.
LTSEC.22.06.4.4.1.3	LTSEC noted its support for the direction of travel, although recommended a reconsideration of the wording to ensure that it was as clear and simple as possible. It also suggested including

	some wording around welfare, which had a more positive connotation.
LTSEC.22.06.4.4.2	**Anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy** *Paper LTSEC.22.06.09 was received.*
LTSEC.22.06.4.4.2.1	The Head of Student & Academic Policy Enhancement presented a paper proposing changes to the anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy for endorsement of the direction of travel. The policy had last been updated in 2016 and needed refreshing to align with best practice across the sector. It was a separate but related policy to the Behaviour and Health Framework and was related to the anti-sexual violence work that the University was doing with other local institutions.
LTSEC.22.06.4.4.2.2	During discussion, LTSEC noted: i) Stronger language was required around closing the process. ii) There were some sensitivities about communicating outcomes in some cases, and should instead highlight that the complaint was taken seriously and appropriately. There was strong support from the Students' Union that outcomes should be communicated wherever possible and it was important that students had the right expectations about the information that they would receive.
LTSEC.22.06.4.4.2.3	LTSEC endorsed the direction of travel of the amended policy, including a recommendation to enhance its usefulness to students by including examples and case studies.
LTSEC22.06.4.5	**Revised Complaints Procedure** *Paper LTSEC22.06.10 was received*
LTSEC22.06.4.5.1	The Head of Student & Academic Policy Enhancement presented a paper for approval as a revision of the existing complaints procedure. Although broadly similar to the previous version, it had been written in a more accessible format and included some high level statements on what could be expected to happen through the procedure. Attention was drawn to the following: i) The apprenticeships section had been strengthened. ii) The reference to the Financial Ombudsman had been removed. iii) It remained the primary route for all non-HR related complaints. iv) It treated group complaints as a standalone issue. v) There was an expanded section on malicious and vexatious complaints and how it related to the Behaviour and Health Framework.

	vi) Meetings would be held as a matter of discretion and not a matter of course.
	vii) There had been a structural change in how the complaints stages were presented, with Stage 3 now a review process. Timescales would be introduced for each stage, with a minimum and maximum.
	viii) It introduced mediation as a potential alternative, providing suitable services were available.
LTSEC22.06.4.5.2	During discussion, LTSEC noted: i) The complaints procedure was owned by the University and specifically related to students, not staff. ii) Compensation was offered as redress if timescales were missed, in line with OIA guidance. iii) There should be signposting to the correct place for students who wanted to make an HR-related complaint. iv) Reducing the timescales would drive a different approach, ensuring it was more targeted and effective, particularly at Stage 2. The timescales were ambitious but realistic. v) There was a need to communicate the desired culture change down to Department-level. vi) There was a need to enhance clarity on the handling of Stage 1, ensuring that it was more about concerns rather than formal complaints.
LTSEC22.06.4.5.3	LTSEC approved the proposal, recommending a sense check of language and utility for students, and ensuring appropriate supporting resources.
LTSEC22.06.4.6 LTSEC22.06.4.6.1 LTSEC.22.06.4.6.2	**Revised Exam Constraints Policy** *Paper LTSEC22.06.11 was received.* The Head of Student & Academic Policy Enhancement introduced a proposal to abolish the Exam Constraints Policy as it was no longer required, with a new information guide being published. LTSEC approved the proposal.
LTSEC22.06.4.7 LTSEC22.06.4.7.1	**Revised Certificates and Transcripts Policy** *Paper LTSEC22.06.12 was received.* The Head of Student & Academic Policy Enhancement presented a paper proposing revisions to the policy about how students access replacements and duplicates of their certificates and transcripts, updating information about the cost of producing and posting the certificates.
LTSEC22.06.4.7.2	LTSEC approved the proposals.

