



STUDENT

WRITTEN

SUBMISSION

2020 - 2021

Foreword

Since 2002, for universities and colleges going through a Quality Assurance Agency review, the Student Submission provides an impression of what it is like to be a student at that institution. It also demonstrates how students' views are incorporated into the decision-making and quality assurance processes of the university or college.

At most Higher Education Institutions, Student Submissions are usually written by the Students' Union, Association or Guild with the support of a range of student representatives once every six years. At BPP University, the Students' Association leads the sector in producing an Annual Student Written Submission. We feel this additional effort, in producing a submission annually, is both appreciated and worth the extra work as continuous improvement is within the DNA of BPP, allowing the University to go from strength to strength.

The QAA review in 2017 positively **HIGHLIGHTED** that

“ Students are satisfied that they have sufficient opportunity to provide feedback to the University and engage with quality assurance processes. The way in which the student written submission is facilitated and how the University responds to each of the recommendations is very beneficial and demonstrates that the issues are listened to and acted upon when appropriate, which is followed up through an action plan. Therefore, the team concludes that the opportunity for student representatives to create an annual Student Written Submission that feeds into the University's strategic planning processes is a feature of good practice. ”

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/reports/bpp-university-ltd-her-ap-17.pdf?sfvrsn=89bbf581_4

In addition to BPP being perhaps the only Higher Education provider in the country to be recognised with good practice with regards to an annual Student Written Submission, the QAA again commended this approach in its 2018 Annual Monitoring Report. It was also pleasing and well-deserved to see BPP University being granted indefinite taught degree awarding powers (ITDAP) in August 2020 and the strong partnership between the University and the student body being commended several times in the ITDAP report. This was acknowledged by the Vice-Chancellor where he stated that the recognition of the QAA was a "significant milestone for BPP and a validation of all the hard work put in by current and previous colleagues and our close partnership with the Students' Association over the years."

<https://www.bpp.com/insights/indefinite-degree-awarding-powers>



Hajra Babariya



GROUP HEAD OF
STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The Quality Assurance Agency and the Office for Students recognise the theme of '**Students as Partners**' as integral and quintessential to UK Higher Education, with a move towards students being considered partners in all aspects of their student experience, including in the design and delivery of programmes. 'Students as Partners' is more than just involving students in feedback requests; it is also the involvement of students in actively engaging and in shaping and enhancing their learning experiences. It is more than asking them for their views after a strategy has been devised; 'Students as Partners' principles and approaches are pertinent to many aspects of enhancement and innovation in curriculum and pedagogy which ultimately correlates with positive learning experiences and outcomes for students.

This Student Written Submission is a key example of the 'Students as Partners' approach; another is the way in which all staff and students across BPP University worked tirelessly when the pandemic hit to ensure that all students were given the opportunity to complete their studies on time with as minimal interruption as possible. As Business Continuity Plans were implemented and an expertly managed seamless transition to online learning was unveiled, hundreds of students in particular commended how they benefitted from twice daily Microsoft Teams and online learning training sessions (led by former Head of Student Experience Shahban Aziz) and new guidance on preparing for and coping with studying from home (co-authored by the Students' Association, Juliette Wagner, the Learning and Teaching Team and Nick Glossop (who leads the Inclusion and Learning Support Team)).

I hope you find this **Student Written Submission** useful in encapsulating the student experience over the last year.

Most importantly, I would like to thank all our Student Voice Representatives who have represented their fellow students admirably in these unprecedented times and have done themselves and BPP proud.

