

School of Engineering & Informatics

Student Experience Group

via Zoom

10 March 2021 14:00-16:00

MINUTES

Present:

Student reps:

Erika Wakui-Macfarlane (EWM)
Tom Harwood (TH)
Jonathan Morris (JM)
Fergus Stirling (FS)
Alixia Savary de Beauregard (AS)
Houwen Wang (Andy) (HW)
Yeamin Siddiqi Ammar (YSA)

Staff:

Kate Howland (KH) Director of Student Experience
Ian Wakeman (IW) Head of School
Ian Mackie (IM) Head of Department, Informatics
Rupert Young (RY) Director of Teaching & Learning
Susan Eamer-Tsoureas (SE-T) School Administrator
Vik Winter (VW) Student Experience Co-ordinator
Emily Crozier (EC) Administrator
Lucy Macpherson (LM) Head of School's Co-ordinator (Minutes)

Apologies:

Romeo Glovnea Head of Department, Engineering & Design

		<u>Actions</u>
1.	Minutes of last meeting (21 October 2020)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">KH noted many Action points were not currently relevant due to lockdown, but invited any comments, or Actions needed.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Citrix/Solidworks - IW asked if there were still problems. YSA said in Technical Drawing most students use Solidworks rather than Citrix. FS said Solidworks notorious for not working. IW will ask if anything can be done to improve Solidworks.	IW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wheelchair access to Chichester 1 Lecture Theatre – SE-T spoke to Johnny Parish & route is now different. SE-T asked for clearer signage – will check signage when back on campus.	SE-T
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">FS said in Richmond 3rd floor CAD lab (3B3 and 3B8) one of the glass sliding doors doesn't have window tint and people walk into it. SE-T to speak to Johnny Parish.In Meeting Chat, FS said some safety warning labels covered by trunking – SE-T also passing this on to Johnny Parish.	SE-T SE-T
2.	Items from Reps	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Financial support for students: EWM said government funding had been announced to support students re Covid, to be administered by Universities, and asked what is happening at Sussex. (In chat: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-50-million-to-support-students-impacted-by-covid-19) KH said she believed that this	

	<p>government money was available via the Hardship Fund (In chat: www.sussex.ac.uk/studentlifecentre/funding/hardship). KH to check with Student Life Centre how this is being publicised and whether this should be advertised in School. EWM asked for clarity on whether the advertised Government funding was separate from the Hardship fund, and whether there was a deadline. KH will check and will look at how this is communicated, as some students may not realise they qualify. KH will notify VW if any messages to be put out to students.</p>	<p>KH</p> <p>KH</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment loans: YSA said in Meeting Chat that he believed the Library were lending laptops. KH said the library laptop loans were for the library – however ITS have a laptop loan scheme for students, with a home delivery service, but this may possibly offer basic Windows provision. IW said the School have some laptops they can lend – any enquiries should go to Chris Sothcott. KH said she is happy for people needing ITS laptops to enquire via her, if this would be helpful. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solidworks on Macs: AS said she bought a Mac for Product Design, as advised for her course, but this means using Solidworks is difficult. IW offered to supply info on using local Windows on Mac. 	<p>IW</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module information on Canvas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FS said it is still hard to get information on labs/lectures from some Canvas module pages. FS shared screen of one module as an example. FS said it can be hard to get information in advance, and some synchronous teaching is at inconvenient timeslots for overseas students. KH said all modules should be providing clear information, and live sessions should be available to be watched later via Panopto. FS said this hadn't always happened, particularly at start of term. ○ YSA said a common template for Canvas module pages would be good, as reps are often asked where to find information/links. IW said faculty had been encouraged to use common templates and all 1st year module pages should be easy to use. IW and KH asked for details of any modules with difficult pages to be sent to them, and also any modules where teaching isn't being recorded adequately. IM is also keen to be informed about any Informatics modules with problems. ○ VW asked if there were examples of Canvas good practice – AS said that all Product Design module pages have a similar format and are easy to use. 	<p>Please send to IW/KH/IM</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech support for recording teaching - TH asked whether any support is provided for lecturers about recording teaching – for example some early lecture recordings by Chris Thornton had poor sound. IW said a new Zoom version was being introduced, which should help. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording in Design Studio – AS said there is currently no facility to record in the Design Studio. IW said work on this was planned, but paused due to lockdown – IW will check if this will now be addressed. (IW said on a positive note, Richmond roof leaks have now been fixed.) 	<p>IW</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First year teaching & peer marking – TH said some faculty have quite often said to first years worried about grades that “it’s only the first year, so it doesn’t matter”. TH said students find this discouraging, and many have concerns about peer marking not being accurate. IW said peer marking was about learning how the marking process worked, rather than grades given. IM said he noted feedback about the effect of faculty “doesn’t matter” comments and said use and amount of peer marking is currently being reviewed. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars & lab sessions – TH said students have been commenting on TA lack of skills/lack of engagement in some online lab sessions. IM said that in face to face 	

	lab classes, TAs are often there to respond when students ask for help, rather than presenting. IM asked for details of particular sessions with problems. TH said he was not always sure who to pass this type of feedback to – IM asked for this to be sent to him. VW can also be contacted by reps when reps are unsure who to approach.	Please send to IM
3.	<u>Items from Staff</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional Circumstances process – KH said this is currently being reviewed and she would appreciate any feedback/comments from reps – at this meeting or later via email. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AS said that EC information wasn't clear on Sussex Direct. KH agreed that EC and Reasonable Adjustments processes were both not integrated well into Sussex Direct. ○ FS said the EC form emphasises Covid-19 a lot. KH said this self-declaration form is only in use because of Covid – prior to lockdown would require evidence such as GP appointments etc. ○ FS said it is not clear early enough in the term what the consequence of an EC claim will be. KH said this has been a difficulty this year and usually the result of an EC claim would be known more quickly – this year have been waiting for 'No Detriment' arrangements to be worked out. ○ TH said onscreen the "New Claim" button is not easy to see. KH noted this problem, and said could look at putting a screenshot in the instructions. ○ TH said some students had thought wrongly that they were limited to making four EC claims per academic year. KH said she had emailed students to explain this is incorrect, but at four claims there is a review re. whether a student needs further support. No-one at this meeting sure where four EC claim limit idea has come from – TH and KH to look into this. ○ KH asked for any other EC feedback/comments to be sent to her. 	<p style="text-align: right;">TH/KH</p> <p>Please send to KH</p>
4.	<u>Any other business</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VW is working with Careers & Employability to look at what would help students re. careers, internships or work placements. If any students have ideas/feedback, please ask them to email VW. 	Please send to VW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KH thanked reps for attending, and IW also thanked reps for their work and contribution. <p>[Meeting ended]</p>	