

APPROVED

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

**SENATE ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE
(TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENTS)**

31 JANUARY 2024

Present: Professor April McMahon (Chair), Professor Adam Danquah, Dr Francisco Eissa-Barroso, Professor Gabrielle Finn (from minute 6), Professor Robert Ford, Professor Danielle George, Professor Peter R Green, Katie Jackson, Mr Andrew Mawdsley, Professor Ellen Schafheutle, Professor Fiona Smyth, Raluca-Elena Valcescu, and Dr Nicholas Weise.

In Attendance for all items: Craig Best (Director of Student and Academic Services), Dr Simon Merrywest (Director for the Student Experience), Dr Julian Skyrme (Director of Social Responsibility), Dr John Marsh (Senior Governance Manager), and Jane Holland (Governance Manager) (minutes).

Apologies: Raheel Ansari and Professor David Schultz.

1 Declarations of Interest

Noted: that there were no declarations of interest in relation to the agenda.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Noted: Points raised in discussion at the meeting regarding the committee's terms of reference had been noted by the Senior Governance Manager, and would be fed into the forthcoming Uniacc review of the progress of the Board-Senate academic governance protocol. Committee members would be able to contribute to this review, and could also submit comments to the Governance Office for inclusion in the review.

Agreed: to approve the minutes of the 19 October 2023 meeting.

3 Matters Arising

Noted:

- a) the Matters Arising Update;
- b) that the Senior Governance Manager and the Director for the Student Experience had met with a small number of committee members to consider the items raised at the meeting in relation to the committee's terms of reference and operation. Further detail would be presented to the committee in the report on Consultation Process on Policy Revisions/New Policies (Agenda item 11b);
- a) that the Director of Student and Academic Services would provide an update on the activity of the Student Engagement Programme (SEP) operational management groups, although this request had been partly superseded by the request from Senate for a review of SEP.

4 Forward Agenda: Schedule of Committee Business for 2023/24

Noted: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee (Teaching, Learning and Students)

Forward Agenda.

5 Chair's Update

Noted:

- a) that a full OFSTED inspection was currently in progress, focusing on apprenticeship programmes in the Business School;
- b) the Planning and Resources Committee (PRC) had approved the establishment of a new University-level Student Recruitment and Intake Strategy Group, which would be chaired by the Vice-President for Teaching, Learning and Students. The new group would take a strategic overview of student intake and recruitment planning, reporting to PRC and would consult and update the Teaching and Learning Strategy Group (TLSG) on relevant items;
- c) the Sunday Times had recently published an article which had confused entry requirements for international foundation year programmes with those for direct entry onto degree programmes. Colleagues were working with Universities UK and the Russell Group to provide counter-evidence. Communications were continuing with international students and applicants to provide assurance.

6 Annual Report on Student Appeals, Complaints and Discipline Cases

Received: the Annual Report on Student Appeals, Complaints and Discipline Cases.

Noted:

- a) that the report was received favourably by committee members in terms of clarity and presentation of information, which could be used as a future exemplar;
- b) that more comparator data was available in relation to nationality and ethnicity, and that a similar analysis would be welcomed next year for disability;
- c) it was recognised that there was a high representation of Chinese, Asian and British Asian students in the academic malpractice figures. Work had been undertaken to address this issue and it was proposed that a report would be presented to a future meeting of the committee detailing the steps taken and plans in place to address this issue. **Action: Director for the Student Experience**
- d) it was acknowledged that the number of formal academic appeals had increased. The Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health had received the highest proportion of appeals, possibly due to regulatory requirements;
- e) a report would be presented to a future meeting of the committee detailing issues that would need to be addressed, e.g. plagiarism. This detail would be added to the committee's forward agenda; **Action: Director for the Student Experience/Governance Manager**

Agreed: to recommend the Annual Report on Student Appeals, Complaints and Discipline Cases to Senate.

7 Update on Teaching, Learning and Students (TLS) Strategy Groups and Functional Areas

Noted:

- a) a presentation on the progress of the TLS strategy groups and functional areas, which would be circulated after the meeting; **Action: Director of Student and Academic Services/Governance Manager**
- b) it was confirmed that a quarterly report on the TLS functional areas would be presented to the committee at subsequent meetings;
- c) concern was raised about the large membership of the operational management groups that had been established. It was confirmed that a review of the operational management groups would be undertaken at the end of the academic year 2023-24, and that careful consideration would be taken to minimise duplication of effort at faculty and school level;
- d) a coordinated approach to student recruitment and intake would be provided by the new Student Recruitment and Intake Strategy Group. The membership included Professional Services and Academic heads of admissions, and a Students' Union staff member for continuity. The terms of reference and membership of each of the strategy groups would be

circulated to the committee members for information. **Action: Director of Student and Academic Services**

- e) that eleven operational management groups had been established to address priority areas. Data from these groups was emerging, and an update would be provided in the quarterly report. It was confirmed that the information would be transparent and visible to colleagues, and would be consolidated and stored on SharePoint for sharing via TLSG. **Action: Director of Student and Academic Services**

8 Access and Participation Plan (APP) Preparation and Timing

Received: APP Preparation and Timing Report.

Noted:

- a) the report provided a summary of the development of the APP and its links to the Office for Students (OfS) conditions of registration and the Higher Education and Research Act, providing equality of opportunity for underrepresented students. The submission was due by the end of May 2024;
- b) there was a process for identifying the items on the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR). The OfS would consider the benchmark data and would expect to see associated narrative in the University's APP submission;
- c) the APP focused on students and EORR data, and it was suggested that consideration should also be given to student groups which were not included in the APP.

9 Update on Student Experience Action Plans (SEAPS) and Action Planning

Received: an update on SEAPS and Action Planning.

Noted:

- a) the committee members were asked for their suggestions towards the new SEAPS process for 2024-25;
- b) there was a high number of SEAPS actions in some faculties, with an overlap between school and faculty SEAPS. A number of faculties had prioritised their actions to aid manageability and had considered that some actions could be consolidated;
- c) it was recognised that SEAPS had been helpful when initially introduced, and were reaching conclusion in their current form;
- d) there was a strong commitment to return to co-creating SEAPS with students in future.

Agreed: to recommend the update on SEAPS and Action Planning to Senate.

10 Updated General Regulation XVII (Conduct and Discipline of Students)

Received: the updated General Regulation XVII (Conduct and Discipline of Students).

Noted: That the proposed update to General Regulation XVII included a new definition to misconduct, which had arisen from a specific case highlighting a risk of harm to others, and safeguarding concerns.

Agreed: to recommend the updated General Regulation XVII (Conduct and Discipline of Students) to Senate.

11 Consultation Process on Policy Revisions/New Policies

Received: the Consultation Process on Policy Reviews/New Policies.

Noted:

- a) that consultation with the committee and Senate would be reinforced more widely by providing consultation opportunities at an earlier stage. Several examples were included in the report and colleagues were invited to provide input;
- b) the process would involve the relevant Vice-Dean for Teaching, Learning and Students

confirming that the consultation process had been completed. This practice would be aligned across the faculties;

- c) feedback from key stakeholders was considered important and it was confirmed that checks would be made to ensure that key stakeholders had participated in the relevant consultations. A new cover sheet had been developed for consultations, which would aid the process by highlighting the purpose and summary points of the consultation;
- d) it was proposed that different approaches to consultations could also be taken in future, including open sessions or online discussions to facilitate feedback.

12 Requests for Agenda Items by Members of the Committee

Noted: No requests for agenda items had been received. Any such requests should be made to the Governance Office at the earliest opportunity.