

HULL UNIVERSITY
UNION



Annual
Student Written Submission
2015

Introduction from Vice-President Education, Matt Evans

In a year where 'change' seems to be the word of the minute, both the University of Hull and Hull University Union have embraced this and we are progressing towards providing a thoroughly modern environment for our students to study, live and thrive. The sheer amount of physical change and improvement to the spaces around campus undertaken over the past year by the University, really show their commitment to enhancement. The official opening of the newly redeveloped Brynmor Jones Library demonstrates the great progress that can be made for the benefit of students,



when the University and HUU work together in effective partnership. These new, bright and inspiring areas of the campus are providing state of the art workspaces for our students, helping to enhance and support a better quality of learning and teaching.

The University's investment in the academic side of the student experience is a positive step towards the aim of giving students the best possible experience with which to go out into the world. However there is still significant work to be done around the wider "student experience" in order to produce the qualities and attributes of the 'Hull Graduate'.

It is encouraging that as we go forward, the way the views of students are being collected and used are constantly being improved by both the University and HUU. We need to engage students in identifying an issue, working towards a solution, action plan and then evaluating its impact. In the first instance, engaging students on this pathway will require clear signage and guidance to enable students and staff to work harmoniously. We need to work towards a system where we have mass student participation, which is not tokenistic but actually produces a meaningful experience. Ultimately there needs to be more recognition that we are two organisations on a journey towards a set of shared goals.

While we recognise that the package of change in recent years was ambitious, in some cases the infrastructure to allow the change programmes to succeed did not appear to be in place before the work of the projects took place. The rate and volume of change created significant time pressures to the previous sabbatical officer team. This has led to this year's officer team having the joint objective of more engagement with students to ensure that the student voice is really heard in the meetings and working groups we attend.

The ability to work effectively and well within a team is a skill we wish all of our members to develop during their time at University either through their academic programme or by being in a society or a sports team. The undying support of the staff team and the rest of the sabbatical team at HUU has been invaluable. In particular I would like to thank Steve Ralph (Education & Representation Co-ordinator) and Liz Pearce (Director of Membership Services), without whom this document would not have come to fruition.

From the new ground floor of the Students' Union Building, to a review of our governance structures & processes, to an entirely new Sabbatical Officer Team – the year ahead promises a fresh perspective and an exciting time for HUU as well as the University. I hope that we can rise to the challenges associated with this and make a positive step change for the benefit of students.

Matt Evans
Vice-President Education
Hull University Union

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This Student Written Submission is presented to the University as a supplementary document to the HER SWS submitted by HUU to the QAA in August 2015. The document provides additional data which further illuminate key issues in the HER SWS and presents data which was not available in August. A complete set of recommendations are provided as Appendix 1.

1.1 Executive Summary of HUU's Student Written Submission for Higher Education Review 2015

- 1 The SWS highlights that HUU and the University need to continue to work together to ensure that Scarborough students get a high quality experience.
- 2 The SWS asks the University to ensure that clear and timely communications are produced about the changes to the PG pass mark so that students fully understand the implications for the grading and assessment of their work.
- 3 As in previous years HUU asks the University to ensure that good practice is shared and that targeted support for low scoring departments is provided. HUU is keen to work with the University to include current students in identifying issues and possible solutions, disseminating good practice and evaluating impact.
- 4 HUU will work, through course reps and the wider student body, to promote and evaluate the impact of the Feedback Charter and the implementation of the University's Guidance on Feedback from Examinations.
- 5 The SWS highlights that HUU and the University need to work together to ensure that external examiner reports are the focus of discussion and action planning in all Staff-Student Committees.
- 6 HUU supports increased student participation in programme design and wants to work with the University to develop training sessions for students on programme design and development, evaluate the impact of any guidance developed for students and share good practice on this topic.
- 7 HUU supports increased student participation in quality processes, including validation panels and wants to work with the University on evaluating the impact, and student perception of this development.
- 8 HUU is concerned about declining NSS results around 'the teaching on my course', and asks the University to work with staff and students to understand and address the reasons for the decline.
- 9 Following full implementation of the new Academic Support Tutoring policy HUU will evaluate the impact of changes through research and engagement with students.
- 10 An action plan has been developed from the HUU Placement Report and the University and HUU will work together on key recommendations.
- 11 HUU would like to continue to work with the University to explore approaches to increasing the uptake and completion of the Hull Employability Award.
- 12 HUU asks the University to explore NSS data by student characteristic (ethnicity, disability, age) and compare satisfaction data by level (postgraduate taught, postgraduate research). The University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee does not currently receive NSS data segmented by student characteristic and HUU recommends that it does so.
- 13 HUU asks the University to ensure that student stakeholders are involved in planning and decision making regarding student facing services and resources.
- 14 The SWS recommends that HUU work with the University to explore the roles of, and support for, department and faculty representatives to ensure that students are aware of the actions taken in response to their feedback and to increase students' perceptions of their influence.

- 15 HUU would like to work with the University to share good practice in Staff-Student Committees and to make sure that all committees are places to raise issues, share ideas, make plans and review progress.
- 16 HUU would like to work with the University to promote the complaints process and alleviate students concerns around the fairness, impact and accessibility of the process.
- 17 HUU would like the University to explore the role that Faculty Co-ordinators could play in the QER process.

1.2 Research Methodology

Broad research bases were used to identify key issues and then more focused studies were conducted on those areas. This approach ensures that the report is founded on real problem areas rather than in areas where we assume there are problems. This document has been produced using extensive qualitative and quantitative data. All primary quantitative data has been inputted and analysed using Microsoft Office Excel. Qualitative data has been coded and analysed using traditional methods. Unless otherwise specified, all graphs within this submission are from the Education Survey 2015. The sources from which we have drawn our evidence include:

- Education Survey

The Education Survey was completed by a total of 753 respondents across both campuses.

- End of Year Staff-Student Committee (SSC) reports and minutes

All departmental SSCs are required to produce an End of Year Report summarising the issues they have dealt with over the year. This year, all departments submitted.

- National Students Survey (NSS)

Department scores from 2015 National Student Survey results. Analysis undertaken by HUU as well as benchmarking reports created by NUS.

-Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)

Exploring the views and opinions of the Postgraduate Taught population of the University of Hull through the HEA survey. Any comparisons to the sector made are done due to HEA Benchmarking reports.

-Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)

Exploring the views and opinions of the Postgraduate Research population of the University of Hull through the HEA survey. Any comparisons to the sector made are done due to HEA Benchmarking reports.

-Student-Led Teaching Awards Nominations

Extracts from the 900+ nominations HUU received this year from its annual Student-Led Teaching Awards.

This submission will also explore the theme of "different experiences at the University of Hull", investigating Postgraduate Taught and Research students for the first time, as well as different demographics within the National Student Survey.

1.3 The Experience of Students Declaring Disabilities

The HUU President, Chuby Okide, included in his election manifesto pledges related to investigating student views of the accessibility of University learning resources and facilities. A project will be undertaken this year on this topic. An initial review of NSS data is included in this submission in order to highlight the academic experience of students with declared disabilities at the University of Hull. As the table below highlights in most areas students with declared disabilities are less satisfied with their experiences than students without declared disabilities.

| | The teaching on my course | Assessment and feedback | Academic support | Organisation and management | Learning resources | Personal development | Overall Satisfaction |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| A specific learning disability (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD) | 88 | 67 | 79 | 72 | 87 | 85 | 84 |
| Other disability (Excluding Dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD) | 87 | 68 | 78 | 72 | 84 | 78 | 83 |
| No Known Disability | 87 | 73 | 81 | 78 | 89 | 85 | 86 |

Comparing the 2015 and 2014 NSS data highlights significant declines in some areas for some groups – specifically in the questions about assessment and feedback and organisation and management.

For example, for students declaring specific learning disabilities; questions 1 (*Staff are good at explaining things*), 2 (*Staff have made the subject interesting*) and 15 (*The course is well organised and is running smoothly*) NSS scores decreased by 5%, questions 8 (*I have received detailed comments on my work*) and 13 (*The timetable works efficiently as far as my activities are concerned.*) have seen a decrease of 6% and question 14 (*Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively.*) saw the largest drop by 7%.

| A specific learning disability (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD) | The teaching on my course | Assessment and feedback | Academic support | Organisation and management | Learning resources | Personal development | Overall Satisfaction |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2015 | 88 | 67 | 79 | 72 | 87 | 85 | 84 |
| 2014 | 90 | 70 | 81 | 79 | 81 | 83 | 87 |
| Difference | -2 | -3 | -2 | -7 | 6 | 2 | -3 |

For students declaring 'other disability', questions 19 (*The course has helped me to present myself with confidence*) and 20 (*My communication skills have improved*) have decreased by 8% resulting in an overall decrease in the questions relating to personal development of 5%.

| Other disability (Excluding Dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD) | The teaching on my course | Assessment and feedback | Academic support | Organisation and management | Learning resources | Personal development | Overall Satisfaction |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2015 | 87 | 68 | 78 | 72 | 84 | 78 | 83 |
| 2014 | 89 | 70 | 80 | 74 | 78 | 83 | 86 |
| Difference | -2 | -2 | -2 | -2 | 6 | -5 | -3 |

| No Known Disability | The teaching on my course | Assessment and feedback | Academic support | Organisation and management | Learning resources | Personal development | Overall Satisfaction |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2015 | 87 | 73 | 81 | 78 | 89 | 85 | 86 |
| 2014 | 90 | 73 | 82 | 80 | 83 | 86 | 90 |
| Difference | -3 | 0 | -1 | -2 | 6 | -1 | -4 |

HUU also investigated the NSS qualitative data and found several comments around disabilities, highlighted below.

Negative comments around disability from the NSS free text comments:

"...Lecturers have often not made reasonable adjustments (as a result of my disability) which could have assisted me with my learning. Again, this is not applicable to all lecturers as two of them did facilitate my learning and consider my disability." – NSS comment around disability – was found when searching for 'Personal Supervisors'

"Student well-being, Mental Health and Disability Department is over worked and hard to get appointment times."

"Lack of communication between disability department and heads of degree programmes a lack of general support."

"If more facilities were available in the Chemistry Department like computers that had mouse and keyboards that worked, comfortable chairs for disabled students and also more sound proof study booths in the Chemistry library."

Positive comments around disability from NSS free text comments:

"...Fantastically supportive disability tutor who is always empathetic and has time to talk to everyone. He has never turned me away or failed to be reassuring! ??? Very supportive and easy to talk to. ??? Assisted with personal situations and gave support and advice throughout..."

*"...Student Union & Disability Services are incredible. Wouldn't be coping without the **disability** services & they deserve recognition for how amazing they are."*

*"*name removed* is a brilliant disability coordinator, he is very supportive and easy to talk to about any issues. *name removed* is also approachable and supportive. The way in which *name removed* and *name removed* provided feedback was both helpful and empowering. ??? is also supportive and has delivered the information for the final assessment to a high standard that suits everybody's needs."*

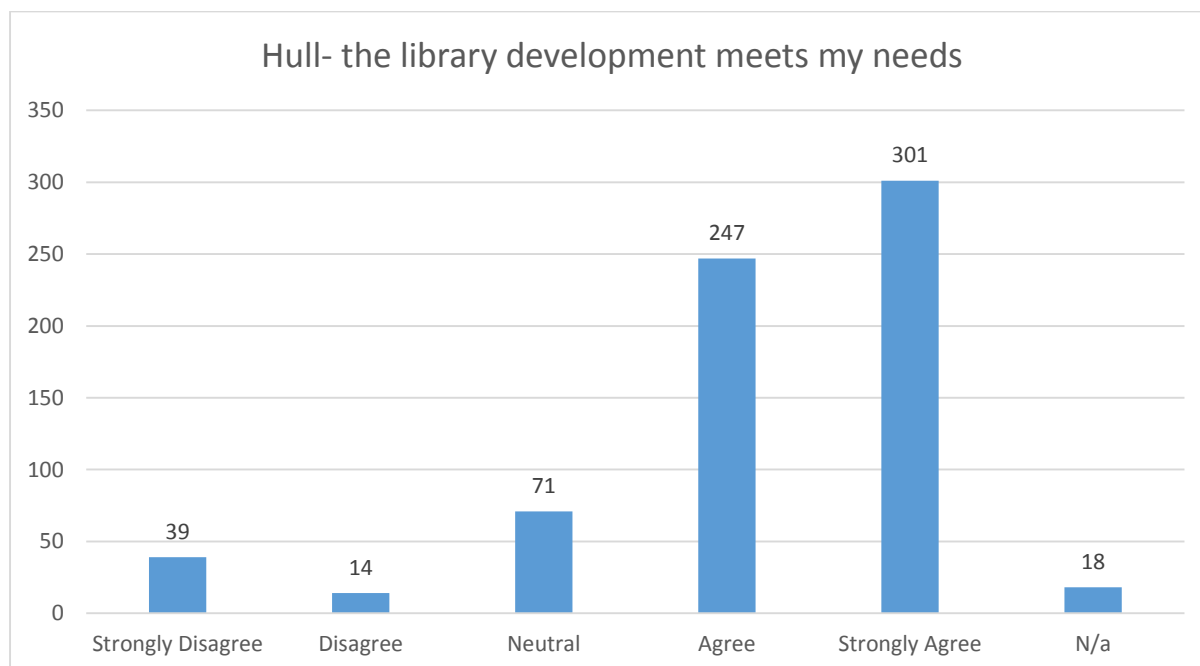
Recommendation

That, in line with HER SWS recommendation 12, the University consider NSS data by student characteristic and works to understand and address the issues arising. In particular, the stark differences in NSS results for students with declared disabilities should be investigated as a priority.