CONTENTS



BPP University
**Students'
Association**



05

STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION BOARD
OF GOVERNORS

06

COVID-19

07-
08

WELCOME FROM THE
PRESIDENT

09-
11

CHAPTER 1:
METHODOLOGY

12-
16

CHAPTER 2:
PREPARATION AND
BACKGROUND

17-
19

CHAPTER 3:
INDEPENDENT
REPRESENTATION

20-
21

CHAPTER 4:
QUALITY OF
TEACHING

22-
40

CHAPTER 5:
THEMATIC
FEEDBACK

41-
46

CHAPTER 6:
THE VIRTUAL
CAMPUS

47-
49

CHAPTER 7:
STUDENT
PUBLICATIONS

50-
52

THREE
RECOMMENDATIONS

53-
54

EIGHT AREAS OF
GOOD PRACTICE

STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

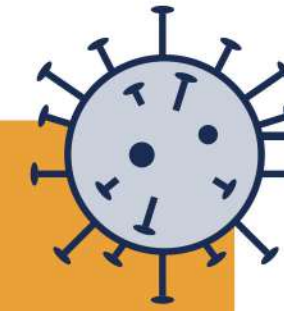
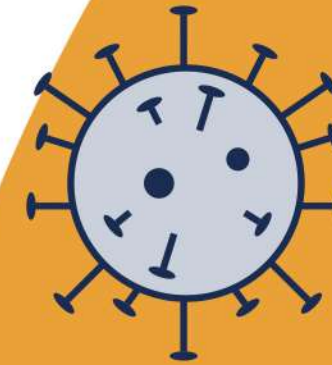
Board of Governors

The BPP Students' Association is independently managed by a Board of Governors chaired by Professor Martyn Jones, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Kingston University. Professor Jones is a constant source of inspiration for the Students' Association team, providing support, mentorship, feedback and oversight of the activities of the Association. Professor Jones shared his confidence in the work undertaken by the BPP Students' Association at the January board meeting, noting that:

“ When making a sector wide comparison, [The BPP Students' Association] would be right out in front. ”

This feedback illustrates the high standard of dedication and commitment exhibited by the Students' Association to support students and to improve the student experience, year on year.

This Independent Association Board meets at least three times a year and receives a report from the Students' Association which is a standing item at every board meeting. Additionally, the resulting university response and action plan to this Student Written Submission will be reviewed and monitored by the Students' Association Board of Governors as well as relevant boards and committees at BPP University.



COVID-19

During 2020, words such as unprecedented, uncertainty, lockdown and social distancing took prominence in our vocabulary. We were all impacted by COVID-19 in a myriad of ways principally, the significant loss of life, financial uncertainty, implementation of social distancing measures and subsequent adjustments to lifestyle. Despite these challenges, we have collectively moved forward to the best of our abilities.

Education was transformed by the COVID-19 crisis when the UK government introduced a nationwide lockdown on 23 March 2020, closing schools and implementing a system of online education. National examinations due to take place in the summer were cancelled and many students anticipating those exams were left feeling disappointed as governmental regulations compelled educational institutions to either cease practice or be moved online.

However, despite these challenges, words such as resilience, hope and the phrase “light at the end of the tunnel” emerged and took their place of prominence. We have taken the opportunity to rise above the challenge of COVID-19 and have found ways to journey forward. BPP University was no less impacted than other universities but displayed resilience by promptly moving all teaching and internal examinations online, ensuring that teaching and assessment could continue throughout the pandemic.

The BPP Students' Association Student Written Submission is an annual document written by BPP student representatives alongside the Students' Association President as lead author. As previously highlighted, decision-making powers at BPP University have traditionally been with the student experience at its core; such an approach can be seen throughout these unprecedented times. As with previous years, this document demonstrates this approach wholeheartedly as feedback from a wide-cross section of the student population threads throughout the document to ensure that the student voice is reflected and given its well-deserved prominence.

Preparation for this document was inevitably impacted by COVID-19 as all meetings and recruitment of Student Voice Representatives had to be completed online.



I would like first of all to thank all those involved in the process of recruiting the amazing Student Voice Representative cohort for 2020/21, namely, the Group Head of Student Experience, **Hajra Babariya**, the Head of BPP Students' Association, **Charlotte Dare** and the former Student President, **Shahroze Warraich**.

