

Minutes: Staff Student Liaison Committee

Short Courses

Monday 25th March 2019



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Centre for Open Learning

Present:

Oliver Reed (OR) Chair: Art and Design Course Organiser
Caroline Bamford (CB) Deputy Head, Short Courses
Rowan Murray (RM) Director of Quality
David Renton (DR) Programme Rep, Literature and Theatre
Heather MacDonald (HM) Programme Rep, Art and Design
Hillary Kennell (HK) Programme Rep, Certificate of Higher Education
Sophie Dixon (SD) Programme Rep, Art History and History
Peter Francis (PF) Programme Rep, PPLS and SPLS

Benjamin McNab (BM) Teaching Office Administrator – Credit & QA

Apologies:

Natalia Strazelecka (NS) Programme Rep, PPLS and SPLS

1	Welcome / Agenda	OR
	OR convened the meeting at 14:00. OR welcomed the Programme Reps and thanked them for volunteering for the rep role.	
2	Minutes of last meeting	OR
	Minutes of the Short Courses Staff Student Liaison Committee held on 3 rd December 2018 were approved.	
3	Staff Items	OR
	Programme Reps Website: <ul style="list-style-type: none">OR working with Communications Team to develop systems of communication and feedback between students and Programme Reps.COL website to be updated with information on feedback processes (e.g. mid-course feedback postcards, Course Enhancement Questionnaires, communicating directly with Student Rep).OR working on feedback information and processes over next few months, with an aim to be implemented for 2019-20 academic year. External Examiners Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">OR explained that reps have access to External Examiners reports and Board of Examiners meeting minutes. OR stressed that it would be useful for reps to review relevant sections of reports and meeting minutes.	

4	Student Items	REPS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DR has not received feedback from students, except from those enrolled in his classes. • Feedback overwhelmingly positive. • HM noted that one of her classes was cancelled: subsequent classes were extended to make up the lost time. Students preferred this arrangement, having the extra time to carry on working on their projects (up until 5pm) therefore having classes 3.5 hours in duration. • HM asked if it were possible to have less classes but of a longer duration. OR noted that this was an interesting proposal and that he would take the proposal on-board in consider future course development. • SD informed the Committee that she had not seen or received mid-term feedback postcards in class. • In regards to the class <i>Introduction to Gothic Literature</i>, SD noted that students were isolated: students arrive just in time for the start of class and leave quickly at the end. Not much opportunity to engage with other students as to their feedback. • Teaching and student engagement exceptional: credit to David Wingrove. • RM queried which feedback postcard the reps had seen / received in class: the mid-course feedback postcard, or the general feedback postcard. HM had seen the postcards in classrooms but had not been offered them by tutors. DR had also been asked to complete a postcard by a course tutor. DR raised concerns that students may feel that once they had completed a feedback postcard, no further feedback was required of them [i.e. Course Enhancement Questionnaire / end of term survey]. OR stressed that further clarity on the feedback postcard system was required. RM explained mid-term feedback postcard system to the Committee. • PF had also never seen or been asked to complete a feedback postcard. • PF had not been able to access lecture slides for <i>An Introduction to Psychology</i>. OR explained the rollout process of Learn pages for non-credit courses. PF suggesting lecture slides were easily available via Dropbox. OR suggested that this may be due to tutors requiring further training on Learn; this was being discussed elsewhere within COL. • HK noted that she was appointed in the past two weeks and that she unsure if other students were aware that she had been appointed as a rep. • HK confirmed that she had been asked to complete a feedback postcard halfway through the term [for the class <i>Rome 'Caput Mundi': Curia, Cardinals and Courtesans from 1300 to 1590</i>]. HK suggested that no comment was made in response to completed postcards. HK did not complete a feedback postcard, as she had not been appointed to the rep role at the time. • Tutor did not explain what the feedback postcards were for – postcards were distributed to students without comment. Tutor was very pressed for time in class – little time left for explanation of processes. OR suggested that explaining what is required of students should not be too onerous a task for tutors. • HK noted that students were provided with hard copies of lecture notes, which older students preferred. • HK noted that she did not check her university email account on a daily basis, as much of the email content was not relevant to her. HK prefers to talk to students to gather feedback. • HK informed the Committee of an instance during Term 1 [<i>Introduction to Classics</i>] where students sat for 30 minutes unaware that class was cancelled. HK noted that students had to persevere with Reception staff to obtain further information. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SD noted that things do happen, the class had been rescheduled and a proportional amount of the course fee refunded. HK accepted this but noted that the larger problem was the lack of communication on the day. PF noted that although such circumstances were unhelpful – communication from COL was generally very good. OR stressed that the student reps are new to COL: will take time for student body to be more aware of the reps and the available feedback processes. PF noted his disappointment at lack of Science courses offered in 2018-19. Has taken up with Course Organiser Dr Kirsty Adamson. CB confirmed that Dr Adamson was currently in the process of developing Science courses for the next academic year. <p><i>RM spoke on behalf of students whose Programme Representative positions are currently vacant [Creative Writing, Film, Media and Contemporary Cultures, Science and Nature].</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RM had received positive feedback from students. Students praised excellent teaching: courses subsequently very engaging. Students raised concerns about rooming of courses / capacity of classes / timetable changes: recurring theme across SSLC's. Limited availability of rooms: bound by Estates. COL try to book the best rooms and facilities for all courses – e.g. of a suitable size and accessible to all students. Timetabling rooms large issue across the University. Will feed back to College. 	
5	Any Other Business	OR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DR informed the Committee that he had been elected as the Part-time Students' Representative in the 2019 EUSA Student Elections. CB meeting with EUSA to discuss how to adapt rep training, so as to be more relevant for COL reps. OR asked reps to send bullet point suggestions to OR this week. CB confirmed that the COL Student Rep meeting had been scheduled for the evening of 3rd June. Invites will be sent to reps shortly. OR informed the Committee that the next SSLC meeting was scheduled for w/c 24th June 2019. DR asked if there had been any progress on the installation of Student Rep noticeboards in Paterson's Land. RM confirmed that the matter was progressing. CB informed the Committee that the next Board of Studies meeting was scheduled for 25th April 2019. RM informed the Committee that the next Learning and Teaching Committee was scheduled for 13th May 2019. RM and CB explained the remit of the Learning and Teaching Committee to the SSLC. OR noted that it would be helpful if reps could attend these meetings but stressed that reps were only required to attend the SSLC meetings. 	<p>REPS</p> <p>CB</p>

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PF asked if students could enrol on a credit course if they did not want to complete course assessments. OR confirmed that this was acceptable, provided that students informed the Teaching Office that they were opting out of credit study.• PF asked what credits could be used for. OR explained the Certificate of Higher Education and the various progression routes open to students. | |
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OR adjourned the meeting at 14:53.