Meeting of the Programme Directors' Forum

6 May 2015 at 10:30 in AG016

Chair: Professor David Bolton

Item 1: Welcome

1. Programme Directors were welcomed to the meeting.

2. Professor David Bolton welcomed the speakers Susannah Quinsee & Pam Parker (LEaD) and Yemi Gbajobi (Students' Union) to the meeting.

Item 2: Matters/actions arising

3. The group was asked if there were any matters arising from the last meeting.

4. None noted.

5. *Professor David Bolton* provided an update on actions arising from the last meeting.

    - ***Policy for timetabling Wednesday afternoons*** had been finalised. It most instances timetabling of lectures/tutorials on a Wednesday afternoon is not permitted but further guidance/clarification will follow.

    - ***Curriculum design and delivery*** (also in alignment with the Education & Student Strategy). It was previously discussed with colleagues that consultation was planned by LEaD for institutional activities associated with curriculum design and delivery for 2026. As such the workshop had been arranged for the meeting.

    - ***Briefing sessions for Assessment Board Chairs and Secretaries***. The purpose of these sessions is to promote good practice around the University and to ensure the sharing of such practice. If colleagues would like more information on this they should contact Helen Fitch (Assistant Registrar (Quality), Student and Academic Services: Helen.Fitch.1@city.ac.uk)

Item 3: Curriculum design and delivery 2026

6. *Susannah Quinsee (Director, Learning, Enhancement and Development)* highlighted to colleagues that LEaD are planning on carrying out some work institutionally, in light of the developing Strategic Plan and Education and Student Strategy. Work undertaken my colleagues in LEaD will look at Programme Curricula across the University and how curricula is currently delivered and how it might be developed moving forwards. A presentation/workshop was delivered which focused on what curricula might look like by 2026; trends which might appear over the next ten years; how this will impact on City's Programmes; and also existing trends across the sector. The following factors were identified as playing a part of trends which are likely to form moving forwards:

    - Less Government money
    - Increasing demand for flexibility and tailored learning
    - Fewer part-time students
    - Increased demand for distance learning
    - Declining overseas market
    - Tension between research and teaching
    - Growing competition globally via technology
    - Digital literacy
    - Declining Postgraduate market

It was highlighted that students are becoming increasing familiar with the use of technology and mobile devises, which they are happy to use as a part of their learning. This might have implications for teaching and campus design in the future, though it was acknowledged that students like coming on to campus to attend lectures and this is a fundamental part of University life to them.

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The group was asked to breakout into smaller groups and to consider a number of questions posed in order to get programme teams thinking about how teaching and programme curricula might change in the coming years. Each group was asked to feedback three key themes arising from the following questions:

- How might learning be delivered in 2026?
- What might the educational environment look like?
- How have students changed in the last 10 years?
- How has your role changed in the last 10 years?
- What will your programme look like in 10 years?

For more information on this workshop or to provide any feedback, please contact Susannah.Quinsee.1@city.ac.uk, or Pam.Parker.1@city.ac.uk.

For reference also see notes of the Programme Directors' Forum, 5th February 2015.

Item 4: Students' Union update

7. *Yemi Gbajobi (CEO, Students' Union)* introduced herself as new CEO to the Students' Union and provided some background on who the Students' Union are, what they are currently in the process of doing and their plans for the future. It was outlined that the SU:

- Is a registered charity
- Is independent from City University but collaboratively working for the benefit and welfare of students of the University
- Has complex structures with a number of stakeholders, including, the Board of Trustees, staff structure and external and democratic structure (e.g. AGMs, referendum, student council, Executive Committee, representative officers and School representatives)

The Students' Union exists in order to change the lives of students, partly through the organisational structure but also through student representation and effective use of feedback. It is important for the SU to ensure strong links with the University and representatives around the University even when there are conflicting priorities.

It was outlined that the remit of the SU is wide and covers the following areas:

- Student communications, with a focus on ensuring these become more targeted
- Student societies
- Student entertainment
- Campaigns
- The Union Support Service
- Student media

- Student Representation
- Student merchandising
- Charity fundraising
- Student and organisational governance
- Green Dragons (sustainability initiative)

With the appointment of Yemi as the new CEO for the SU it is a new chapter for the Students' Union, particularly with the Union's forthcoming plans to:

- Create a new mission, visions and set of values (who they are, why they are, how they are, what they do)
- Review of the Union's governance and structures
- Review of the Union's service provision
- Increased communication with students' and staff – embedding themselves in day-to-day activities and as critical friends to the University
- Build on relationships and collaborative partnership across the University
- Develop student representation – what it means, how it is exercised and different models/modes of participation and providing feedback
- Align activities with the new Education and Student Strategy and notably, Support for Success, Career Development and Employability and City Communities

Discussion following the presentation focused on how the SU can effectively build on the support they provide to students and raise the profile of the SU and sharing of good experiences. It was suggested that consideration should be given to including students in disciplinary committees. This might ensure such cases are dealt with more effectively. Additionally, increased SU training is important moving forward in order to raise awareness of the Union's role and power. This is equally important to ensure there is more clarity around the student representative role and remit. It was noted that the SU are looking into this and are going to factor in training around the needs of different student groups, e.g. nursing programmes in SHS. It is hoped that with increased training around the role, student representation will become stronger and more effective.

Item 5: Annual Programme Evaluation

8. *Anika Bloomfield (Education and Student Strategy Coordinator, SAS)* provided an update on Annual Programme Evaluation for the forthcoming cycle. It was highlighted that School-wide consultation on Annual Programme Evaluation had been underway and would be completed imminently. The purpose of the consultation was to establish how the APE template and guidance could usefully be developed to encompass Education & Student Strategy reporting in order to oversee and track implementation activities. Additionally through the process it was important to establish how the wider process could be streamlined to support colleagues within Schools and to ensure the forms are as user friendly as possible. Colleagues were encouraged to get in touch with any feedback they had to further support the consultation process.

   APE templates for Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Research, as well as the supporting guidance have now been finalised and released to Schools to support the timely completion of mid-cycle reviews.

Item 6: If things go Wrong Project update

9. *Julie Crofts (Head of Student Experience, SAS)* noted that the focus for the project was to ensure that guidance and policy within certain key areas was made clearer and more comprehensive. The purpose of this was to aid early resolution where problems arise. Colleagues were made aware that the process is being managed by SAS.

   Work is currently being done to ensure disciplinary practice at City is in alignment with the good practice framework. This will include improved guidance for panels, fitness to practice and tiding up of policy (or a change of policy). The project encompasses on an entire suit of work which began earlier in the year, also looking at fitness to study, the complaints process, extenuating circumstances and establishing regulatory practice as well as developing some additional guidance.

   It was noted that a progress meeting was scheduled for 7th May and that additional information on certain aspects of the project would be circulated in due course. For further information, or to provide feedback, colleagues were advised to contact Julie Crofts (Julie.Crofts@city.ac.uk).

Summary of actions:

Action 1	Consider the issues discussed and provide feedback to key colleagues (identified within notes) as appropriate	*Programme Directors'*

Anika Bloomfield
Education and Student Strategy Coordinator