

**Education Executive Minutes**

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| Date & time | Tuesday 23rd May; 5-p.m. |
| Location | Orchard Building Collaborative Space / MS Teams |
| Attendance | * Shijeet Shrey (SS) - VP Education (Chair) * Maia Jarvis (MJ) - President * Hannah Hockin (HH) - President-elect * Carmen Anderson (CA) - PDA School Rep * Jack Masters (JM) - Humanities School Rep * Harsh Tripathi (HT) - PGT Representative * Veronica Armanuos (VA) - PGT Representative * Pia Balaam (PB) - Project Manager at RHUL Strategic Planning * Roberta Mock (RB) - Executive Dean for PDA School |
| Apologies | * Jayden Bookout - LSS School Rep * Martin Kapusta - SBM School Rep * Shupin Liu - PGR Convenor * Sharanya Shivaraja – VP Education-elect |

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| Item | Action | Responsible | Due |
| Officer Update | Send remaining papers to Ed Exec | SS | ASAP |

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| Item | Notes | Action |
| Introduction | No notes on Introduction |  |
| Officer Update | * SS runs through the papers and items and opens the floor to questions * SS mentions that some of the papers will be sent post meeting as AOB | SS to send post-meeting papers |
| Assessment Futures | * PB loads PowerPoint presentation on Assessment Futures and introduces themselves and the project * PB mentions there are two parts of the plan, the first being conceptual which is going to be the one brought to the students now * PB mentions it's quite high level and that the strategy will not be taken generally to the students and will be looked into how it gets adapted into schools to encourage engagement * Also importance of the future students' engagements * What they will try to do is see how assessment helps students learn and develop employability when it's working well, and to ensure that it's structured well to promote learning and the student experience * Introduces the role of the SU Executive as a way to provide an initial level of feedback and thinking of the implementation side and what it looks like in practice for what it looks like a great idea on paper although it might not be the case from different experiences * The principles of the strategy are authenticity and inclusivity   + Authentic assessment is reflective of real assessments that may happen in a workplace   + As opposed to essays it might be to approach it will real life scenarios   + It helps close the awarding gap in the future   + Mentions that AI could help in these future assessments rather than be seen as a threat or something to be feared and be used as a tool to help as it would be in the workplace * Sustainable workload for both sides   + Both with students being bombarded with assessments and staff not being overburdened with feedback not being timely * Four pillars   + Course-led design   + Reducing the assessment burden   + Achieving a consistency across courses   + Authentic assessment * What are some of the key benefits you could see for students? * What are your concerns about implementation? * Are there particular pitfalls or areas requiring specific considering * JM mentions that the consistency would help with joint honours. Mentions that are a concern would be if combining authentic assessments with reducing assessments might mean that an essay-based assessment might still be in place in every module * PB mentions that the proportionality will vary through every courses * JM mentions that smaller assessments are usually used to know your lecturer's marking styles and having more authentic assessments might raise the number of formative assessments and marking times for the staff * PB assures the approach will be School tailored but there is going to be an encouragement on matching the needs of the schools as the overwhelming message is about burden and that they will be encouraged to see it cross-modules to build the skills * VA mentions it might increase stress levels in students * CA mentions that it's quite difficult to comment on it as the PDA School has a very good assessment style in place as it's mainly authentic assessment, and coming from a School where it is implemented it's excellent and that it might be important to still keep some elements of conventional assessments - the biggest benefit on this would be the reduction of the burden of marking as in the PDA School the feedback is always late and it builds frustration with students and there is a double standard on students' lateness versus lecturers' lateness * PB mentions it will vary by school and that there will not be a forceful 100% authentic assessments, but it will be encouraged to be in the design, and making it come to a pragmatic thing. There may be some use of technology (in the works and not scoped) to help. Something that has been raised is that if authentic assessment is new to you there should be an introduction on how to adapt to the new system for both students and staff * SS mentions that in a conversation with Matthew and that RHUL has to come to a culture shift around assessments and how they can be assessed pragmatically and encourages them to get in touch with Reps * PB mentions they can always get in touch with her and that this is a start of the conversation with students * CA encourages them to look into how the PDA School have adapted to authentic assessments * PB mentions that is true * VA mentions that they struggle to understand how this could work in the PG setting for Humanities, as most assessments will be essay-based with a heavy weighing, a new assessment was introduced that was less weighed and that was the only change that was noted. In SSC meetings it was said that this is how assessments will be working in Humanities * PB mentions they are working with the vice Dean for Humanities, and