

# WSU Education Council Minutes

Thursday 01/12/2022 at 13:15 - EE 2009

In Attendance	Apologies Received
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frankie Webb</li> <li>- Ellie Harris</li> <li>- Seb James</li> <li>- Tegen Jones</li> <li>- Harry Janssen</li> <li>- Abie Dutton</li> <li>- Nicole Mau Vieira</li> <li>- Bryonie Conlan</li> <li>- Sam Finney</li> <li>- Tereza Vidrová</li> <li>- Joshua Bowman</li>   <li>- Al Linforth (President/Acting Chair)</li> <li>- Sophie Williams (CEO/Chairs Aid)</li> <li>- Jack Appleby (Minuting Secretary)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gemma Allcott</li> <li>- Brad Law</li> <li>- Rajan Bhogal</li> <li>- Hannah Harrison</li> <li>- Helen Phillips</li> <li>- Fiona Tovey</li> <li>- Jake Matthews</li> <li>- Joanna Roberson</li> <li>- Iva Devcic</li> <li>- Kiya Randle</li> </ul>

	ITEM	Timings	Owner
1.	Welcome & Introductions	13:15	AL
2.	Apologies	13:16	AL
3.	Declaration of interest	13:17	AL
4.	Minutes of previous meeting	13:18	AL
5.	Matters arising	13:25	AL
<b>Approval Items</b>			
6.	Policy Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mandatory Mental Health Training</li> <li>- Financial Training</li> </ul>	13:30	JB JB
<b>Reporting Items</b>			
7.	Policies Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">2018-19 011: SU Against Fit to Sit (20/05/2025)</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">2019-20 004: Fit to Study (28/04/2023)</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">2018-19 012: Deadlines and Multiple Assessments (31/07/2025)</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">2021-22-006: Multiple Exams in one day (31/07/2025)</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">2021-22-007: University Grading and Postgraduate Application Support (31/07/2025)</a></li> </ul>	13:45	JA
8.	VP Education Officer Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rep Conference Postponed</li> </ul>	13:50	AL
<b>Discussion Item</b>			

9.	TEF - The quality of course content? - How well does assessment feedback support student learning? - Does the University create a supportive learning environment?	13:55	AL
10.	General Feedback	14:05	AL
<b>Any Other Business</b>			
11.	AOB - University TEF Submission, reps interested? 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 3pm	14:15	GA
Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February at 13:15pm			

## Minutes

### **1.0 Welcome & Introduction**

AL welcomed all members to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Education Council of the year. AL explained that they would be stepping in as Chair in GA absence. AL noted GA apologies for not being able to attend.

### **2.0 Apologies**

Apologies can be seen above.

### **3.0 Declaration of interest**

Joshua Bowman expressed a declaration of interest on the following policies:

- Mandatory Mental Health Training
- Financial Training

No other members declared any interest in today's given agenda.

### **4.0 Minutes of previous meeting**

GA walked the council through the previous minutes. The council reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and then took a vote to approve:

For - 11

Against - 0

Abstain - 0

The minutes from the Education Council on October 14th 2022, were approved.

### **5.0 Matters arising**

Action	Owner	Update
<b>Action ED01-1:</b> Brad to email Gemma more details on late Digital Media lectures.	GA/BL	Update Pending.

<b>Action ED01-2:</b> GA to contact Benji and arrange a meeting to see how we can support and develop future student support.	GA	Update Pending.
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## 6.0 Approval Items

### **6.1 Mandatory Mental Health Training**

AL invited Joshua Bowman to speak on behalf of the policy 'Mandatory mental health training'.

JB referred to its relevancy to current Movember campaigns and promoting awareness of MH illness and removing stigmas. Key themes acknowledged by JB were:

- Students know the support is there but accessibility and signposting isn't clear of effective.
- Orange button community scheme could be a great way to advertise:
  - o Who is trained to help?
  - o Visibility of MH support
  - o Allows students who may need that support to know who they can speak too
- Implementing mandatory training for staff across the University
  - o Early intervention
  - o Support when needed.
  - o Better student retention
- Understands that University resources are stretched.
  - o Look to promote external charities which offer similar support and guidance
  - o Look to promote NHS services available.

AL invited councillors to ask any questions. The following questions and statements were asked:

#### Abie Dutton:

- Promotion of these services available are promoted to students during the induction period, there may not be a need for there to be more promotion.
- Awareness of the workload of University staff, some may not have the availability to take on additional responsibilities.
  - o **JB:** Understands that staff may already have MH issues themselves, wants to ensure that this policy would look to benefit both staff and students, so that signposting could be as efficient as possible.

#### Frankie Webb

- This is a good idea but knows that these services are already available.
- Is there an issue with the service internally, opposed to the promotion and awareness of it?

### Ellie Harris

- Noted that they felt that this was a great idea.
- Visual promotion needs to be improved more, available all year around not just in welcome week.