Chapter 2 Learning Environments

2.1 Brynmor Jones Library

In the 2015 Education Survey HUU asked participants to comment on the BJL redevelopment and whether the new facilities and resources met their needs. Last year the satisfaction around the library dropped (and the 2014 SWS noted that it may have been due to building work). This year we are pleased to report that an overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that the redevelopment has met their needs! In last year's student written submission, HUU highlighted that the: "library should increase advertisement of new and improved areas" the results from the Education survey indicate that this has been successfully achieved.



The NSS scores relating to learning resources reflect improvements across all areas

| | Learning resources | 16. The library resources and services are good enough for my needs. | 17. I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to. | 18. I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I needed to. |
|------------|--------------------|--|---|---|
| 2015 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 86 |
| 2014 | 83 | 80 | 86 | 82 |
| Difference | 5 | 9 | 4 | 4 |

Congratulations to the University of Hull for achieving above the 2015 NSS top quartile scores for Learning Resources.

Building on our previous work around student views of the library, HUU investigated the postgraduate and undergraduate experiences of the library by comparing NSS, PTES and PRES data.

The table below shows that undergraduates are 2% more satisfied with library resources than postgraduate taught students, that the groups are equally satisfied with IT resources and that PGT are slightly more satisfied with specialist resources and equipment.

NSS & PTES scores for learning resource compared with the top quartile / benchmark

| | The library resources and services are good enough for my needs. | I have been able to access general IT resources when I needed to. | I have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities or rooms when I needed to. |
|-----------------------|--|---|---|
| NSS | 89 | 90 | 86 |
| NSS Top Quartile | 88 | 90 | 83 |
| PTES | 87 | 90 | 88 |
| PTES Sector Benchmark | 84 | 87 | 83 |

PRES scores for learning environments and resources compared with the benchmark

| | I have a suitable working space | There is adequate provision of computer resources and facilities | There is adequate provision of library facilities (including physical and online resources) | I have access to the specialist resources necessary for my research |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|---|
| PRES | 73% | 80% | 84% | 71% |
| PRES Sector Benchmark | 77% | 79% | 84% | 78% |
| Difference | -4% | 1% | 0% | -7% |

Comparisons with the PRES results are more challenging as the survey asks slightly different questions. By comparing the questions about library provision it is clear that only 84% of respondents agreed ('Definitely Agree' or 'Mostly Agree') with this statement. Whilst on benchmark the result may suggest lower satisfaction with the library amongst PGR students. Regarding specialist resources PRES results indicate that only 71% agree that they have sufficient access. This is 7% below the PRES sector benchmark and, given the advance level of study, the result is somewhat concerning and suggests that PGR students are significantly less satisfied with the specialist resources available.

In light of changes to the use of the Graduate School HUU notes with interest the PRES results regarding 'suitable working spaces', and the fact that the University is 4% below the sector average. HUU looks forward to investigating changes to this score when PRES is next run.

Recommendation

That, in line with HER SWS recommendation 12, the University compare satisfaction data by level (postgraduate taught, postgraduate research) and undertake more detailed exploration of the PGR experience of their learning environments and resources.

Chapter 3 Student Support

3.1 Academic Support

The 2015 NSS results show that the overall score for academic support dropped by 1%. The top quartile of UK institutions scored 84% (3% more than the University of Hull), the highest score within the University's TRAC group is 85%, achieved by the University of Portsmouth. Within the region, the University of Hull is 2% lower than the average and the region's highest score is 86%, achieved by the University of Newcastle.

NSS academic support scores against the sector, TRAC Group and region

| | University of Hull | NSS Top Quartile | UK Average | TRAC Group C Average | English Region (North East) |
|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Academic Support % Agree | 81 | 84 | 82 | 81 | 83 |

The overall results for academic support mask significant variation between subject areas, for example the difference between the highest and lowest scores for academic support is 47%. HUU has identified the need to share practice between high and low scoring departments before and reiterates the need to ensure a consistently high quality student experience.

Top NSS Scores for Academic Support

| | Academic support | 10. I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies. | 11. I have been able to contact staff when I needed to. | 12. Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices. |
|--|------------------|--|---|--|
| 050 Ctre for Environmental & Marine Sciences | 97 | 97 | 95 | 100 |
| 004 Physics | 93 | 92 | 96 | 90 |
| 012 Educational Studies | 90 | 89 | 94 | 87 |
| 020 History | 90 | 92 | 94 | 84 |

Congratulations to the Centre for Environmental & Marine Sciences for reaching 100% for Question 12 (*Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices*) in the NSS!

Most improvement needed for NSS academic support score

| | Academic support | 10. I have received sufficient advice and support with my studies. | 11. I have been able to contact staff when I needed to. | 12. Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices. |
|-------------------------|------------------|--|---|--|
| 046 Social Work | 68 | 67 | 71 | 65 |
| 058 Biological Sciences | 67 | 63 | 76 | 61 |
| 027 Philosophy | 57 | 48 | 67 | 57 |
| 054 Theatre | 53 | 36 | 82 | 40 |

It is concerning that the score for two departments fell by over 10% (Theatre -32% and CMT -12%) and both departments are on the Scarborough Campus

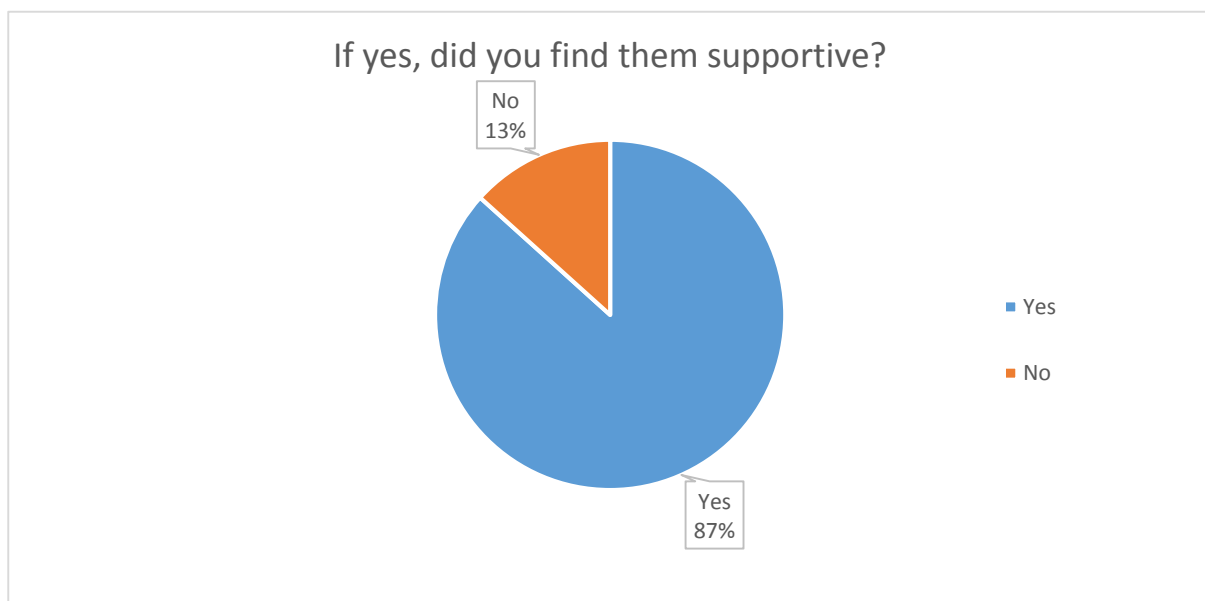
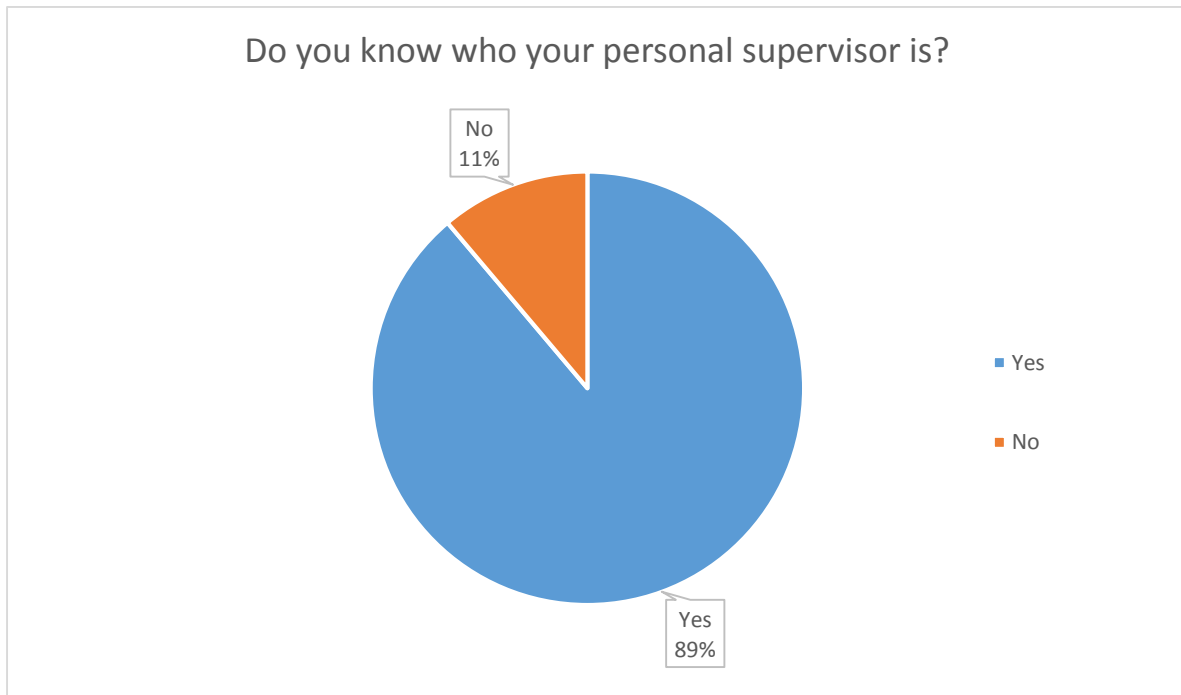
Recommendation

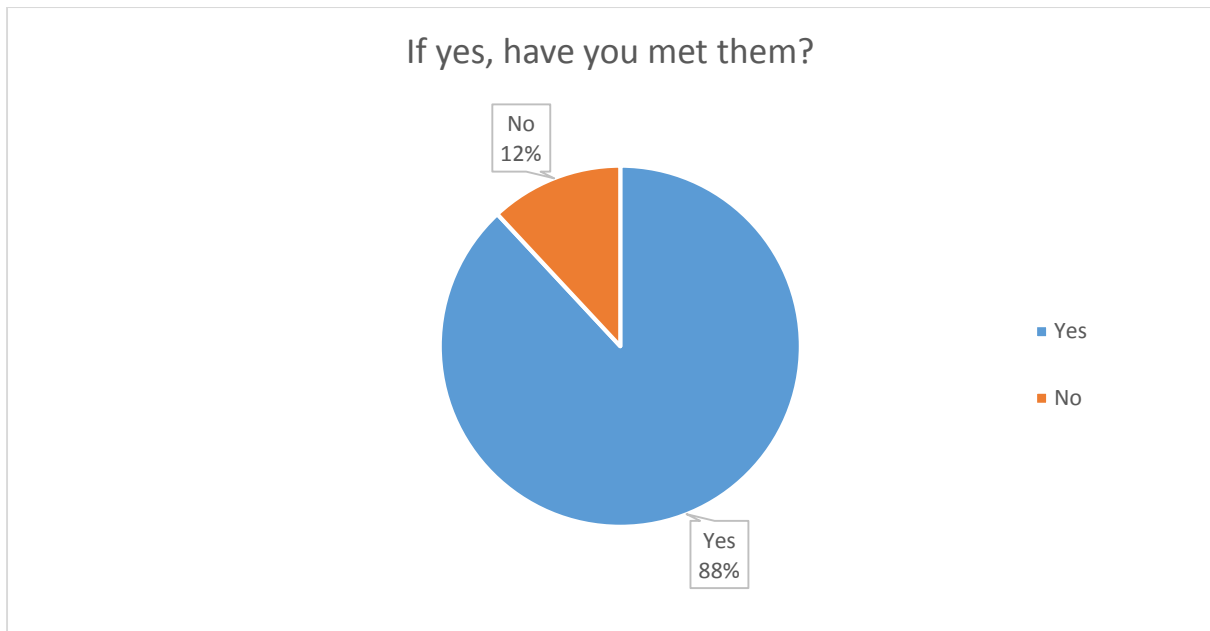
That, in line with recommendation 3 from the HER SWS, HUU asks the University to ensure that good practice is shared and that targeted support for low scoring departments is provided. HUU is keen to work with the University to include current students in identifying issues and possible solutions, disseminating good practice and evaluating impact.

That, In line with recommendation 1 from the HER SWS, HUU and the University need to continue to work together to ensure that Scarborough students get a high quality experience.

3.2 Personal Supervision (Academic Support Tuition)

HUU identified issues with the Personal Supervision system in 2013 and 2014 and as a result the Student Experience Programme Personal Supervision Project was launched. The new Academic Support Tuition scheme has not yet been implemented but the data from the 2015 Education Survey suggest some improvement during the 2014-15 session. For example the number of students who knew who their personal supervisors was increased by 1%, of those the number who had met them increased by 6% and the number who found them supportive increased by 4% (compared with 2013). The charts below highlight the data.