LTSEC.22.06.4.8	**Word Count Policy Review** *Paper LTSEC.22.06.13 was received.*
LTSEC.22.06.4.8.1	The Student Voice & Academic Policy Team Manager introduced a paper on the review of the word count policy. It was noted that it had been nine years since the last review and the proposals had gone through four stages of consultations in recent months. The key highlights included changes to maximum limits, some clarity on penalties and the inclusion of other forms of assessment. It had been suggested that it was renamed as 'Assessment Limits' to include other forms of limits beyond word counts.
LTSEC.22.06.4.8.2	LTSEC agreed in principle that it should have a more inclusive title but felt that 'assessment limit' could be misleading. It was also recommended that this be further reviewed as the inclusive assessment strategy of the University matured. LTSEC approved the paper, recommending reconsideration of the title.
LTSEC.22.06.4.9	**Religion and Belief Policy refresh** *Paper LTSEC.22.06.14 was received.*
LTSEC.22.06.4.9.1	The Deputy Director LCI: Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity and the Inclusive Practice Officer presented a paper updating the Religion and Belief Policy, requesting input from LTSEC on the policy direction, the principles within it, and additional issues for inclusion. During discussion, LTSEC noted the following: i) There was a need to ensure consistency between references to freedom of speech in this document and work that was ongoing elsewhere in the University. ii) Given that the policy covered both students and staff, more consideration should be given to whether these needed to be further differentiated. iii) The inclusion of case studies to highlight good practice would be helpful. iv) It was important to ensure consideration was given to the timing of major events, such as graduation, and how they aligned with religious calendars.
LTSEC.22.06.4.10	**Tier 4 Visa Policy** *Paper LTSEC.22.06.15 was received.*
LTSEC.22.06.4.10.1	The Head of Student & Academic Policy Enhancement presented a paper proposing a revision of two existing policies into a single policy governing visa issues relating to international students. The proposals reflected the University's statutory obligations and legal requirements. The changes included the use of more straightforward language and the removal of sections that were duplicated on UKVI websites.
LTSEC.22.06.4.10.2	LTSEC approved the policy.

LTSEC22.06.5	**TRANSFORMING FUTURES LEARNING STRATEGY 2030**
LTSEC22.06.5.1	**CCC Reflection and Roll Out** *Paper LTSEC22.06.16 was received*
LTSEC22.06.5.1.1	The Registrar and Pro-Vice Chancellor Student Experience updated LTSEC on the CCC pilot, which had trialled three new roles to support programme teams and the programmatic student experience: The roles were Programme Coordinators, Success Coaches, and Student Communications focused. Attention was drawn to: i) The pilot had received significant positive feedback and endorsed the need for additional programme facing support. ii) The pilot had concluded but work was ongoing to ensure that the learning around closer alignment between professional service and academic staff to support the programmatic experience, was embedded, including on how to structure teams in the future. iii) There were challenges around support for foundation years that could be addressed by providing that kind of additional support. iv) Communications team would be College and School facing, ensuring that comms was being delivered in the right ways using channels that were familiar to students.
LTSEC.22.06.5.1.2	During discussion, LTSEC noted the following: i) Work was ongoing with the Heads of College on how the Coaches will be incorporated into business as usual going forward. ii) The timeline for the new permanent arrangements was intended to align with the transition to Colleges and Schools. iii) It was important to ensure that the team was in place for the start of the academic year and plan recruitment accordingly.
LTSEC22.06.6	**LTSEC SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTING**
LTSEC22.06.6.1	**University Quality and Standards Sub-Committee** *Paper LTSEC22.06.17 was received*
LTSEC22.06.6.1.1	LTSEC received a report from the most recent meeting of the University Quality and Standards Sub-Committee. Attention was drawn to the following matters for escalation: i) A discussion around the CI tool as part of the University's quality assurance approach. Concern had been raised at Directorate about whether the tool was being used to its full potential and there was further work to be done on ensuring its relevance and use was communicated. It was

	an important mechanism for delivering assurance around student continuation, progression, and success, and for monitoring interventions at Faculty/College level. ii) On internal and external assessment scrutiny, there was a proposal for focusing on Level 6 coursework and then looking at other levels in the following academic year.
LTSEC22.06.7	**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
LTSEC22.06.7.1	LTSEC noted and commended the recent REF results.
LTSEC22.06.8	**DATES OF 2022/23 MEETINGS**
LTSEC22.06.8.1	Next meeting dates for Academic Year 22/23 • 14 September 2022 • 17 November 2022 • 1 February 2023 • 19 April 2023 • 7 June 2023