

## Edge Hotel School (EHS)

### STUDENT VOICE GROUP

11:00 – 12:00, Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October Room: 5S.4.11

#### Minutes

#### Attendees:

Student representatives: Klein Offley, Jack Robertson

EHS staff: Adrian Martin, Jennifer Kaye, Philip Berners, Dimitri Lera, Quynh Nguyen, Angela Crosby and David Bishop (Minutes)

WH Staff: Sean Morrison

Library Staff: Sandy Macmillen

SU: Jane Mwaura

#### **1 Welcome and Apologies**

AM and KO welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Stephanie Wilson and Oliver Brown from Wivenhoe House Hotel.

#### **2 Minutes of previous meeting**

Department Meeting minutes - Approved as an accurate record with no matters arising.

SSLC minutes – approved as an accurate record.

#### **3 Matters arising from the minutes**

##### **3.1 Spacing of Level 6 Assignments**

AM explained it would be difficult to spread assignments out any further due to time constraints with the course. It might be possible to have deadlines be a day apart instead of on the same day, but this would be of little practical difference. It was also requested for the L6 Marketing plan to be earlier in the year than previously. This would be practical. **ACTION: QN**

##### **3.2 Security of Student Accommodation**

AM has discussed CCTV placement with campus security. He has been informed that cameras cannot be moved due to planning issues. The advice given was to report any concerns to campus security immediately.

##### **3.3 Safety Bus from Wivenhoe House**

AM says this has been trialled before and has proven unworkable due to students expecting the bus to wait for as long as 15 minutes, however, campus lights now remain on until 3:00am, which should make the walk back to accommodation much safer. JR to add poster in WH staff room advertising the SU night bus departing from sub-zero for those living off campus. **ACTION: JR**

##### **3.4 3.4 Dividers between PCs in IT lab**

AC stated that there is no budget for this at the moment, but that it would be looked into for next budget. **ACTION: AC**

### 3.5

#### **N.S.S**

AM concerned that some students are not aware that scores of 1, 2 and 3 are all regarded as negatives for the N.S.S. AM to communicate that we would appreciate comments to accompany 1,2 and 3 scores as they indicate room for improvement, but to avoid further briefing which could bias survey responses. **ACTION: AM**

### 3.6 **Edge Hotel School Absence Policy**

AC says that the Absence Policy – students are permitted 2 hotel shifts off without medical evidence - is not on the University Website, which will need updating. It should still be available on Moodle.

## 4. **Issues Raised by Student Reps**

4.1 KO raised the spacing out of assignment deadlines again, but it had already been addressed at the beginning of the meeting. AM stated that the department will look at moving next year's deadlines so that assignments do not finish on the same day, but spacing them out any more than that would not be practical. **ACTION: AM**

4.2 The student breakroom in Wivenhoe House is changing to a much smaller room, while the numbers of students are rising. SM will be looking into a solution for this. **ACTION: SM**

4.3 KO raised the issue of timely feedback. The University policy is that students receive feedback on their work within 4 weeks. Both student reps, KO and JR felt that 4 weeks was reasonable. There is a new feedback format, which KO and JR feel is superior to what EHS was previously using, but they will poll students and report back. They did report that the way text feedback is displayed shows up very small on a mobile phone, which most students use to access email and feedback. AM acknowledged that it is reasonable for students to expect to be able to read feedback on mobile devices and suggested looking into different formats for feedback, for example that it might be possible for academics to edit text comments in a different colour into the text.

4.4 PB raised that students tend to submit PDFs, which cannot be edited. AM said we should look at changing that, as being able to edit submitted work with comments would be more useful. We could possibly encourage students to submit both a Word document and a PDF. **ACTION: Academic Team**

## 5. **Departmental Update**

75 new students have enrolled – these have been divided evenly into 4 groups. PB stated that the rooms booked for teaching are very good.

### **Away Day Actions**

Guest Speakers – Academics are looking at creating a more formal system for inviting guest speakers so that there is parity between different student groups in terms of which speakers and how many they meet. **ACTION: AM & ZP**

Academics are going to do shifts in the hotel in order to keep current with what students are experiencing. **ACTION: All academics**

With regards to EHS students not necessarily taking advantage of all the possible IT facilities at the university, it would be a good idea to publicise the holiday closing times of the library and the Silberrad to EHS students. SM agreed to email EHS students before the holiday periods to raise awareness of library hours, commencing this December. **ACTION: SM and AC**

Some confusion was raised about students being enabled to attend the summer ball. It was clarified that Level 4s were not expected to attend and would have to work those shifts but Level 5s and 6s leave requests would always be granted.

SM said that Oliver has agreed that Events students would be granted a day to run an event at Wivenhoe House.

AM raised that when students source their own placements it should be with one company and based in the UK. Placements with more than one company make it very difficult to evidence any progression as the students are not there long enough. A new guide is being written to clarify placement requirements and expectations. **ACTION: AM**

**6. Actions from results of Student survey – NSS and UKES**

Two questions were raised and addressed:

*“The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well”*

AM wanted it made clear that this question was supposed to cover the entire university, not just the facilities at EHS. KO and JR both felt that, with this in mind, the IT facilities available at Essex were more than adequate.

*“I feel part of a community of staff and students.”*

EHS students scored somewhat low on this. AM said that EHS and Wivenhoe House would try to give students Wednesday afternoons off if at all possible, so that they can participate in activities with students from other departments, however this is not always possible with hotel shifts.

**7. External Examiner Report**

This has been discussed at the previous meeting; any actions have been implemented

**8. Undergraduate Handbook**

No items to report

**9. Programme Developments – No items to report.**

**10. Any other business**

**Library Update**

SM asked about students' preferences regarding online books vs physical books because library are still debating how to spend their budget. KO said he preferred physical books but was happy to work with online books. JR said he did not mind and both felt this was representative of other students. They had not experienced problems with availability of resources.

**11. Date and time of next meeting**

28 January 2020 at 9.00am

28 April 2020 at 11.00am