

Minutes: Student Staff Liaison Committee

Short Courses

3rd December 2018

G30, Paterson's Land



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Centre for Open Learning

Present:

Oliver Reed (OR)

Rowan Murray (RM)

David Renton (DR)

Benjamin McNab (BM)

Chair

Director of Quality

Programme Rep, Short Courses

Teaching Office

Start Time: 12:04

End Time: 12:43

1	Welcome and Introductions	OR
	<p>OR welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited those present to introduce themselves to the other members of the Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC).</p>	
2	Short Courses: Feedback and Updates	OR
	<p>OR gave a brief explanation of the remit and conduct of the Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC).</p> <p>OR confirmed to the Committee that ideally six student representatives will be recruited to represent each of the Short Courses subject areas. At present, only two Short Courses student reps have been recruited. Current rep Xiaolingzi Hu will be standing down at the end of Term 1. OR has raised this issue with Caroline Bamford, who will discuss with potential alternative student reps.</p> <p>OR confirmed that the next Short Courses Board of Examiners will take place on 29th January 2019. OR asked if student reps will be invited to the Board of Examiners. RM noted that a final decision on this matter had not been taken. RM confirmed that there will be some form of student representation at the Board of Examiners and relevant COL committees.</p> <p>OR summarised levels of student submissions in 2016-17 and 2017-18</p> <p>OR raised concerns about the lack of visible student rep information on the COL website, e.g. lack of guidance on how to become a rep and how students can contact their rep. RM advised the Committee that the lack of available student rep information was raised at other SSLC meetings. RM noted that was an item for discussion at the following day's SSLC review meeting.</p> <p>RM asked how student comments were being recorded and made available to student reps. OR replied that student comments were being collated by Caroline Bamford, then distributed to student reps. OR disagreed with this approach, noting that students need to be able to contact their student reps directly. RM noted that there was an issue with the student feedback form on the COL website only being available for a short period of time. RM informed the Committee that communication and reporting structures were still being developed for COL student reps -</p>	

	<p>progress will be made in Term 2. RM confirmed that outcomes of SSLC review meeting will be fed back to student reps.</p> <p>DR noted that having an academic staff member involved in the student rep channels of communication was problematic. DR suggested that such a system may lead to a “them and us” mentality developing. In response, OR noted that it was important to communicate to students the purpose of the student reps – i.e. not a complaint’s procedure.</p> <p>RM confirmed that noticeboards with information on student reps are be installed throughout Paterson’s Land. RM thanked DR for consenting to a short biography being used as part of student rep promotional materials. RM is currently waiting for consent being provided from other student reps.</p> <p>DR asked if the student rep noticeboards could also be on the lower ground floor of Paterson’s Land. RM replied that she would speak to Simon Christie (COL Facilities Manager) about this. OR confirmed availability of noticeboards in Thomson’s Land.</p> <p>OR asked DR’s view on the “Role and Purpose of a Short Courses Programme Representation” document that was distributed to Committee members prior to the meeting. DR replied that much of the content was duplicated from the EUSA Training Rep session. DR noted that the document was a good reminder but not a primary source of information.</p> <p>OR asked DR’s views on the student rep training. DR replied that the training was very good, though there was slight confusion as to why one part of training was similar to another. DR commented the training concentrated on how student reps are to relate to EUSA [Edinburgh University Students Association], rather than their Schools. DR noted the relationship between EUSA and COL requires building up, though he also noted that this will develop year-on-year: e.g. scheduling of meeting times to suit full time students, rather than part time students.</p> <p>RM confirmed that they can discuss further training options with EUSA, following distribution of training materials to COL staff and agreement as to what parts of training will be relevant to COL student reps.</p>	<p>RM</p> <p>RM / CB</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Subject Area Reps: Feedback Reports</p>	
	<p>DR confirmed to the Committee that obtaining feedback from students had been quite difficult. DR had scheduled open office hours for students to meet him in person but no students attended. DR stressed that it was always going to be difficult to get COL students interested in the student rep system. Scheduling suitable student reps meeting times in particular was going to be an issue.</p> <p>DR deliberately chose not to email students directly. No feedback was received from COL students by email. DR did receive feedback from students on courses that he is enrolled on.</p> <p>Discussing academic staff, DR noted that the feedback from students was universally positive. DR did note that some administrative issues had been highlighted by students, e.g. issues with using the online booking system or completing the University matriculation process. Issue with booking online seemed to have only affected students who had previously studied at COL.</p> <p>DR noted that the matriculation issue largely affected himself. DR informed the Committee that it took eight weeks to matriculate and required speaking to several departments across the University. BM explained the technical issues with DR’s EUCLID student record to the Committee but noted that any manual fixes to student records can only be carried out at the central Student Systems level. RM noted that Teaching Office staff would at least be aware of the issue should such circumstances arise in future.</p>	

	<p>OR raised the possibility of installing feedback postcard boxes across the campus. RM noted that academic staff were looking into this, though discussions with the Estates Team were required regarding the suitability of locations [of feedback postcard boxes]. RM stressed that visibility of the student reps was the main issue, noting that colleagues from the Marketing Team were attending the forthcoming SSLC review meeting to provide advice on this matter.</p> <p>OR discussed various ways that the student reps could be promoted to COL students, e.g. via study skills sessions / COL website. RM suggested that parts of course Learn pages could include information on student reps. BM explained the limited communication tools available on Learn Guest Courses [being introduced for use by non-credit courses]. RM and OR recommended use of feedback postcard system.</p> <p>DR asked if School reps are to be appointed during the 2018-19 academic year. RM confirmed that School Reps would not be in place this year: student rep system to bed in before expanding further. RM noted that School reps to be discussed by COL academic staff in Term 2.</p> <p>OR raised the provision of student surveys. BM explained the different systems of collection for student feedback and timelines for return of feedback to academic staff. OR suggested it would be helpful in future to produce a short calendar so that student reps are aware of when student feedback will be available. BM explained this could be discussed at the following day's SSLC review meeting but that the availability of student feedback to student reps would need to be at the discretion of RM [in her role as Director of Quality]. BM also confirmed that minutes of Board of Examiners are approved by the Board Convener and should be sent to Board meeting attendees within ten working days.</p> <p>DR asked if it would be helpful if all students who did not currently have a student rep were able to contact DR in the meantime. RM and OR thanked DR for volunteering and noted that this would be kept in mind. RM confirmed that a recruitment drive for student reps would take place in Term 2.</p>	RM
4	Any Other Business	
	<p>No other business was presented to the Committee.</p> <p>OR informed the Committee that the next SSLC meeting was scheduled for 25th March 2019.</p> <p>OR thanked everyone for their attendance.</p> <p>The Committee was adjourned at 12:43.</p>	