The impact of good personal supervisors is evident from both NSS and Student-Led Teaching Award nominations.

NSS positive comments:

*"The only positive feedback I can give is that I was very lucky to have a **personal supervisor** who actually cared. She has helped me a great deal in organizing my dissertation by replying to any questions I may have with great efficiency. I don't think I would have managed as well as I have without her and she deserves a lot more credit than what she deserves."*

*"...support you and your decisions and give you advice when needed especially my **personal supervisor** who has been there for me this year especially since it has been a very tough year. I cannot thank her enough."*

*"Positive aspects include allocation of **personal supervisors** (I feel my **personal supervisor** has been extremely helpful and is always there if I encounter any problems) and the Music Office are always willing to help to solve an administration problem."*

Extracts from a 'Best Supervisor Award' nomination forms from the Student-Led Teaching Awards:

"I understand how busy his schedule can be, so the fact that he takes time to ensure he is answering my questions in detail is valuable!"

"She dealt with matters in a sensitive and discreet manner"

"...faced a number of hurdles in my return to education but none so challenging as the change to personal circumstances in my third year. As a student I have achieved over the course of my degree when I faced difficulties in continuing this success to the end, Tricia has been empathetic supporting, caring, supportive and motivating."

However, the impact of a less positive experience is also apparent from NSS comments.

*"My **supervisor** took 2 months to send in a reference for a summer placement. I did not end up getting the funding which may have had something to do with a late submission."*

*"I do not feel I received ample amount of support from my university **personal supervisor**. Within my first year, we had a few meetings however, I have not seen her since then..."*

*"My **Personal** Tutor has said on previous occasions that she doesn't care if we pass or fail and when I have asked to speak to her on **personal** matters that may affect my ability to complete the course she did not care and left me to sort it out myself without any support, she has also never visited while on placement even though I have sent her my shift patterns and when she did try to visit she came on my day off even though she knew it would be my day off."*

Recommendation

That, in line with HER SWS recommendation 9, HUU will, following full implementation of the new Academic Support Tutoring policy, evaluate the impact of changes through research and engagement with students.

3.3 Department Support and Communication

3.3.1 Timetabling

HUU has raised the issue of timetabling in previous SWS and acknowledges the efforts made by the University to streamline and enhance its timetabling processes. Timetabling, however, remains an emotive issue for both students and staff. Early and correct timetables are imperative if students are to plan travel, caring responsibilities, social, voluntary and paid work activities.

NSS scores for organisation and management compared to the top quartile

| | Organisation and management | 13. The timetable works efficiently as far as my activities are concerned. | 14. Any changes in the course or teaching have been communicated effectively. | 15. The course is well organised and is running smoothly. |
|--|-----------------------------|--|---|---|
| NSS Top Quartile | 84 | 85 | 84 | 85 |
| NSS University of Hull | 77 | 79 | 75 | 77 |
| Difference between top quartile and University of Hull | -7 | -6 | -9 | -8 |

In all areas of *organisation and management* the University of Hull is below the top quartile by between 6 and 9%. The biggest difference is between the University of Hull score and the top quartile, is question 14 around the communication of changes to courses or teaching.

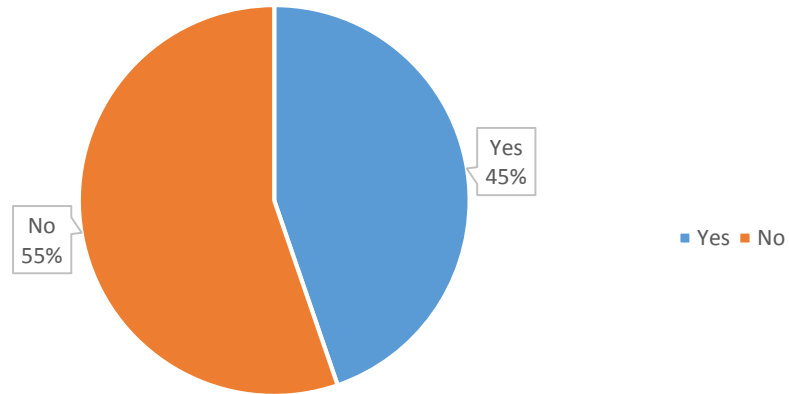
NSS free text comments relating to timetabling highlight the issues which timetabling can cause.

*“There is a lack of support for part-time students and we tend to be bundled with full time students so our **timetables** tend to be very busy.”*

*“The **timetable** in the first year left no time to volunteer in a setting, although this was a requirement.”*

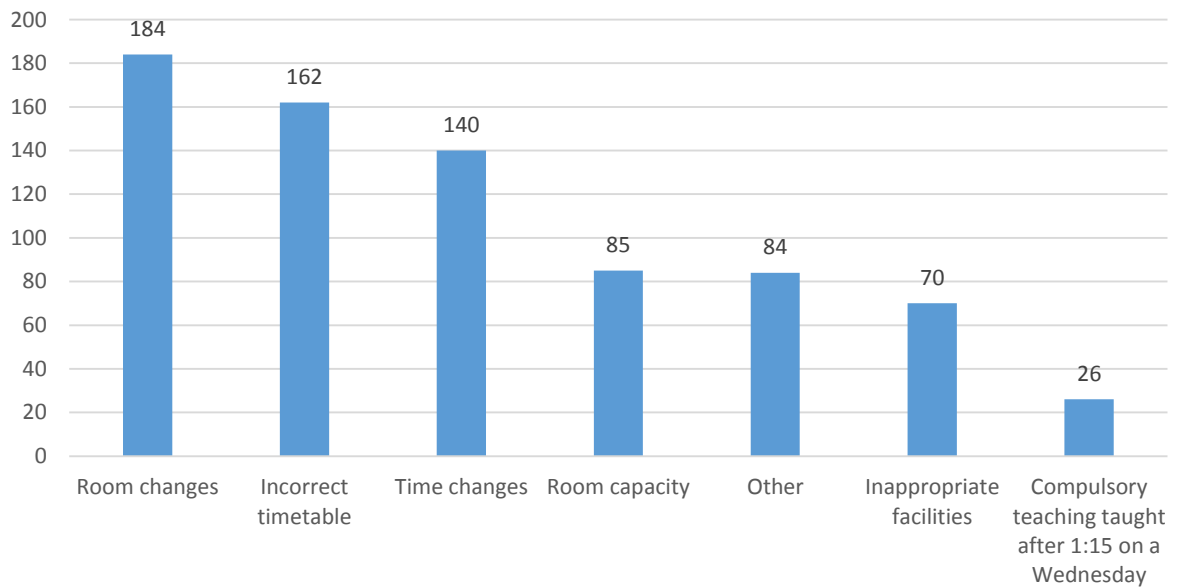
The charts below outline the responses to questions about timetabling in the 2015 Education Survey.

Have you experienced any timetabling problems this year?

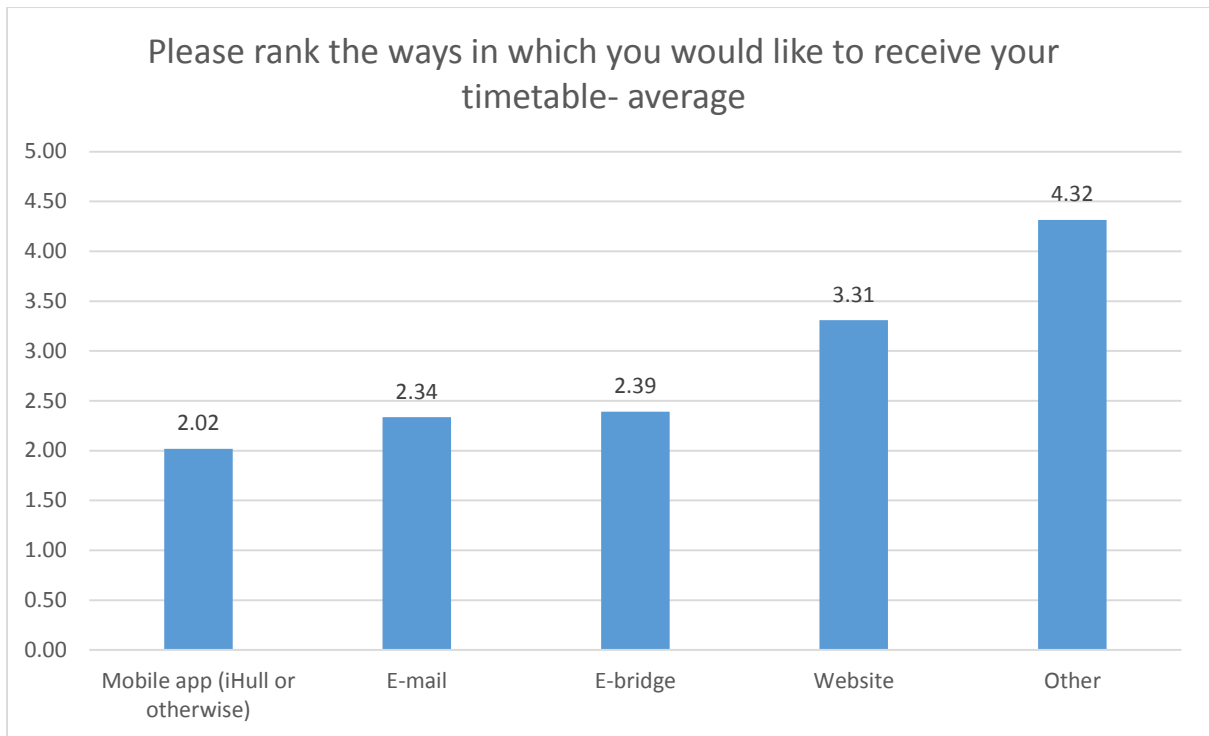


Data suggests that 45% of students have experienced timetabling problems, this is an increase of 3% on last year. The major problems highlighted in last year’s submission were room changes and the timetable being incorrect. This year, both issues seem to be persistent as the graph below indicates.

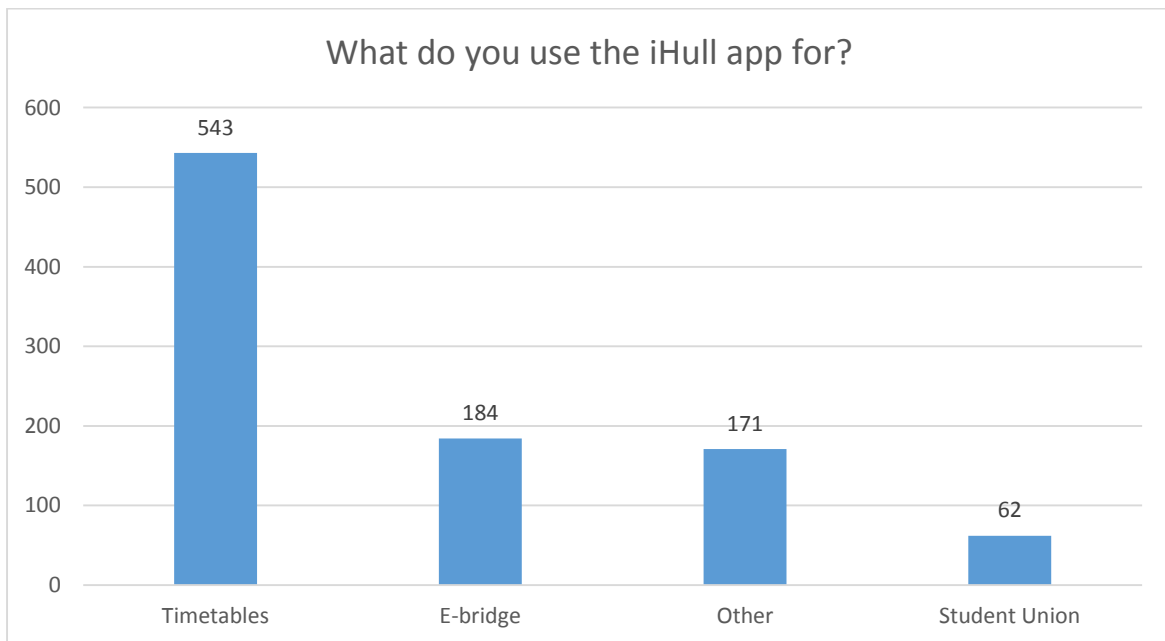
If yes, which of the following problems have you experienced?



HUU used the 2015 Education Survey to investigate how students would like to receive their timetables and the results are below.



HUU asked participants about the iHull app usage and the results show that the main usage for the app is timetables however the app appears to be the least popular way to receive this information. Further work is needed to understand how students would like to receive their timetables.