### Harry Janssen

- Lack of services at satellite sites, there is a need for staff to have this training but perhaps not all students. Look at potentially have a % of staff trained opposed to all staff.
  - o **JB:** This policy doesn't mean that staff would be forced to partake in MH awareness training, it could be training with the discrepancy of an opt out.
- PATs are supposed to have awareness of MH signposting/awareness. These are the key contacts that are supposed to be supporting students.
  - o **JB:** It's important that students feel comfortable to be able to approach your PAT and know that they can support you in whichever way you need, even if that means signposting on.

### Tegan Jones

- More training needs to be put in place for PATs, agrees that not all staff need mandatory training but those key staff who deal with students in those personal and interactive.

### Seb James

- University staff understanding & awareness of what the causes of stress are and how that may affect students Mental Health.
  - o **AB:** attended the most recent LTQE and within the School of Science & the Environment are aware of the issues that are facing their students.

### Sophie Williams (CEO)

- Staff personal development is something that the University strives to offer.
- PATs are encouraged not to deal with issues themselves and are told to refer to FirstPoint.
- University Security: These are they key members of staff who are MH trained to support students.
- PATs, there is already regular conversations about the PAT system and its effectiveness, so we can ensure your feedback is involved with this.
- City campus: Issues are a key concern, and these are the students which we know will struggle to access the services even more than others.
  
- 3 Key areas we've highlighted in these conversations are:
  - o Disparity of offering between different schools
  - o Awareness of PATs and they're support.
  - o Provision and Awareness of MH services and signposting
- What can the SU do?
  - o AL/SW can speak directly to FirstPoint,
  - o AL/SW communicating these issues raised to Tim Jones

- Open Panel Session: Get Tim Jones in front of SRs to talk about MH.
- Raise the topic of 'PATs' at the upcoming LTSEC.

It was decided by vote that this policy be postponed to the next Education Council, Joshua Bowman is to work with the SU and Councillors to reword this policy following the recommendations made by fellow councillors.

For - 10  
Against - 0  
Abstain - 1

The policy proposal 'Mandatory mental health training' will be resubmitted to the next Education Council on the 02/02/2023.

**ACTION:** JA to recommend to GA that we add PATs to the February SR & CR Forums.

**ACTION:** SW/AL/GA/JA to work with JB and involve Tim Jones in the conversations around MH services, awareness and signposting for students.

**ACTION:** SW/GA/JA to work with JB in re-writing policy proposal following conversations with Tim Jones.

## 6.2 Financial Training

AL invited Joshua Bowman to speak on behalf of the policy 'Mandatory mental health training'

Key themes acknowledged by JB were:

- Sharing creative Top Tips for students
  - Increase in Cost of living.
  - Negative effects on MH
  - Growing costs and impacts on commuter students.
- Access to Learning Fund
  - Simplifying application processes
  - Ensuring the application is inclusive to all students.
  - FW: Hidden course costs

### Seb James

- One of their students it took 9 weeks to do their application
- Nursing student, dropped out of placement due to costs. Money Advice Service suggested student should have budgeted better.

### Ellie Harris

- Speaking from personnel experience, the Access to Learning Fund is too long.
- Potentially undergoing a finance training session could lead to better student engagement.

### Frankie Webb

- I've been impacted by hidden course costs, lecture taking place in Malvern.

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Nicole Vau Vieira

- Circuit Laundry
  - o Costs are ridiculous and students are prioritising food over clean clothes.
    - HJ: Some accommodation providers will provide cleaning services.
  - o Laundry costs should be included in rental costs.

Sophie Williams

- The officers are all looking at the effects of 'Cost of Living' are happening on students. The Students' Union are regularly looking at what we can do to support students affected by the 'Cost of Living' crisis.
  - o Tim Jones is aware and the SU have been working with University SMT about the issues facing students
- Encouraging councillors to please promote our SU services.
  - o Community Cupboard
  - o SU Breakfast Club
  - o Foodbank voucher provider
  - o Warm space provider
  - o Help & Advice Centre

Unfortunately, due to councillors having to leave early, the council were unable to approve this policy. The policy proposal was then put to an indicative vote due to council not being quorate:

For - 7

Against - 0

Abstain - 4

The policy proposal 'Financial Training' will need approval via email.

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**7.0 Policy Update**

[2018-19 011: SU Against Fit to Sit \(20/05/2025\)](#)

There are currently no new updates to give on this Policy as of yet.

[2019-20 004: Fit to Study \(28/04/2023\)](#)

There are currently no new updates to give on this Policy as of yet.

[2018-19 012: Deadlines and Multiple Assessments \(20/05/2024\)](#)

There are currently no new updates to give on this Policy as of yet.

[2021-22 006: Multiple Exams in one day \(31/07/2025\)](#)

There are currently no new updates to give on this Policy as of yet.

