Minutes for the meeting held on 30/04/2015
Time: 12:00 noon
Venue: F2-16 Neville-Rolfe Boardroom

Present: Beverley Knights, Matt Dillon, Fiona Valentine, Trevor Hodgson, Sarah Taylor, Christine Smith, Craig Renshaw, Angela Bommer, Lauren Elliott.
Student Representatives (SRs): Andrew Corbett, Scott Lambert, Rasha Alshakhshir, Aidan Matear, Cheryl Hill, Nabila Shabbir.

SECTION A – BUSINESS MATTERS

1.1 Welcome to Members

Members welcomed and the meeting commenced at approximately 12 noon.

1.2 Declaration of any conflicts of interest made to the Chair or otherwise

There was no declaration of any conflicts of interest.

1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 February 2015

Minutes were circulated from the previous meeting and checked for accuracy. Members of the user group raised no issues regarding the minutes.

SECTION B – MATTERS OF DISCUSSION

2.1 Matters arising/outstanding from previous minutes

Action points were reviewed from the last meeting:

- A mailing group has been established including all User Group members, ensuring members are kept up to date and establishing a platform to raise any issues. The agenda would be issued in good time via the mailing group to give Student Representatives sufficient time to engage with their peers.

- It was reiterated the method of using User Group ideas to influence policies would be achieved by sending Student Representatives draft local plans. Student Representatives could influence these plans through suggested improvements and feedback.

- Publicising Student Services was revisited from the initial meeting. Student Representatives were handed a leaflet which promoted key Student Services, giving an overview for each service with contact details. Services would be promoted on the University of Bolton website and on TV screens in the University. It was advised seeking the advice of these services was free.
Student Representatives were advised work by Student Services on providing a Citizenship scheme was ongoing.

Library services would demonstrate their updates relating to Discover@Bolton and online reading lists in a presentation later in the meeting.

### 2.2 Student Issues

Several points were raised by Student Representatives, including:

- The process of students moving to a top-up degree was discussed. A Student Representative explained the process of a current student filling out an application form was elongated and enquired if there was a more effective way of applying for a new course such as applying through UCAS. It was advised that students who are already attending the University should only need to fill in the first two pages of an application form, however this would be investigated and the Student Representatives would be updated.

- It was also advised students should notify Student Finance England if they apply for a new course. If a student withdrew and applied for another course at the University of Bolton they would apply using a new application form. A Student Representative advised it was difficult to apply if they had previously withdrawn. Students advised they were referred elsewhere frequently and gave up applying as a result of this. It was advised this would be investigated.

- Student Representatives were complimentary of Student Services. One representative highlighted exemplary service when assisted with a Student Finance England query. This was reiterated by the Student’s Union, who advised in the Student Lead Teaching Awards that nominations had been received for Student Service and Library staff. Emails of positive comments would be distributed.

- The topic of IT staff training was discussed. One Student Representative was referred to multiple departments on several occasions when seeking assistance regarding their dissertation. They felt they were “fobbed around” and had to resolve the issue on Google’s search engine. Student Representatives asked how often training is updated for library and IT staff. Student representatives were advised that IT staff were duty bound to support “core” university software. There would be variations in knowledge but staff should share core competencies. IT staff should look to actively refer students directly to someone who had the relevant information to resolve the issue. A meeting to discuss this issue in detail was offered to the Student Representative.

- A Student Representative highlighted the issue of room usage for study support sessions. The example related to a class being cancelled and the student accessed their study support instead. The library rooms had a three hour limit, the student was with their Study Support all day but a lack of flexibility in facilities meant they could not fully utilize their study support. It was advised individual room provision would be investigated, specifically for students with study support. Students would be kept updated.
The issue of wheelchair access in the Students Union bar was identified. A Student Representative felt the Students Union bar was an ideal recreation location but was not wheelchair friendly. The Student Representative asked if a designated wheelchair user area could be set aside. The Students Union would investigate this and feedback.

T2 swipe card access was not working for a number of disabled students. Student representatives were advised to leave details of students experiencing difficulties, so the matter could be investigated and students updated. It was advised the T2 door could not be left open as students could take books out of that particular exit without security checks.

2.3 Mystery Shopping

Student Representatives were advised of a new opportunity to feedback on User Group services:

- Mystery shopping was advertised, requiring student help in assessing the standard of service: To look at the services, to give feedback in order to test the standards of service and to ask set questions (e.g. “was the member of staff professional in handling your query?”).
- Students would be paid for 2 hours work at a rate of £6.50 an hour. Student Representatives were asked to advertise this to students and to direct interested students to make enquiries with Student Services.

2.3 Student Services: updates and issues

Student Representatives were notified about a walk in clinic that Student Services was introducing. The clinic would be aimed at students who were close to withdrawing from their course; they could talk to staff about their problems, assess their options and examine implications.

- Branding for the walk in clinic was discussed; other Universities called their walk in clinics “back on track”. Student Representatives were asked for feedback about what names could be used.
- Locations for the walk in clinic were discussed; the Student Learning Zone (SLZ) was suggested, making the clinic visible and informal for students to attend. Student Representatives advised of confidentiality issues making students too embarrassed to use a walk in clinic in the SLZ. It was suggested promotion for the walk in clinic could occur in the SLZ and confidential discussions could take place in Student Services allowing the clinic to be reactive, enabling students to be seen immediately in a drop-in scenario.
- Student Representatives were advised of an event on the 1st July called Breaking Barriers. This event would target students transitioning from further education onto a University course and would promote User Group services.
MINUTES

- Student Representatives were informed of an early enrolment session for Disabled Students; ensuring a less crowded environment for their initial experience at the University. The early enrolment would be structured so family members and friends could attend. Student representatives were happy that priorities were being taken away from the saturated fresher’s events.

2.4 Academic Support: updates and issues

- Student Representatives were updated that the examination timetable was now available on the University of Bolton website for exams week commencing 25th May.

2.5 Library: updates and issues

- Library standards of service were distributed to attendees of the User Group. Student Representatives were asked to provide feedback on whether the standards were relevant in showing how well or otherwise the Library was performing. Also, whether something was missing from the service?
- The Discover@Bolton search platform was introduced. Discover@Bolton allows students to search multiple databases at once via a single web interface. Students can access available full-text content from these databases. Student representatives were advised Discover@Bolton is only available on-campus and off-campus functionality would be available soon.
- Discover@Bolton also provides information to other services, such as links to referencing, and Study Skills materials. Student Representatives were advised to contact Sarah Taylor for more information if required.
- Reading lists online was introduced to attendees of the User Group, granting students electronic access to eBooks, journals and databases. With reading lists online, students have direct access to resources relevant to the modules they are studying, with filters on electronic and physical resources available.

SECTION C – DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

3.1 Any other business

- No other business was declared.

3.1 Date and Time for next meeting

It was advised in the group the next meeting would be confirmed.

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and the meeting closed at 1:15pm.