I take this opportunity to express my immense gratitude to Shahroze for his leadership through the uncertain times we experienced when the country was plunged into lockdown in 2020. He kept the morale of the students up by frequently checking in with the Student Voice Representatives who provided updates on the student experience during that time and took on any challenges which arose in an effort to resolve them all while working remotely.

Having taken up my role in March 2021, I am eternally grateful to Hajra and Charlotte who have been hard at work continuing the mandate of the Students' Association whilst a President was recruited and for encouraging students to apply for the role. I was successful in my application for the role of President, and I would like to thank everyone for their words of encouragement and support. A second Student President was also recruited to offer a consultative and support role in helping students to return to normality and focus on transitioning students back smoothly after a difficult year. This role will provide new initiatives which can be driven from regular post-COVID focus groups. I look forward to working with Sam Edwards who has been selected for this role.

By way of introduction, I am an international student and have been at BPP since 2015, studying the Foundation Certificate in Legal Studies, the LLB Hons, the BPTC with LLM and currently on an academic Master of Laws degree (LLM) in Fraud and Financial Crime. During my time as a BPP student I took part in several extracurricular activities including several opportunities within pro bono, being a Diversity Ambassador, President of the BPP St. Lucia Society and a SSLC representative.

I have also been deeply involved with the Students' Association as a Student Voice Representative since 2017 until my recent appointment to President of the Student's Association in March 2021.

Having been so very intricately involved in several aspects of university life I bring a unique all rounded perspective and experience to the role. I look forward to bringing this wealth of experience to the role and working with all students to advance their voice.

WELCOME

from the President



Kurt Satney



I would like to give special thanks to the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Tim Stewart, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sally-Ann Burnett and the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Juliette Wagner for their unwavering support for the student voice and availing themselves to the Student Voice Representatives for small group sessions in an effort to learn first-hand the overall student experience during this time. Thanks must also be extended to the Head of Inclusion and Diversity, Nicholas Glossop, and his team and to the Head of Registry Operations, Laila Barbe and her team for taking the time to meet with and support student representatives. Their collective efforts have been invaluable in informing the University's strategy coming out of the pandemic as we progress through this coming year.

This year we could not hold a face to face away day, as was done in previous years, due to the pandemic, but one was held virtually. I would like to say a huge thank you to the 32 Student Voice Representatives who provided their feedback by attending the sessions and by submitting feedback via email. Prior to this, the Student Voice Representatives have been hard at work gathering and providing feedback through a series of engaging and innovative online focus groups from October 2020 on all aspects of university life, from on-boarding and re-boarding to online teaching and learning, assessments, student services and inclusion and diversity.

I would like to give an honourable mention to Juliette Wagner for the introduction of one good practice which is the BPP Virtual Campus (a first of its kind) and the inspirational team which brought it into fruition. This addition to the student and staff experience is innovative and has been well received by students who have consistently and regularly provided positive feedback on it.

As the President, I am responsible for working day-to-day with the BPP University student body now both virtually and in person (whenever it is deemed safe so to do) and have both national and international coverage by representing more than 14,500 students studying across 16 centres in 10 locations across England and abroad. The following Student Written Submission is presented as a summation of the views of students at BPP University on their experience of studying at BPP during the pandemic. I wish to thank the student body for allowing me to present their views and ensuring their collective voices are heard as follows.

1

CHAPTER

METHODOLOGY

Feedback

Sources

There have been many feedback mechanisms utilised to triangulate student feedback and produce this Student Written Submission, ensuring that we embody the University's message of 'Students as Partners' and 'Together we Change'.

The robust evidence base for this document includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Feedback from Student Voice Representatives, including that of their peer groups, programmes and centres they represent;
- Direct face-to-face student feedback;
- A range of student surveys;
- Over 75,000 responses to the Daily Pulse Survey;
- Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) minutes;
- Tailored thematic focus groups;
- A review of the previous Student Written Submission and associated action plan; and
- Student feedback sent directly via email to represent@bpp.com and online via www.bppstudents.com which is managed by the Head of the Students' Association, Charlotte Dare.