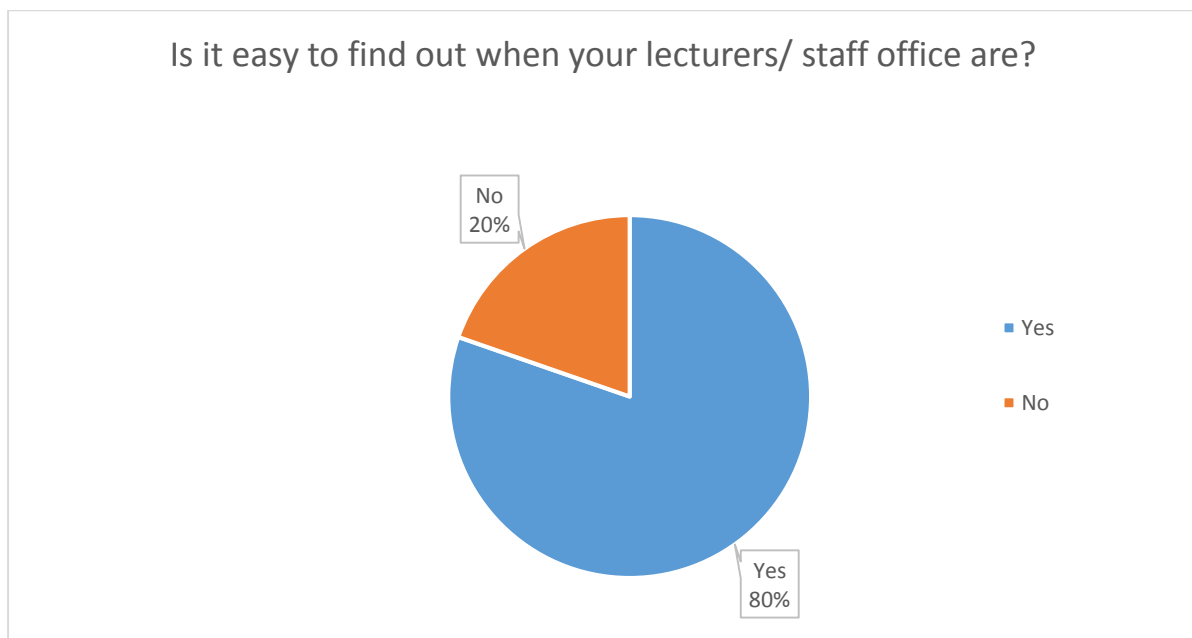
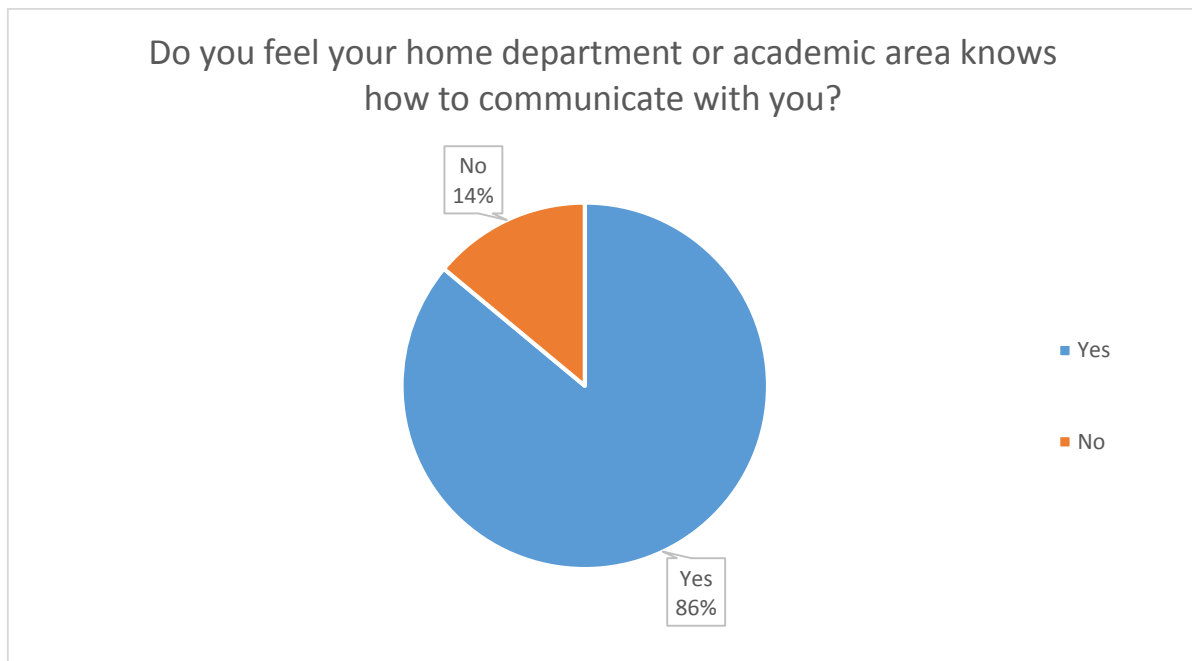


Recommendation

That HUU and the University work together to understand the 'other' category with regard to both the timetabling issues students have experienced and the mechanisms they would like to use to access their timetables.

3.3.2 Communication

The 2015 Education Survey highlights that 86% of respondents feel their home department knows how to communicate with them. This is an improvement on previous results (up 6% since 2012). This is a positive result and matched by a 9% improvement in the number of survey respondents who agreed that it was easy to find out when staff office hours are. The StEP 'Student Communications' project has yet to conclude and HUU looks forward to reporting on further improvements in students' perception of communications.



Recommendation

That HUU continue to monitor issues around student communications in light of the positive improvements in 2015.

3.4 Employability

3.4.1 Placements

The 2014 SWS included a recommendation for “HUU to conduct research into the support, guidance and advice student wishing to go on placement, or currently out on placement, will receive and the levels that these are being delivered”. HUU undertook a placement project and submitted its final report to ULTAC during the 2014-2015 session. The report outlined several themes that need investigating by the University; communications, support, the International Office, assessment whilst on Placement and Placement Evaluation. The report is available via the HUU website and a prioritised action plan is included as an Appendix to this submission.

During the summer of 2015 additional concerns relating to placements were received from students. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the process by which students receive results and attend placement may be affecting their experiences. For example, cases where students start placements before the results of their assessments or reassessment are released can lead to wasted time and resource if placements are terminated following results.

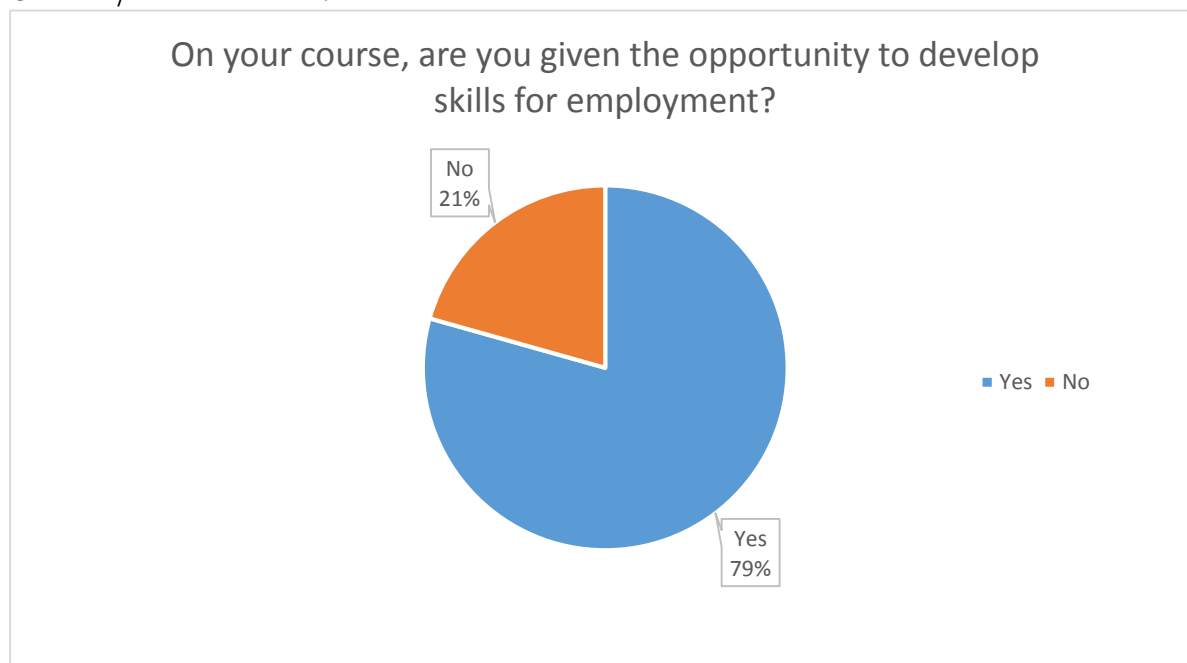
The Faculty Co-ordinator for Health and Social Care campaigned last academic year for protected results days, where students would not be on placement, to allow students to seek help and advice. These protected results days, as well as ‘results clinics’ to discuss results and academic appeals could help the experiences of these individuals. The concern is that students have completed the appropriate administrative processes in order to attend placement, however it is merely the failure of assessment that leads to embarrassment of having to leave a placement.

Recommendation

That the University explore processes and support available for students who start placements prior to the confirmation of their assessment or re-assessment results.

3.4.2 Employability Skills on Course

The 2015 Education Survey confirms that in the last two years there has been an 18% increase in the number of respondents who feel their course provides them with employability skills and the majority of this increase occurred between 2014 and 2015. This is positive news for both the University and its students.



In this context it is a concern that the overall NSS scores for personal development have decreased (between 1 and 2%) across all areas of personal development since last year.

NSS scores for questions regarding personal development

| | Personal development | 19. The course has helped me to present myself with confidence. | 20. My communication skills have improved. | 21. As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems. |
|------------|----------------------|---|--|--|
| 2015 | 84 | 83 | 85 | 84 |
| 2014 | 86 | 85 | 86 | 85 |
| Difference | -2 | -2 | -1 | -1 |

The University of Hull's personal development score as an average is 84%. This is 1% higher than the UK Average and the University's TRAC group, however is 2% less than the North East region. Within the region for personal development the top scores are from; Hull York Medical School with 99%, Teeside scoring 87%, with Lincoln, Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumbria at Newcastle, Bradford, Sheffield Hallam and Leeds Trinity all scoring 86%.

NSS personal development scores against the sector, TRAC Group and region

| | University of Hull | NSS Top Quartile | UK Average | TRAC Group C Average | English Region (North East) |
|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Personal Development % Agree | 84 | 83 | 83 | 83 | 86 |

Once again overall scores hide considerable difference at a departmental level with the gap between the highest and lowest scoring departments being 26%.

Top NSS scores for personal development

| | Personal development | 19. The course has helped me to present myself with confidence. | 20. My communication skills have improved. | 21. As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems. |
|--|----------------------|---|--|--|
| Ctre for Environmental & Marine Sciences | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 |
| Music | 92 | 96 | 88 | 92 |
| Geography | 91 | 91 | 91 | 93 |

Both Music and the Centre for Environmental and Marine Sciences have been in the top scoring departments for Personal Development for the last two years – congratulations!

Most improvement needed for Personal Development

| | Personal development | 19. The course has helped me to present myself with confidence. | 20. My communication skills have improved. | 21. As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems. |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---|--|--|
| Creative Music Technology | 74 | 77 | 77 | 69 |
| English | 72 | 75 | 75 | 67 |
| Philosophy | 71 | 67 | 81 | 67 |

It is concerning that the personal development scores for three departments fell by over 10% (Theatre -25%, Philosophy and English -10%)

3.5 Complaints and appeals

HUU has raised concerns regarding student perception of complaints in recent years and, whilst amendments have been made to the regulations, these have done little to address student concerns and misapprehensions.

Recommendation

That, in line with HER SWS recommendation 16, HUU would like to work with the University to promote the complaints process and alleviate students concerns around the fairness, impact and accessibility of the process.

HUU seeks to work in partnership with the University on an “It’s ok to complain” campaign.

Whilst the University does have an informal resolution stage within its complaints process, as requested by the OIA Good Practice Framework for Complaints and Academic Appeals the University does not record informal resolutions and as such is unable to monitor resolution or share good practice.

Recommendation

That the University begin to capture informal resolutions and share best practice across the Institution.

Included as an Appendix to this submission is a case study from the University of Sheffield where the informal resolution process includes peer support. The process has proved successful.

Recommendation

That HUU explore student perceptions of peer support during the informal resolution stage of a complaint and include its findings in the 2016 SWS.

Chapter 4 Learning and Teaching

4.1 Feedback and Assessment

The HER SWS outlines the key issues in assessment and feedback, including the difference in students' perceptions of feedback between departments and types of feedback. The 2015 NSS results highlight the differences between departments with a 57% difference between the highest and lowest scoring departments.

Top 10 Departments for Assessment and Feedback

| | Assessment and feedback | 7. Feedback on my work has been prompt. | 8. I have received detailed comments on my work. | 9. Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand. |
|--|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| 012 Educational Studies | 92 | 87 | 93 | 89 |
| 050 Ctre for Environmental & Marine Sciences | 89 | 76 | 89 | 89 |
| 002 American Studies | 87 | 80 | 90 | 90 |
| 014 English | 85 | 74 | 90 | 85 |
| 020 History | 84 | 75 | 88 | 79 |
| 009 Drama | 83 | 78 | 93 | 78 |
| 173 The Centre for Employability and Professional Skills | 80 | 59 | 89 | 81 |
| 033 Sport Health and Exercise Science | 79 | 73 | 73 | 76 |
| 056 Accounting and Finance | 79 | 79 | 76 | 65 |
| 025 Music | 78 | 60 | 80 | 68 |

Sports, Health and Exercise Science, Music and American Studies have been in the top 10 for 4 years!

Congratulations to Centre for Environmental and Marine Sciences, American Studies, Educational Studies, Sports, Health and Exercise Science, Music and Drama for being in the top 10 for another year.