agrees that some courses might be more challenging that others and that some courses might not be able to * VA mentions that the reputation of RHUL of English might put some students off from learning in a non-traditional way * PB mentions that the main aim is to add to the learning, not detract and that there is a sector-wide move onto authentic assessments * MJ thanks PB for the project and raises what is the current position on letting students pick their assessments, and what are the drivers to create the alternative assessment styles? Is it with employers, students, staff…   + PB mentions that on the choice they don't know   + PB mentions that the aim is on simplification going from gut instinct   + In terms of how the assessments will be created, it will be left to the individual departments with support and encouragement to reach to Careers and CEDAS as well as the channels that work for them in involving students in co-creation as well as looking into industry * MJ mentions that CEDAS would have to change to be broader to include the new sorts of assessments * PB mentions that the timeline for the project is   + First batch of modules with the new model validated in the new year |  |
| APP from the student perspective | * SS mentions how APP is used to monitor progress and information and mentions the guidelines introduced * Risk to opportunity happens when an individual has their opportunities removed * Mentions that student groups most affected are welcome to feed back * Opportunity to recruit students to make up the working group with a certification of recognition, recruiting up to 20 students focusing on Black & Global Majority students, Commuting and anyone at risk of this |  |
| Student Life App | * Has anyone heard of it? * Has anyone used it? * SS mentions it would be beneficial to have everything present in the App, which has a calendar that is meant to be updated on events, but it has not been, and perhaps there might be a space in the coming months on how that App could be used and repurposed * CA mentions that when it is revamped the marketing has to be really strong around it as they only used it for Fresher's week and how it's useful past this * Simba mentions that you can use it to mark your attendance * JM mentions that whilst the app is great the information should also be elsewhere and also displayed through outlook or other streams * SS agrees with JM but also mentions the idea behind it is to have it all in one place * HH mentions if there might be confusion around how many apps there are now around * SS agrees and mentions that there is some work going on around this |  |
| President Manifesto Update | * Mentions how all VPs have Execs, but the space is not the same to update for the President * Decolonisation - Divest to decolonise   + The climate crisis will affect people from the global south more than the others   + Invest for Change campaign   + Lobby for a commitment to divest   + Student engagement and quiz in Execs   + Invest for change, community organising involving staff and students, including the execs as elected leaders as well as the Centre for Research into Sustainability   + Recommendations paper with key stakeholders   + Update in the Sustainability vision, campaign is still live and there is still governance hoops to jump through, potential update in July   + Environmental sustainability guide written by a student for student groups   + Sustainability awards introduced * ECs   + Member of the University Extenuating Circumstances Policy Review   + Successfully lobbied to add financial hardship to the reasons for ECs   + Working with the Chair to conduct student focus groups to consult students on proposals * SU Security review   + All student survey in January (380 responses)   + Student insight report to be published at the beginning of June 2023   + Infographic with all the data   + Recommendations preview * Inclusivity   + Inclusive campus map   + Disabled and gender-neutral toilets on the University maps   + Lobbying for Free Period Products   + Queer Creativity Showcase * Officer visibility and President being held accountable   + Where do you find yourself seeing officer work and where does it work for you?     - CA says that Instagram is the most accessible and approachable as it's more simplified and a blog post can be harder to digest     - JM mentions that having the blog posts are also important for people to don't want to move onto social media |  |
| ECs Review Focus group | * RM mentions they have been chairing the ECs working groups * Mentions that RHUL fully understands that the current system doesn't work and is not fit for purposed, last academic year over half of applications were rejected * This year there have been some changes, but it takes a lot longer to change regulations in the organisations, what could be done is look around the regulations to suggest what could happen * The long-term issue is how to make the system better for students, and the working group has been brainstorming on what is wrong with it and what possible solutions exist, institutions have been benchmarked and some criteria have been built   + Positive student experience   + Fair and equitable   + Communicated clearly   + Positive impact on the workload of Professional Services   + Simplification of the current practice   + Maintain the Integrity and Standards and avoid misuse of the system   + Positive impact on marking, feedback, academic workload   + Reduce the volume of applications * What do we want from you   + 2 option packages agreed by the Executive Board - UWE Bristol and University College Cork   + Main point of consultation will be a survey for both staff and students most likely   + Part A will explain both options and which is preferred   + Part B will cover