[2021-22-007: University Grading and Postgraduate Application Support \(31/07/2025\)](#)

There are currently no new updates to give on this Policy as of yet.

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## **8.0 Vice President Education Officer Update**

In Gemma's absence, AL gave an update on their behalf.

It's been a super busy few months, packed full of events; including graduation, black history month workshops, Diwali, a trans rights protest, speak week, the first BUCs showcase, antisemitism training and RAG week, which included getting gunged!

### Objective Updates

- **Reward & Recognition:**

Renew the reward and recognition system for reps - this is well underway, and I'll be announcing our first 3 course reps of the month when I return to work, alongside another School Rep of the month. Thanks to all the School reps who have submitted nominations.

- **Decolonising the Curriculum**

Lobbying the University to decolonise the curriculum - In October I delivered a workshop on decolonising the curriculum, thank you to the reps that attended (lol who am I kidding it was just Abie from biology, but she is a rep). Uni have agreed to include decolonisation in their new curriculum design policy and set up a working group woohoo.

- **Rep conference**

Unfortunately, this has had to be postponed until 20<sup>th</sup> Jan, But I'm really excited for it and I hope lots of you can come! I will send out some more information shortly after returning to work.

- **Rep Drop-Ins**

Held the first rep drop-in session in St Johns campus, mainly chatted to course reps who needed to know more. The second one is next week in Jenny Lind - Monday 5<sup>th</sup> dec 12:15-14:15 in JLG010. This is totally optional - if you want to chat to me or Jack just pop in. We'll have laptops if anyone wants to give us a call on teams instead

### Additional Updates

- **Jenny Lind**

Sorry to the reps I was liaising with about Jenny Lind, I didn't expect to need to take time off. Apparently, a room has been fitted with sofas and microwaves and kettles are on their way, I would be interested to hear what our JL reps think?

- **Cost of living**

- Al and I presented a series of questions and comments from students around the CoL to Uni senior management. We published their responses and our own SU responses as a news article on our website

- Met Robin Walker MP who agreed to push for a tailored CoL package for students in the new budgets. Unfortunately, this didn't come to light, but as a result of this meeting, Al and I have been invited to talk to local councillors and the first bus company where we will advocate for students and their need for affordable student transport.
- As an officer team we have been raising our concerns about the CoL in a variety of university committees and we hope we will see positive change come out of this, and we will update you all when we can.
- We launched our breakfast club initiative - we have now hosted 2 breakfast clubs in the Hangar, where we gave out 167 free breakfast in total. As an officer team we have a £1500 budget for campaigning, and we have committed to using £1000 of this budget to provide food for students during the CoL crisis.
  - Shout out to Al's community cupboard in case anyone's not heard of it yet

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## **9.0 Teaching Excellence Framework Submission**

AL explained that the SU are required to make a student submission for TEF. The SU are now compiling a report on the following questions.

1. The quality of course content?
2. How well does assessment feedback support student learning?
3. Does the University create a supportive learning environment?

AL explained that councillors would split off into small groups to talk about the following questions above and write down their thoughts, opinions and experiences on the provided flipchart paper.

AL explained that the given feedback will be used for the purpose of writing a Students' Union TEF report. The final report will be available to reps to view upon completion.

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## **10.0 General Feedback**

AL explained that this is an opportunity for all members to give any feedback on University life, with a particular reference to academia since the last Education Council. AL opened the floor to the councillors.

### Seb James

- Level 6 students are applying for Postgrad at the moment, received an email response saying.
    - Worcester students are not a favourable due to institution, pushed back Oxford. Oxford prioritise Russell Group universities.
      - **ACTION:** Officers to raise Oxford email with Jim Dickinson at upcoming WonkHE update.
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- **ACTION:** SJ to email VC David Green about the response received from Oxford University.

No further discussions were made.

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### **11.0AOB**

University TEF submission consultation.

SW: If you are interested to be a part of this consultation, would you be willing to take part? We understand that the return to campus after Christmas is Exam and Assessment season.

Schools Interested:

- SoH
- SoA
- SoE
- SoP
- SSES
- WBS

Schools Unavailable:

- SSE: Having assessments and assignments the whole 2 weeks on the return to campus.

No further discussion was made.

AL closed the meeting and thanked all members for attending.



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**ACTIONS:**

1. **Action ED02-1:** JA to recommend to GA that we add PATs to the February SR & CR Forums.
  2. **Action ED02-2:** SW/AL/GA/JA to work with JB and involve Tim Jones in the conversations around MH services, awareness and signposting for students.
  3. **Action ED02-3:** SW/GA/JA to work with JB in re-writing policy proposal following conversations with Tim Jones.
  4. **Action ED02-4:** Officers to raise this with Jim Dickinson at upcoming WonkHE update.
  5. **Action ED02-5:** SJ to email VC David Green about the response received from Oxford University.
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