Most improvement needed for Assessment and Feedback

| | Assessment and feedback | 7. Feedback on my work has been prompt. | 8. I have received detailed comments on my work. | 9. Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand. |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| 027 Philosophy | 58 | 38 | 62 | 57 |
| 058 Biological Sciences | 58 | 38 | 56 | 61 |
| 006 Chemistry | 58 | 53 | 45 | 52 |
| 031 Psychology | 52 | 46 | 53 | 41 |
| 054 Theatre | 35 | 45 | 36 | 27 |

Theatre and Psychology have remained in the bottom for the fourth consecutive year. Note: Psychology's score has decreased across each question from last year.

Recommendation

That, in line with the HER SWS recommendation 3, the University to ensure that good practice is shared and that targeted support for low scoring departments is provided. HUU is keen to work with the University to include current students in identifying issues and possible solutions, disseminating good practice and evaluating impact.

The 2015 Education Survey was once again used to explore feedback on different types of assessment.

| | Not assessed this way | Don't receive feedback | Those that received feedback | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------|-------|-------|-----------|
| | | | Very bad | Bad | Ok | Good | Very good |
| Exam % | 16.13 | 20.43 | 3.90 | 7.66 | 27.02 | 19.35 | 5.51 |
| Assignment % | 1.47 | 0.94 | 2.67 | 6.82 | 27.54 | 39.57 | 20.99 |
| Presentation % | 20.99 | 2.94 | 0.94 | 5.35 | 23.80 | 33.02 | 12.97 |
| Group Work % | 29.74 | 3.10 | 1.35 | 5.25 | 25.30 | 28.26 | 7.00 |
| Other % | 52.99 | 3.32 | 0.83 | 1.66 | 17.94 | 17.11 | 6.15 |

The above table outlines how students rate feedback by assessment type. Given the development, review and amendment of the University's 'Guidance on Feedback from Examinations' it is pleasing that the number of respondents who say that they do not receive feedback on exams has declined from 34% to 20% and that only 3% report not receiving feedback for presentations (down from 5% last year). Based on this evidence it seems that improvements have been made in the provision of feedback on different assessment types. The perceived quality of feedback also seems to be improving. In 2014, 23% felt that exam feedback was poor / very poor (now 11.5%), 11% felt that assignment feedback was poor / very poor (now 9.4%) and 8% felt presentation feedback was poor / very poor (now 6.2%). HUU commends the staff who have worked hard to provide quality feedback on the full range of assessment types.

Thank you to all staff who have worked hard to provide and promote feedback on the full range of assessment types.

Whilst there are some successes to be celebrated the table below highlights that the University is below the top quartile for feedback and assessment, the lowest score being 65% for prompt feedback, 10% below the top quartile. As noted within the Feedback Charter, there is a four week turnaround for feedback.

HUU used PTES data to compare the assessment experience of undergraduate and postgraduate students and found that these are comparable with no significant differences. The University exceeds the PTES benchmark for feedback and assessments across all three questions.

| | The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance. | Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair. | Feedback on my work has been prompt. |
|-----------------------|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| NSS | 78 | 79 | 65 |
| NSS Top Quartile | 80 | 82 | 75 |
| PTES | 79 | 79 | 64 |
| PTES Sector Benchmark | 76 | 73 | 66 |

Recommendation

That, in line with recommendation 4 from the HER SWS, HUU work through course reps and the wider student body, to promote and evaluate the impact of the Feedback Charter and implementation of the University's 'Guidance on Feedback from Examinations'.

4.2 Student-Led Teaching Awards

The Student-Led Teaching Awards have been run by HUU for four years and in 2015 HUU received over 900 nominations, the highest number yet. The awards showcase the fantastic work of professional services staff and academics across both campuses.

HUU notes that currently there is no analysis of Student-Led Teaching Awards nominations. Best practice is only shared through the awards ceremony itself and the invitation of winners to speak at the Annual Learning and Teaching Conference facilitated by LEAP. For the awards to have a fuller impact a quantitative analysis of the awards nominations could be undertaken and the results integrated into staff development and resource planning.

Recommendation

That the University consider the possible use which could be made of the SLTA nomination data to inform staff development and planning.

Chapter 5 Student Engagement

5.1.1 Review of the code of practice

During 2014-15 HUU and LEAP worked together to add more accountability to the current student representation system and ensure that actions arising from Staff-Student Committees (SSCs) were reported clearly. The new reporting template has been developed in collaboration with departments. The aim of the template is to highlight the key areas of best practice and improvement.

5.1.2 End of Year Reports

The End of Year Reports (EOYR) are completed by both staff and course reps. This year HUU received, for the first time, reports from all academic departments. HUU extends its thanks to every department for this collegial approach. However, only some completed the reports appropriately and as such these are the only ones to be included within the submission.

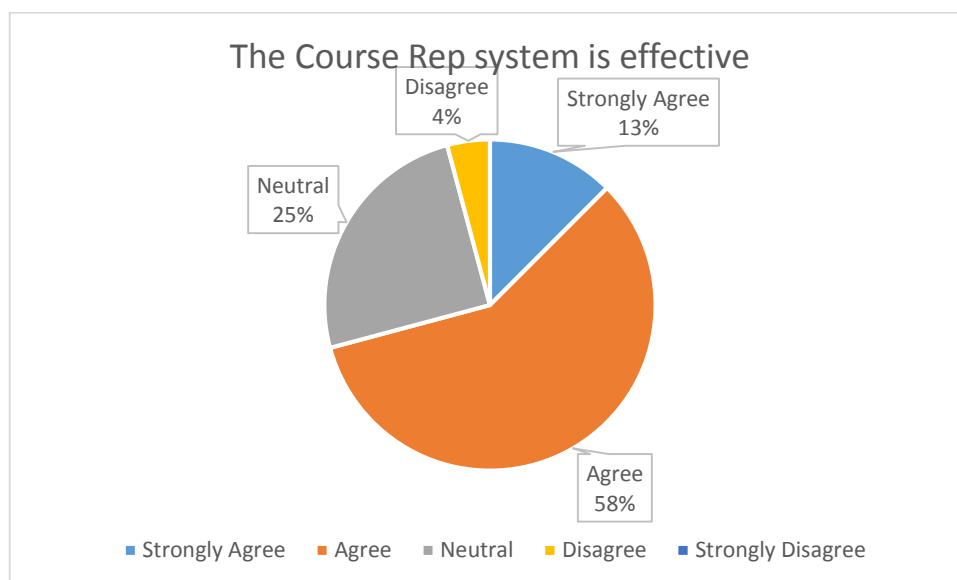
The table below provides an overview of the topics discussed at SSC and, as noted within the HER SWS, both Module Evaluation Questionnaires and External Examiners reports are inconsistently discussed.

Recommendation:

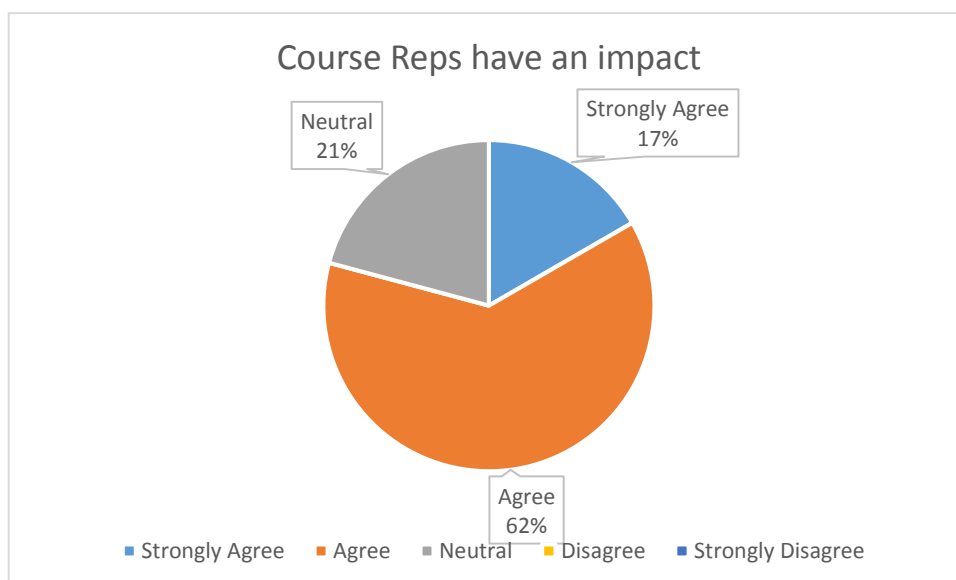
That, in line with recommendations 5 and 15 from HER SWS, HUU and the University work together to ensure that Staff-Student Committees are places to raise issues, share ideas, make plans and review progress. Efforts should be undertaken to ensure that external examiner reports and MEQs are considered by all SSC.

| Theme | Number of SSCs discussing | Scarborough |
|---|---------------------------|-------------|
| Student Representation | 21 | 6 |
| Learning and Teaching Methods | 20 | 6 |
| Quality of Teaching | 22 | 6 |
| Work placements/Year Abroad | 14 | 6 |
| University/Department Policy | 13 | 6 |
| Content and quality of programmes and modules | 19 | 6 |
| Feedback and Evaluation of assessed work | 21 | 6 |
| Student Handbooks | 10 | 6 |
| NSS | 16 | 6 |
| Last Year's Annual Report | 17 | 6 |
| HUU Course Rep Training | 16 | 6 |
| Assessment Methods | 21 | 6 |
| Student Evaluations | 19 | 6 |
| Project Work | 11 | 6 |
| Quality and Availability of resources | 13 | 6 |
| Library and IT resources | 17 | 6 |
| Student Support | 13 | 6 |
| Personal Supervisor | 14 | 6 |
| External Examiners Report | 14 | 6 |
| Module Evaluation reports | 18 | 6 |
| Annual Monitoring | 4 | 0 |
| Academic Council | 5 | 0 |
| Promoting and advertising Course Reps | 7 | 0 |

The next sections investigate the responses of course reps around certain questions about system effectiveness.



HUU is happy to report that no departments strongly disagree with the statement “the Course Rep system is effective”, with 58% agreeing with the statement. It is troubling that 25% remain ‘neutral’ in determining Course Rep effectiveness. The chart below outlines the responses around Course Reps having an impact. 21% of responses are ‘neutral’, HUU and the University of Hull need to investigate why this percentage is so high, furthermore, more work needs to be done unpicking what impact is considered by the other 79%, moreover is that impact considered positive.



Recommendation

That, in line with the HER SWS recommendation 14, HUU work with the University to explore the roles of, and support for, department and faculty representatives to ensure that students are aware of the actions taken in response to their feedback and to increase students' perceptions of their influence.

5.3 Decision Making & Partnership Working

A key recommendation from the 2014 SWS was for "students to have a greater involvement in the decision making process, both within their departments and the University". As the HER SWS highlights, HUU and the University have a broadly positive working relationship and there have been a number of notable examples of student engagement, namely the VLE review and the BJJ redevelopment projects. As the University continues to implement existing, and identify new, change projects it is timely to reassert the need for genuine partnership working to improve the student experience. As noted in the introduction, it is these effective partnerships which result in positive change.

Recommendation

That, in line recommendation 13 of the HER SWS, the University ensure that student stakeholders are involved in planning and decision making regarding student facing services and resources.

Appendix 1 Integrated SWS 2015 Recommendations

- 1 The SWS highlights that HUU and the University need to continue to work together to ensure that Scarborough students get a high quality experience.
- 2 The SWS asks the University to ensure that clear and timely communications are produced about the changes to the PG pass mark so that students fully understand the implications for the grading and assessment of their work.
- 3 As in previous years HUU asks the University to ensure that good practice is shared and that targeted support for low scoring departments is provided. HUU is keen to work with the University to include current students in identifying issues and possible solutions, disseminating good practice and evaluating impact.
- 4 HUU will work, through course reps and the wider student body, to promote and evaluate the impact of the Feedback Charter and the implementation of the University's Guidance on Feedback from Examinations.
- 5 The SWS highlights that HUU and the University need to work together to ensure that external examiner reports are the focus of discussion and action planning in all Staff-Student Committees.
- 6 HUU supports increased student participation in programme design and wants to work with the University to develop training sessions for students on programme design and development, evaluate the impact of any guidance developed for students and share good practice on this topic.
- 7 HUU supports increased student participation in quality processes, including validation panels and wants to work with the University on evaluating the impact, and student perception of this development.
- 8 HUU is concerned about declining NSS results around 'the teaching on my course', and asks the University to work with staff and students to understand and address the reasons for the decline.
- 9 Following full implementation of the new Academic Support Tutoring policy HUU will evaluate the impact of changes through research and engagement with students.
- 10 An action plan has been developed from the HUU Placement Report and the University and HUU will work together on key recommendations.
- 11 HUU would like to continue to work with the University to explore approaches to increasing the uptake and completion of the Hull Employability Award.
- 12 HUU asks the University to explore NSS data by student characteristic (ethnicity, disability, age) and compare satisfaction data by level (postgraduate taught, postgraduate research). The University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee does not currently receive NSS data segmented by student characteristic and HUU recommends that it does so.
- 13 HUU asks the University to ensure that student stakeholders are involved in planning and decision making regarding student facing services and resources.
- 14 The SWS recommends that HUU work with the University to explore the roles of, and support for, department and faculty representatives to ensure that students are aware of the actions taken in response to their feedback and to increase students' perceptions of their influence.
- 15 HUU would like to work with the University to share good practice in Staff-Student Committees and to make sure that all committees are places to raise issues, share ideas, make plans and review progress.
- 16 HUU would like to work with the University to promote the complaints process and alleviate students concerns around the fairness, impact and accessibility of the process.