extensions * Option 1   + Deferral     - Student may apply for a deferral to the next available opportunity to submit or sit with no penalty…   + ECs     - If deferral was not requested     - If assessment was attempted but circumstances affected the students' judgements to the extent that they were unable to determine that they shouldn't have done so   + Benefits     - Simpler     - Workload spread more evenly     - Students receive quicker more straightforward outcome     - Deferred assessments not recorded as 0     - Post results opportunity for EC will remove speculative applications     - Clear outcomes and progression pathways for students * Option 2   + Uncapped resits     - If you don't submit or not show up for exam you get a 0 but you automatically get offered a resit and your mark won't be capped, always offers a second attempt     - If that second attempt is not used the module would have to be retaken with a capped grade   + ECs     - If resit was not attempted or resubmitted     - If assessment was attempted but circumstances affected the students' judgement to the extent that they were unable to determine that they shouldn't have done so     - Evidence required in both cases   + For consideration     - How many credits can quality for automatic resits in one academic year, extensions can apply to resits     - Qualifying circumstances and outcomes available as results of application need to be agreed   + Benefits     - Remove application and outcome process in most instances     - Simple to communicate     - Simplified options for students     - Workload for professional services greatly reduce     - Students receive quicker more straightforward way * Extensions   + Existing system kind of working 2x2 working days and 2x5 working days * Introduces the implementation plan and timeline for the consultation process * JM mentions that any of the options would solve the issues around the student complaints they have received on ECs and the first option would really ease people's anxiety. Having unlimited 2-day extensions then that means they become the norm and it will feel like you get less extensions as you would see the deadline as 2 days later * CA asks that in regards on Option 2 if all assessments can be resat, as well as group projects can't be resat - RM agrees but also mentions that they already have working on resits in place. Mentions with the uncapped resits that people would take advantage and take the first assessment for granted and that if it were to go ahead it would have to be really clear on what it means for students as well * MJ mentions that having some sort of process or friction encourages students to think around what they need, mentions that option 2 might not be beneficial to then take students to the workplace as a way to justify their lateness in submissions * CA mentions that option 2 opens a lot more room for gamifying. Quick question on the current on EC system, are the circumstances themselves being looked into? * RM mentions that there should be that safety net but that is still very up in the air * CA mentions how one of the instances that is not included is long-term or chronic illnesses, RM mentions that self-certification could work for these items |  |
| School Rep update | * CA mentions they are going strong on the PDA Instagram, and it has helped engagement greatly, keeping the emails is important but the Instagram will be staying next year as they have been re-elected. Some struggles with staff being a bit more demanding to get content published   + Representation wise it has been a bit of a struggle as they were one of the schools doing the pilot schemes, the CRs and SCRs were not fully sure of what their responsibilities are, there has been a lot of hand holding, and that they are going to push from the get-go that the system is in place for Action meetings and that it is followed without having the dip in representations * JM mentions that they have struggling with their Instagram in Humanities and asks if there is something specific that CA was doing to increase engagement. CA mentions it might just have to do with the type of students in their Schools and to really push that it's beneficial for students * MJ congratulates them on representation and was wondering why the SCRs were not aware of their responsibility and why the Action meetings were not happening?   + CA mentions students are told one thing and the school is most likely confused on who is responsible for what, and some of the departments struggle in helping the students do the work on the availability, mentions staff has to step up and get an action meeting in order, staff need to be in the same page, and they expect contact from the students while the students also expect contact from staff   + MJ mentions that the Academic Rep pilot is being reviewed now and that some findings will be published soon * JM mentions that the term has gone pretty well, assessment bunching has been an issue lately with final assessments and something has to be done around that and that Assessment Futures should be focused on the student experience and not only on staff marking times. Generally, things are going alright, and reps haven't been super communicative, SSCs have been going ahead but some have been fairly empty and is looking forward for next year in collaborating with Reps more and societies * VA mentions that they are at the drafting stages in a PGT Programme for International students into how to welcome new ideas and how the university work with this. Mentions the PGR Symposium and how it's inviting MA students looking into doing Doctoral studies. |  |
| AOB | * Student trustee at UoL position * Executives roundup form reminder to fill * SS Mentions energy support system | School Reps to fill in Executive Roundup form |