- 17 HUU would like the University to explore the role that Faculty Co-ordinators could play in the QER process.
- 18 That HUU and the University work together to understand the 'other' category with regard to both the timetabling issues students have experienced and the mechanisms they would like to use to access their timetables.
- 19 That HUU continue to monitor issues around student communications in light of the positive improvements in 2015.
- 20 That the University explore processes and support available for students who start placements prior to the confirmation of their assessment or re-assessment results.
- 21 HUU seeks to work in partnership with the University on an "It's ok to complain" campaign.
- 22 That the University begin to capture informal complaint resolutions and share best practice across the Institution.
- 23 That HUU explore student perceptions of peer support during the informal resolution stage of a complaint and include its findings in the 2016 SWS.
- 24 That the University consider the possible use which could be made of the SLTA nomination data to inform staff development and planning.

Appendix 2 Prioritised Actions Arising from HUU's Place Report

Placement Report Priority List

After the ULTAC Meeting on the 20th May 2015, the Vice-President Education was actioned to go away and look at the recommendations from within the report, to suggest an order of priority for these. Below is what we, at Hull University Union (HUU), believe the priority list should look like.

Instead of a priority list from 1 through to 9, the recommendations have been put into 4 groups, and these have then been prioritised. Group 1 is what is deemed as the highest priority, and Group 4 being the lowest.

| <u>GROUP 1</u> | |
|--|---|
| Recommendation | Location in Report |
| <p>For the University to create a contact booklet centrally, including the above contacts and other useful contacts, and for the departments to input the details that will differ, such as placement and University contacts.</p> <p>In addition, this booklet should also contain information that is defined as a must within paragraph 49 of the Code of Practice on Placement Learning.</p> | <p>Communications, Connections and Clarity – Recommendations 1 and 2 (merged)</p> |
| <p>For the HUU Advice Centre and Student Wellbeing Team, as well as University Departments, to advertise these services more effectively, especially to placement students. This could be done with the recommendation within the Communications, Connections and Clarity section.</p> | <p>Support – Recommendation 4</p> |
| <p>For the University contact for the placement student to be more proactive, rather than reactive, by sending courtesy emails on a regular basis, checking how they are doing and if any support is required</p> | <p>Support – Recommendation 5</p> |

| GROUP 2 | |
|--|---|
| Recommendation | Location in Report |
| To re-evaluate the role of the International Mobility and Partnerships Office, and their website to be updated to match the new re-evaluated role. | The International Office – Recommendation 1 |
| For a full review of the IMAP Office to be undertaken, with particular focus to services provided to placement learners and their delivery, processes, procedures, personnel and how placement learners are communicated to. | The International Office – Recommendation 2 |
| For HUU to look into adapting the Course Representative structure so that all views are heard through the correct channels. This could be through the creation of Placement Representatives. | Support – Recommendation 3 |

| GROUP 3 | |
|--|---|
| Recommendation | Location in Report |
| For University departments to review the assessments given to placement students | Assessment and Evaluation – Recommendation 1 |
| For an open and honest placement review structure to be created and implemented. For an archiving system to be in place, so that information regarding a placement by those who have experienced it can be shared with those considering going on a placement to the same location. | Assessment and Evaluation – Recommendation 2 and 3 (merged) |
| For the University to review its provision for travel subsidiary, and where it is offered, that the financial support given actually covers travel costs. | Support – Recommendation 2 |

GROUP 4

| Recommendation | Location in Report |
|---|----------------------------|
| For a database to be created and managed regarding housing, so that student feedback from previous placements can be used for those looking to go on placement. | Support – Recommendation 1 |

Case study – OIA Framework for Complaints and Appeals 2014

“The University of Sheffield has been running an early resolution scheme since February 2013. During each year of operation, up to six student peer conciliators have been recruited from pools of “engaged” students. To get the scheme off the ground, a working group was formed with sabbatical officers, HR and colleagues from Student Services. A training package was developed and this has now been made available to other relevant groups at the university...”

“The record of each meeting is kept simple – a form is completed with the name of the student, a brief summary of the issue and the outcome. It is for internal use only and no details...There is a careful use of language, for example or “concerns”, not “complaints”. The university reports that a number of cases have been resolved before reaching the formal stage...”

“Conciliators are given a brief summary of the type of issue in advance of the meeting...The pilot has been perceived as a positive experience. Student peer conciliators are thought to be more independent and the scheme is less formal than other types of early resolution.”

Outcomes:

- none of the cases conciliated has gone on to the formal stage of the student complaints procedure
- students feel they have been listened to
- the scheme has contributed to the personal development of the conciliators
- there has been a sense of achievement for everyone concerned
- the profile of the University has been raised
- a stand-alone training package has been developed
- it is a joint scheme between the University and the Students’ Union
- the students have an enhanced student experience
- the pre-prepared script requires the conciliator to go through a confidentiality statement with the student which needs to be signed – this has proved to be an effective icebreaker. “issues”

Appendix 4 HUU's Student Written Submission for the Institutional Review



HULL UNIVERSITY UNION'S
Higher Education Review
Student Written Submission
2015

Introduction

- 1 This Student Written Submission (SWS) is presented to the QAA as part of the 2015 Higher Education Review. Student representatives have been included in all stages of the University's planning for the review, through informal support and full participation in both Executive and Operational Group meetings. The SWS cross references the SED, to which HUU has had full access, and a joint evidence base has been developed.
- 2 The submission is largely based on the analysis of existing published information. A key source of evidence are the annual SWS, produced by HUU following the 2009 QAA review^{1 2 3 4}. HUU has worked with the University to iteratively improve submissions and the action planning arising from them. The SWS draw on a range of data including Staff-Student Committee (SSC) minutes, NSS results, course rep comments and qualitative and quantitative data from HUU's annual Education Survey. Response rates for the Education Survey have increased from 243 in 2010 to over 1500 in 2014, reflecting high levels of student engagement with the themes it addresses.
- 3 The SWS and action plan are received annually by the University Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee (ULTAC) and, following a presentation by the Vice-President Education (VPE) to Senate in February 2015, will now form part of the annual submission to Senate.
- 4 The minutes of ULTAC reflect the esteem in which the SWS is held and action plans chart the progress made in key areas^{5 6 7}. HUU's practice in this area has been recognized in the sector. The VPE and the University's Head of Quality presented the approach to the ARC Quality Practitioners Group in 2014, HUU contributed to the TSEP project on Annual Quality Reports, have shared submissions with the sector through NUS Connect and have informally helped other Unions with the development of their submissions.
- 5 This submission has been developed by a team including the 2014-15 and 2015-16 Presidents and the Vice-Presidents Education and Scarborough (VPE and VPSc), Membership Services Director, and Education and Representation Co-ordinator. Key themes in the submission were considered by HUU's Union Council in May 2015⁸. The final version of the document was endorsed at Union Executive Committee in August 2015. The document will be made available to the 2015-16 student body in October and any comments will be fed into the review meetings in November 2015.

Relationship with the University

- 6 The University's Strategic Plan (2011-15) states that "[s]tudent engagement is a key driver for change within our management of learning and teaching"⁹ and the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy (2012-15) (LTSES) affirms the commitment to "improve quality through partnership with our students"¹⁰. Evidence from previous SWS action plans highlight the range of initiatives

¹ 161 2011 SWS

² 162 2012 SWS

³ 163 2013 SWS

⁴ 164 2014 SWS

⁵ 567 2011 SWS Action Plan Update

⁶ 568 2012 SWS Action Plan Update

⁷ 569 2013 SWS Action Plan Update

⁸ 570 Union Council, 2015 05 11, min 6a

⁹ 010 University of Hull Strategic Plan (2011-15), section 2.3

¹⁰ 006 LTSE Strategy (2012-15), para. 29

undertaken in response to, and in partnership with, HUU and the wider student body.

- 7 Changes to the title of the UCP governing student involvement in quality assurance and enhancement, moving from 'student representation' in 2009 to 'partnership with students'¹¹ by 2011, reflect the University's journey towards genuine partnership working. This journey is on-going, but the commitment to it is real. Evidence of progress include the introduction of student representatives on Periodic Review panels, the joint development of a Student Charter¹² and a Feedback Charter¹³, student co-ownership of projects within the Student Experience Programme (StEP), Curriculum 2016+ requirements regarding the student voice in programme design and the extensive student involvement in the BJJ redevelopment and VLE review.
- 8 Elected student officers meet regularly with members of University staff. For example, at a senior management level regular meetings are held between the HUU President and the Vice-Chancellor and the VPE and the PVC Education. Similarly, at a wider leadership level the Vice-President Welfare and Community meets regularly with the Head of Student Wellbeing, Learning and Welfare Support (SWLWS). These meetings provide opportunities to explore joint initiatives and discuss strategic and operational issues.
- 9 Student representation is the norm on University deliberative committees including University Council, Senate and HYMS Joint Senate. The profile of representation and approach to partnership working is articulated in the UCP Partnership with Students in the Management of Quality and Standards. The student representative system is jointly owned and is reviewed annually to ensure that practice is informed by feedback from both bodies.
- 10 Commitment to the student voice is evident, for example in May 2013¹⁴ it was agreed that the first substantive item on the ULTAC agenda would be the minutes of HUU's Academic Council and Scarborough Course Representative Forum, and items raised by the student member.
- 11 Student representation on University working groups is also standard practice. The A2Q Action Plan and committee work plans provide clear schedules for code and regulation review and representatives are included on review groups. Notable examples of student participation on University project groups include partnership working on the Library Redevelopment Group and HUU's coordination of input from over 1000 students to the initial scoping of the Curriculum 2016+ programme.
- 12 Where relevant University staff attend HUU's Academic Council and Scarborough Course Rep Forum in order to consult with, or brief, student representatives. For example, ICTD staff attended Academic Council regarding their investment initiatives¹⁵ and members of the STeP team attended to gain feedback from the wider student body on the programme's direction¹⁶. HUU organises an annual student conference and University staff regularly contribute to ensure the wider student body is aware of strategic initiatives¹⁷.

¹¹ 273 UCP Partnership with Student in the Management of Quality & Standards, 2011

¹² 065 Student Charter, 2012

¹³ 066 Student Feedback Charter, 2015

¹⁴ 571 ULTAC 2013 05 2013 Decision Record, min.105

¹⁵ 572 Academic Council 2013 03 05, min 5

¹⁶ 573 STeP Briefing to Union Council 2014 10 20

¹⁷ 574 HUU Student Conference 2015 Programme

- 13 The number and quality of submissions to the annual Student-Led Teaching Awards (SLTAs) reflects the commitment and passion of many individuals and staff teams to providing an outstanding student experience.

Scarborough Campus

- 14 In 2014 the University took the strategic decision to cease intake to programmes on the Scarborough Campus from 2015. Elected student officers were fully briefed about the decision and raised their concerns at Senate¹⁸. HUU is working closely with the University to ensure that the impact of the transition is minimized. The VPSc and VPE sit on the Scarborough Transition Group and worked with senior University staff to create the Principles of an Excellent Student Experience¹⁹, which outlines both University and HUU responsibilities during the transition. The document was signed by the VPSc and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) in March 2015.
- 15 Many students have a strong attachment to the campus and its programmes, as demonstrated by the high overall NSS satisfaction scores achieved by some departments, and changes to the provision are an emotive topic. Minutes of SSCs and the Scarborough Course Rep Forum for 2104-15 highlight issues regarding the availability of staff^{20 21 22} and clarity regarding transition²³. In March 2015 the VPSc organised an open forum for students to discuss their concerns with the DVC. The need for improved communication and continued access to teaching and support staff were identified as key priorities. In response, a Programme Migration Group has been established to monitor the implementation of the 'Scarborough principles'. The 2015 NSS includes worryingly low levels of student satisfaction in some areas. For example, Theatre, achieved only 27% satisfaction with the organization and smooth running of the programme and 36% overall satisfaction. HUU will continue to work to ensure that commitments are met and that the academic and wider student experience is positive.

Student Representative Body

- 16 HUU is the representative body for all students at the University of Hull. HUU employs 90 permanent staff and 6 full-time elected officers, of which 1 elected officer and 4 staff are based at the Scarborough Campus.
- 17 The University's collaborative provision operates on a direct student numbers model and partner institutions are responsible for their own student representation systems. However, HUU has provided training and support for student representatives in partner institutions. Partner college students can apply to be Associate Members of HUU.
- 18 HUU offers a range of engagement and support opportunities to its members including:
- Training and coordination of course, departmental and faculty student representatives
 - An Advice Centre offering impartial advice on academic, financial and housing issues

¹⁸ 172 Senate 2014 04 02, min 41

¹⁹ 575 Principles of an Excellent Student Experience

²⁰ 576 Scarborough Course Rep Forum, 'Assessment and Feedback'

²¹ 577 SSC SCHCS 2015 04 22, min 3.1

²² 578 SSC TaP 2015 5 15, min 9.1

²³ 579 SSC SCHCS 2015 02 04, min 9.3

- Specific support for under-represented groups through committees; Disabled Students' Committee, Lesbian Gay Bi Transgendered + (LGBT+), International Students' Association (ISA), Womens' Committee and Black Asian Minority and Ethnic Committee (BAME)
 - Over 100 societies with over 3000 members including a range of academic societies and 50 sports clubs with over 2000 members
 - A Jobshop
 - Student-led and external community volunteering initiatives
 - HullSTARS, a housing review and accreditation scheme.
- 19 In addition, HUU operates commercial services including an accommodation lettings service, shops on both campuses and licensed premises.
- 20 Our recent Rate Your Union (RYU) survey indicates that 92% of respondents know that they are a member of HUU and 67% were aware of the role of the 6 elected officers, a 15% increase on the 2012 result. Whilst continually striving to engage with, 'hard to reach groups' HUU has positive levels of engagement. NSS data for the last 4 years confirms that 78-80% of students are satisfied with the students' union.
- 21 As part of HUU's recent strategy consultation over 3000 students were surveyed regarding their views on, and aspirations for, HUU. Students' top 3 priorities for the organisation were employability, academic success and representing their views to the University, themes closely aligned with the focus of this submission. HUU undertook a comprehensive governance review during the 2014-15 session with the aim of further enhancing its capacity to meaningfully represent members and to improve the student experience.
- 22 In developing this submission we have reviewed SSC minutes from distance taught and part-time programmes, programmes with a substantial placement component and programmes currently being transitioned between campuses. By using a range of data in the development of this submission we aim to capture the views of HUU's diverse members.

How effectively the University has addressed the recommendations of its last review?

| | |
|---|--|
| "The audit team recommends that the University considers action in certain areas. | |
| Implement consistently the requirements of its Code of Practice that annual monitoring reports are completed by postgraduate research students and their supervisors. | HUU has received no specific complaints or issues regarding the monitoring of PGR students. |
| Extend the range of information it uses to assure itself about the standards and quality of research degree programmes. | HUU supports participation in the PRES survey as a mechanism to gain feedback from PGR students. |

| | |
|---|--|
| It is desirable for the University to: | |
| Ensure that any action taken as a result of student feedback from module evaluation questionnaires and staff-student committees is communicated effectively to all students. | The UCP Standardised Module and Teaching Quality Evaluation Questionnaires requires departments to have clear feedback mechanisms in place for reporting action taken in response to issues raised and sets out minimum requirements for the information which must be made available to students. End of Year Reports supplied by SSCs for 2013-2014 highlight that MEQs were discussed at only 14, of the 24 reporting SSCs ²⁴ whilst the 2014-2015 reports highlight that 18 out of 26 SSCs discussed MEQs ²⁵ . This is clearly disappointing and HUU are keen to work closely with the University to ensure that MEQ data is used to facilitate meaningful and productive discussions with students. |
| Strengthen its oversight of the process by which departments ensure that postgraduate research students who teach are adequately prepared to do so. | HUU welcomed the development and implementation of the new Policy on PGR who Teach ²⁶ . HUU believes that the policy supports both undergraduate and postgraduate research students by ensuring that necessary training is received and contractual protections are in place. |
| Implement consistently the requirements in its Code of Practice that external examiner reports, and departmental responses to external examiner reports, are shared with students through staff-student committees. | Reviewing SSC End of Year Reports it is clear that the sharing of External Examiner reports with students remains inconsistent. In both 2013-2014 and 2014-15 External Examiners Reports were raised by only 14 SSCs. HUU welcomes the direct access to external examiner reports now provided to all students and are keen to work closely |

²⁴ 164 2014 SWS, pg. 45

²⁵ 580 End of Year Reports Overview 2014-15

²⁶ 055 Policy on the Employment of Postgraduate Research Students for Teaching and Supporting Learning

| | |
|--|---|
| | with the University to ensure that reports are used to facilitate meaningful and productive discussions with students. |
| The range of information designed to make the University's Quality and Standards Framework more accessible to all types of staff, including the Implementation Guides, Quality and Standards Updates and 'Working with...' series of leaflets. | HUU has no information or comment on the impact of these documents. |
| The range of staff development opportunities on offer. | HUU welcomes the increased institutional resource allocated to academic professional development, including technology-enhanced learning, through increased staffing in LEAP and the structured approach taken to management and leadership development by the Staff Development team. |
| The contribution made by quality enhancement reports to the management of quality and standards and, in particular, to the identification and dissemination of good practice. | The Quality Enhancement Report (QER) process is one of the few remaining quality assurance and enhancement processes which does not include the student voice. HUU is keen to explore the role that Faculty Co-ordinators could play in reflecting on the actions taken in response to quality processes and ensuring the dissemination of good practice. |
| The encouragement and recognition of excellence in learning and teaching that is provided by the University Teaching Fellowship scheme, and the contribution of both National and University Teaching Fellows to quality enhancement. | HUU applauds the University's continued success in award schemes such as the National Teaching Fellowships and welcomes the implementation of the DARTE HEA Fellowship scheme. |

Academic standards

Do student see assessments getting more challenging as they progress through their course and do they understand grading criteria?

- 23 A student representative is a full, trained member of each University Periodic Review panel and meeting with departmental students is a key element of the review process. The outcomes of Periodic Reviews are shared through ULTAC and are made available to students. During a review students are asked about the progression of assessment, learning outcomes and how grades are allocated. Reports for the last 2 years do not identify any issues in this area.
- 24 NSS data for the last 3 years suggests that University of Hull students are 2-3% more satisfied than their TRAC Group with the clarity of marking criteria and the fairness of assessment. The University is scheduled to amend the postgraduate pass mark in September 2016 and HUU encourages the University to ensure that clear and timely communications are produced so that students fully understand the implications for the grading and assessment of their work.

Do students feel that their assessments are appropriate?

- 25 The limited range of assessments experienced by some students are highlighted in the 2013 and 2014 SWS with Exam/Presentation/Essay and Exam/Essay dominating the landscape^{27 28}. HUU welcomes the emphasis, included in the Curriculum 2016+ programme, on mapping assessment types and deadlines at the programme level and diversifying the range of assessment methods used.

Do students feel that their feedback is timely and helpful?

- 26 The University's NSS scores for feedback and assessment suggest that undergraduate finalists 2012-2015 have been comparatively satisfied with the timeliness and quality of their feedback, with scores either matching or exceeding that of the University's TRAC Group. HUU and the University have worked collaboratively on improving the quality of feedback for a number of years and the joint Feedback Charter²⁹ was developed as part of the 2012 review of the UCP Assessment Procedures. The Charter sets out student rights and responsibilities with regard to feedback and has been distributed through various mechanisms over the last 3 years. Student views of feedback and the Feedback Charter now form the basis of a joint HUU / LEAP taught session on the PCAP programme.
- 27 Overall scores for assessment and feedback mask considerable variation between assessment methods and departments. The 2014 Education Survey highlights that, of the 1202 question respondents, only 59% consistently received feedback on presentations and only 35% received exam feedback³⁰. At the start of the 2014-15 session HUU consulted its Academic Council and two-thirds of attendees indicated that exam feedback was a key area for improvement³¹. Working closely with staff in LEAP, the Feedback Charter was revised to highlight its relevance to exams and other forms of assessment³². In the 2015-16 session HUU will work, through course reps and the wider student body, to promote and

²⁷ 163 2013 SWS, pg. 29

²⁸ 164 2014 SWS, pg. 28

²⁹ 162 2012 SWS, pg. 9

³⁰ 164 2014 SWS, pg. 31

³¹ 581 Academic Council 2014 11 13, min. 6

³² 066 Student Feedback Charter, 2015

evaluate the impact of the revisions and the implementation of the University's Guidance on Feedback from Examinations³³.

- 28 The 2014 SWS highlights that some departments, specifically Theatre and Psychology, have received consistently poor NSS feedback scores whilst other areas, namely American Studies, Sport Health and Exercise Science and Music, have received high scores for 3 consecutive years³⁴. This trend has continued in the 2015 NSS data with the named departments remaining in the same positions. The variation between the lowest and highest assessment and feedback scores in 2015 is 57%, up from 41% on 2014. HUU continue to encourage the University to ensure that good academic and administrative practice is shared and that targeted support is provided where necessary.

Are students aware of the rules on plagiarism?

- 29 The University has a standard student handbook template for both UG and PG students along with an online Student Handbook. The use of templates ensures that all students are aware of plagiarism and penalties for the use of unfair means. As outlined in the SED the Skills Team provide a range of face-to-face and online guidance regarding avoiding plagiarism. In response to feedback from students standard approaches to academic referencing were introduced in 2014-15 and comprehensive guidance is available from the Skills Team³⁵.

Do students have access to External Examiner Reports?

- 30 As noted above, and acknowledged in the SED, there has been an inconsistent approach to the dissemination and consideration of external examiner reports. The University has taken steps to provide all students with access to reports and, as mentioned above, HUU are keen to work with the University to ensure that reports are the focus of productive discussion in all SSCs.

How are students involved in the design of new programmes?

- 31 As the SED highlights the role of students in the design, and redesign, of programmes is a fundamental component of the Curriculum 2016+ programme. HUU welcomes the requirement for programme teams to clearly outline 'student engagement in curriculum and pedagogic design' and the specific guidance to be created for students. In order to support work in this area HUU and the University have engaged with The Student Engagement Partnership (TSEP) to access good practice and support. TSEP visited the University in February 2015 to meet with staff and elected officers and present to the wider student body³⁶. HUU is keen to work collaboratively with the University to develop training sessions, evaluate the impact of guidance and disseminate good practice.
- 32 The UCP Approval of New Programmes highlights the requirement that Validation Panels include student representatives. This requirement was implemented during the 2014-15 session with current students and recent graduates included as full panel members. HUU is keen to work with the University on evaluating the impact, and student perception of, this development in the coming session.

³³ 582 Guidance on Feedback from Examinations

³⁴ 164 2014 SWS, pg. 35-36

³⁵ 056 Policy on Academic Referencing

³⁶ 574 HUU Student Conference 2015 Programme

Learning Opportunities

How do students perceive the learning support available from academic and professional services staff?

- 33 Increased staff resource in the LEAP academic practice and TEL teams, the re-launch of the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PCAP), the creation of the Disciplinary Approaches to Research and Teaching Excellence (DARTE) scheme and the training programme for PGR students who teach, all demonstrate the University's commitment to improving the quality of teaching and student support. Whilst NSS scores related to 'the teaching on my course' increased annually by 1% in the 3 years 2012-14, it is concerning that 2015 has seen a 3% drop in satisfaction in this area. Worryingly the sharpest decline is around staff enthusiasm for their teaching (down 4%), in addition the 10%+ drop in the 'Academic Support' scores in some departments is notable. HUU encourages the University to work with staff and students to understand and address the reasons for this decline.
- 34 Issues identified with academic support may be directly related to the personal supervisor system which has been a recurrent theme in the SWS. In 2012 92% of Education Survey respondents knew who their supervisor was and 89% had met them³⁷. However, the 2014 SWS highlighted that these figures had declined³⁸. Survey respondents cited staff being too busy, unsupportive or negative as the primary reasons for not meeting with their supervisor. The Personal Supervision project within StEP was developed in response to these concerns and the VPE was project co-owner. The project used a range of student feedback data to shape a model for provision at Hull³⁹. The new Policy on Academic Tutoring⁴⁰ clarifies the role and remit of supervisors, provides for workload allocation and minimum numbers of meetings. Clear communication and systematic staff development will be key to the success of the new policy and HUU looks forward to working with the University to evaluate the impact of changes made
- 35 HUU is aware of the range of initiatives the University has implemented to support students in achieving the learning outcomes associated with their programmes. Such initiatives, including the Student Success Advisors and the PASS scheme, are outlined in the SED. HUU notes that over 300 PASS sessions were facilitated in 2014-15 and over 1300 1:1 sessions were supported by the LLI Skills Team.
- 36 The SED highlights the changes which have taken place in SWLWS in order to better support the student body and increased investment in this service is a positive development. Where appropriate the SWLWS team work closely with HUU's Advice Centre to offer student support and the co-location of the teams has strengthened operational connections. HUU Advice Centre statistics indicate that the numbers of students presenting with mental health problems is increasing and the development of support in this area in the new SWLWS is welcomed.
- 37 In 2012 HUU and the University participated in the HEA Student-Led Teaching Award pilot. The awards have been a marked success with over 900 nominations received in 2015. The volume and content of nominations reflects the outstanding teaching and support that many students experience. It is noteworthy that award winners range from professorial staff to early career academics. The awards also

³⁷ 162 2012 SWS, pg. 24

³⁸ 164 2014 SWS, pg. 14

³⁹ 583 Personal Supervision Project Report

⁴⁰ 488 Policy on Academic Tutoring

feature categories for non-academic staff and nominees include staff from LLI and faculty finance offices.

- 38 During 2014-15 the VPE undertook research into the experience of students on placements, including study abroad⁴¹. As described in the SED, the report and action plan were considered by ULTAC in May 2015 and a clear set of priorities for further work in this area has been developed. As the University continues to focus on developing highly employable graduates, HUU looks forward to working with the University to ensure that the benefits of high quality placement provision are maximized.

How is student employability supported?

- 39 The SED outlines the range of initiatives, and specific examples of departmental practice, to support student employability and entrepreneurship. The 2014 NSS saw the University ranked joint top of its TRAC group for 'Personal Development' questions. The 2015 Education Survey confirms that in the last two years there has been an 18% increase in the number of respondents who feel their course provides them with employability skills. Positive student perceptions in this area is confirmed by DLHE evidence, with 95% of graduates now in work or further study within six months of leaving the University. In this context it seems clear that the deliberate steps the University has taken to improve student employability have been effective. The emphasis on employability in the Curriculum 2016+ programme should further disseminate existing good practice and ensure that the promise of the 'Hull Graduate', articulated in the Strategic Plan (2011-15), is made real for all students.
- 40 HUU was actively involved in the development of the Hull Graduate Attributes Framework and is a partner in the Hull Employability Awards. HUU has participated fully in the development of the awards criteria and HUU staff are involved in assessment. During the 2014-15 session 494 students registered for the awards, 273 students attended the initial training and 10 students completed. The current completion rate does not reflect the wealth of opportunity available to students, both within the curriculum and the co-curriculum. HUU seeks to continue to work with the University to explore approaches to increasing the uptake and completion of the awards.

Do students believe that learning resources are adequate?

Physical Learning Resources

- 41 As outlined in the SED, the University is undertaking a programme of facilities and teaching space refurbishment. Elected student representatives sit on the Learning Spaces Advisory Group as well as the Teaching Spaces Group. The University's partnership approach has ensured that student views have been central to developments. Steady increases in the NSS scores for Q17 and Q18 over the last 4 years reflect investment in teaching, lab and IT facilities. IT resource satisfaction has now reach 90%, a 6% increase in the last 4 years. However, analysis of the data by student characteristic may be telling and only 85% of students declaring 'other disability' are satisfied with IT resources. Further exploration of this data is required in order to fully understand and address the challenges facing particular groups.
- 42 In 2011 HUU led a library campaign engaging with over 4000 students to explore their needs and ideas. The resulting report 'HUU's Vision for the Future of the Library'⁴² formed the basis of the University's Library Redevelopment project, a

⁴¹ 068 HUU Placement Learning Report

⁴² 584 HUU's Vision for the Brynmor Jones Library

£28 million project completed this year. Partnership working has underpinned the project from its inception. The VPE was a key member of the Library Redevelopment Group ensuring that student needs and views were considered at all stages of the project. Achievements included ensuring that stakeholder communication met student needs and facilitating study spaces during the assessment period to mitigate the low number of spaces in the library.

- 43 Whilst feedback from students reflects the impact of disruption during the redevelopment⁴³, an overwhelming majority of respondents to the 2015 Education Survey reported that the new development meets their needs. The 2015 NSS scores show a 7% increase in satisfaction with library resources over the last 4 years. HUU is currently comparing perceptions of the facility amongst undergraduate and postgraduate students, using NSS, PTES and PRES data. The report will be shared with the University at the start of the 2015-16 session.
- 44 Previous SWS highlight the strength of student opinion regarding 24hour library opening^{44 45}. Following the redevelopment of the BJL and a feasibility pilot, term time 24 hour access is now in place providing study space, IT facilities and library resources on a more flexible basis.

Virtual Learning Resources

- 45 Technology-enhanced learning is a key elements of the Curriculum 2016+ programme and student representatives have been actively involved in the Virtual Campus project. Since 2013-14 HUU elected officers have met monthly with the Head of Technology Enhanced Learning to exchange ideas and communicate developments. The need for enhanced infrastructure for elearning and additional staff support was noted in previous SWS⁴⁶.
- 46 The decision to review the VLE and explore the introduction of a new platform was made in 2013. The 2014 Education Survey was used to research the topic and the majority of students reported that the eBridge system was not easy to navigate and its integration with other software limited its capacity⁴⁷. Both undergraduate and postgraduate students from every faculty were involved in testing the potential replacements, scoring the systems from both mobile and desktop views. Course reps focused on innovative forms of engagement; from chatting to students in lifts to asking every student in a lecture to write their ideas on a post-it note. In addition, HUU elected officers were supported to visit other institutions to review VLEs and discuss their use with students. During the final stages of the project, student feedback from testing was considered to be the heaviest weighted criteria in the decision making process. The University has articulated its commitment to ensuring that students are engaged throughout the process of implementation and HUU welcomes the opportunities the new platform provides.

Graduate School

- 47 During the 2014-15 session a series of discussions were held between the PVC Research and Enterprise and the HUU President and VPE regarding the future of the Graduate School building. Issues with the building had been raised in the 2012 SWS⁴⁸. Elected representatives understood the context and need for change and lobbied for engagement with the building's primary stakeholders.

⁴³ 164 2014 SWS, pg. 6

⁴⁴ 161 2011 SWS, pg. 10

⁴⁵ 163 2013 SWS, pg. 9

⁴⁶ 163 2013 SWS, pg. 13

⁴⁷ 164 2014 SWS, pg. 12

⁴⁸ 162 2012 SWS, pg. 31

However, in June the University announced that the building would be repurposed, removing the social and study spaces used by some postgraduate students⁴⁹. Open forum meetings were held and plans were amended to include study and enhanced social space. The VPE and PVC worked closely on student communications to clarify the situation. Whilst the tangible outcomes were positive the incident provides an example of the need to ensure that the commitment to partnership working is embedded in all areas of the University.

How effective is student representation? How are representatives trained?

Academic Representation

- 48 The jointly owned approach to student representation is outlined in the SED and includes representation at programme, Department, Faculty and University level, as well as specific representation for international and postgraduate students.
- 49 HUU works closely with the University to promote the role of course reps. In partnership with departments, HUU ensures that an elected officer or HUU staff member attends every timetabled induction session to promote the academic representation system and HUU services. Positive working relationships with departmental staff have ensured that in the coming session both Faculty of Health and Social Care and postgraduate research students, both of whom HUU has historically struggled to engage with, will receive extended induction input from HUU. In addition, from 2015 students interested in becoming course reps are identified through the STEMS online induction tool and can discuss the role with the VPE pre-arrival.
- 50 HUU provides training for course, department and faculty representatives and has worked to increase the numbers of reps being trained (up from 140 in 2013 to 207 in 2014). The training has received consistently high levels of positive feedback⁵⁰. For those unable to attend, and as a source of 24/7 support, HUU has developed VLE based training materials and resources. In addition, the VPE and the HUU Education and Representation Co-ordinator support course reps by providing guidance and sharing good practice.
- 51 Course representation is evaluated annually through End of Year Reports and HUU's Rate Your Union survey. End of Year Report data for the last six years shows that both departmental staff and course reps believe that the system has a positive impact⁵¹ ⁵². HUU and LEAP use evaluations to further develop the system. Recent developments include the accreditation scheme rolled out by HUU in the 2014-15 session (Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for attendance, training and participation), and the development of a new action template for SSC meetings, to be introduced in 2015-16.
- 52 Changes to Faculty Boards have led to an increased focus on departmental and faculty representation, with an additional requirement for international student representation at department level. HUU has found the election of, and provision of training for, department reps challenging and is keen to work with the University to explore the requirements and support for department and faculty representatives.
- 53 Whilst our current system is undoubtedly effective, more could be done to promote and develop it. Research conducted with 3000 students as part of HUU's strategy consultation reveals that almost half (46%) of respondents

⁴⁹ 585 Email announcements regarding changes to the Graduate School

⁵⁰ 163 2013 SWS, pg. 36

⁵¹ 163 2013 SWS, pg. 34-35

⁵² 164 2014 SWS, pg. 44

believe that they can influence decisions at course level and just over a quarter (27%) believe they can influence change at University level. Further work is needed at faculty and department level to ensure that the representative system is strengthened and evaluated. HUU is committed to working with the University to ensure that students are aware of the actions taken in response to their feedback and to increase students' perceptions of their influence.

- 54 During the 2014-15 session some issues with course rep behavior were identified. Consultation with Academic Council led to the creation of a Course Rep Code of Conduct. HUU developed the Code which was approved by ULTAC in May 2015⁵³.
- 55 HUU is aware of its own challenges in engaging with the postgraduate community and approached the Director of the Graduate School to explore a project investigating how PGRs engage with their learning environments and how they feel they can shape them⁵⁴. The resulting joint proposal was successful in gaining support from TSEP and work is underway on establishing project activities. HUU believes that this project will be valuable in revitalizing engagement with the PGR community to ensure that their voice is heard throughout University processes.

Staff-Student Committees

- 56 The conduct of SSCs is outlined in the relevant UCP⁵⁵ and minutes are provided to HUU. Reviewing SSC minutes suggests that there is some inconsistency in their conduct. For example, the detail included in minutes and numbers of staff attending differs between programmes^{56 57 58 59}. HUU is keen to work with the University to ensure that good practice is embedded and that all SSCs provide a space for information exchange, shared reflection and collaborative action planning. Enhancing the quality of SSC minutes may provide a way to more effectively close the feedback loop to students. This work is already under way and in 2014-15 HUU and LEAP developed a standard reporting template to facilitate the tracking of SSC actions to resolution.

How do students find out about complaints and appeals procedures?

- 57 Information about complaints and appeals are included in the standard UG and PG student handbook templates produced by the University.

Complaints

- 58 Information about how to complain is included in the handbook, however there is a concerning increase in the numbers of student seeking to make a complaint and a discrepancy between those considering a complaint and those actually complaining.
- 59 Statistics from HUU's Advice Centre show that there has been a slow increase in first time clients enquiring about the complaints process. The 2015 Education Survey shows that 30% of respondents felt inclined to make a complaint, an increase of 9% on the same question in the 2013 survey⁶⁰.

⁵³ 586 Course Representative Code of Conduct, 2015

⁵⁴ 587 TSEP Postgraduate Project Application

⁵⁵ 273 UCP Partnership with Students in the Management of Quality and Standards

⁵⁶ 588 SSC Youth & Community Work Studies 2014 12 1

⁵⁷ 589 SSC Geography 2015 02 18

⁵⁸ 590 SSC Creative Music Technology 2014 11 12

⁵⁹ 591 SSC Music 2014 11 12

⁶⁰ 164 2014 SWS, pg. 25

60 Whilst an increased number of students may feel inclined to make a complaint, few students actually do. Data submitted to ULTAC in February 2015 confirms the low numbers of students making complaints⁶¹. The Education Survey 2014 asked those students who were interested in complaining but didn't, their reasoning for not doing so. The three most frequently cited reasons were; students not knowing the process or who to talk to regarding complaints, fear of repercussions and not feeling it would make a difference. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these feelings may be particularly prevalent in certain faculties. This is troubling data and HUU seeks to work with the University to promote the complaints process and alleviate students concerns around the fairness, impact and accessibility of the process.

Appeals

- 61 HUU Advice Centre statistics show that there has been a steady increase in first time clients enquiring about making an academic appeal.
- 62 Each year the HUU Advice Centre receives grade queries from students who are unhappy with their results. As part of the review of the Academic Appeals Regulations, undertaken through StEP, HUU staff and elected officers worked closely with Student Administrative Services to ensure that student feedback was incorporated. It is envisaged that the revised regulations, which include scope for the prompt resolution of such queries, will help students understand and access the process.

Enhancement

How is the student voice heard in assurance and enhancement processes?

- 63 As the SED outlines, and as this SWS has demonstrated, there is clear evidence of the University's sustained commitment to ensuring that the student voice is heard in initiatives to develop and enhance learning opportunities.
- 64 The SED outlines the approach to annual monitoring at all levels and highlights the role that MEQ feedback, SSC comments and student data play in module and programme monitoring. At the subject level students have been full members of Periodic Review Panels since 2011 and meetings with students form an integral part of the review process.
- 65 The University has developed a departmental action planning process in response to NSS results, however review may be timely. HUU would welcome the creation of a targeted approach for areas with sustained low performance and is keen to work with the University to include current students in identifying issues and possible solutions, disseminating good practice and evaluating impact. The development of this process could be extended to the action planning arising from PTES and PRES data.
- 66 Whilst a range of survey results and progression data are considered through annual monitoring processes, HUU believes that further efforts should be made to mainstream the analysis of data relating to, and comments from, students with protected characteristics. For example consideration of NSS responses from students with declared disabilities reveals a -2%/-3% difference in results regarding 'teaching on my course'. ULTAC could usefully explore these issues but does not currently receive data segmented by student characteristic.
- 67 As noted above, the QER process does not currently include the student voice and HUU is keen to explore the role that Faculty Co-ordinators could play in

⁶¹ 179 ULTAC 2014 02 26, min 39

reflecting on the actions taken in response to quality processes and in ensuring the dissemination of good practice.

Published Information

How accurate and user-friendly is the University's published information?

- 68 HUU notes the processes in place to monitor the accuracy of published information outlined in the SED. HUU worked closely with the University to both highlight issues with the 'hidden costs of study' and to develop the Policy on the Transparency of Course Costs for Students⁶². HUU endorses the emphasis on consistency and clarity included in the policy and where issues with the implementation of this policy have been identified they have been resolved promptly⁶³.
- 69 Student communication, together with the accuracy and timeliness of timetables, have been recurrent issues in SWS. In response to issues raised the StEP Student Communications and Timetabling Projects were developed and co-owned by elected student officers.
- 70 The VPE co-owned the Timetabling Project which explored both technology and process issues around timetabling. The implementation of the project has ensured that students can now access individual timetables, before the start of term, online and via the iHull app. The streamlining of the programme portfolio and scope for module choice, underway through the Curriculum 2016+ programme will further enhance the University's ability to produce timely and accurate timetables.
- 71 The HUU President co-owned the Student Communications Project which involved research with both students and staff to explore relevant communication channels and existing good practice. It is hoped that the further development of the University website and the iHull app, together with the opportunities afforded by the new VLE will increase student satisfaction with institutional communications.

Conclusion

- 72 As the University enters a new strategic plan with a clear emphasis on academic excellence and the student learning experience, HUU remains confident that progress on our joint journey towards genuine partnership working will continue to gain momentum. As this submission highlights there are clear areas for development in the University, but also a substantial body of good practice, experience in, and commitment to, student engagement in quality assurance, enhancement and learning and teaching development.

⁶² 592 Draft Policy on the Transparency of Course Costs for Students

⁶³ 183 ULTAC 2015-02-04, min 35c