STUDENTS AS PARTNERS

Together we Change

One of the key themes embedded within this document is the idea of students at BPP University being considered as partners, leaders, and decision makers in the University. A theme adopted previously was the 'You Said We Did' campaign, which centred around the idea of students making recommendations to the University, who in turn made a commitment to honouring student feedback and adopting the key recommendations made by students, where practicable.

To build on this successful and prominent model, over the last two years the Students' Association and student body has worked closely with the expert, knowledgeable and passionate Director of Academic Quality and Policy, Ramita Tejpal, on developing this theme. Last year, Student Voice Representatives agreed on the Student Voice Training Day that 'Together We Change' is a more cohesive and holistic approach to defining the relationship between BPP students and staff at the University, as opposed to 'You Said We Did'.

The 'Together we Change' approach represents and builds upon the BPP culture of Everybody Matters, Student-centricity, being Stronger Together, Trust and Respect, Embracing Change and Students as Partners.

Review of previous
Annual Student
Written Submission
2019-2020

Recommendations

Within the **last Student Written Submission** there were 10 areas highlighted for recommendation by the Student Voice Representatives.

All 10 of these recommendations have been acted upon and improved by BPP and further improvements continue to be made.

2

CHAPTER

PREPARATION AND BACKGROUND

STUDENT VOICE

Representative Training



Hajra Babariya
GROUP HEAD OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE



Charlotte Dare
HEAD OF STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION



Kurt Satney
PRESIDENT



Sam Edwards
PRESIDENT,
POST COVID19 TRANSITION
CONSULTATION AND
SUPPORT ROLE



Catherine Devonald
EVENTS AND ENGAGEMENT
MANAGER



Stacey Clements
SENIOR INDEPENDENT
EDUCATION AND WELFARE ADVISOR

This past year has been unique; the Student Voice Representative training and the Student Written Submission sessions have all been facilitated online. It is unquestionable that there are many challenges adapting to a virtual world at such short notice. To this end, completing training and producing this shared document in an online environment is testament to the hard work of the Students' Association and University leadership.

Providing training to student representatives is essential for them to effectively carry out their roles. Student representatives commended this training.

We would specifically like to thank all the staff who have had sessions with us, which included the Students' Association team, Tim Stewart, Sally-Ann Burnett, Juliette Wagner, Laila Barbe, Nicholas Glossop, Jess Austen, the entire library team, and the many other individual members of staff who continually support us.

The co-authors of this Student Written Submission, without whose input, support, and guidance this document would not be possible, are as follows:



Farheen Rasheed
BUSINESS SCHOOL
MSC ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE (ADAF)



Kimberly Myra DSouza
BUSINESS SCHOOL
MSC ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE (ADAF)



Abhinendra Prasad Jain
BUSINESS SCHOOL
MSC ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE (ADAF)



Louis Dela Semakor
BUSINESS SCHOOL
ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE (ACCA ROUTE)



Kovadio N'dri
BUSINESS SCHOOL
INTERNATIONAL MBA



Philip Nyeko
BUSINESS SCHOOL
MSC MANAGEMENT WITH PROJECT MANAGEMENT



Taylor Dowling
SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGY
DIGITAL AND TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS



Lucy Erin Hunter
LAW SCHOOL
PARALEGAL APPRENTICESHIP



Amy Marren
LAW SCHOOL

SOLICITOR APPRENTICESHIP



Tori Stammers
LAW SCHOOL

SOLICITOR APPRENTICESHIP



Maria Gamila Ferraro
LAW SCHOOL

BAR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING
COURSE (BPTC)



Lauren Naires
LAW SCHOOL

BARRISTER TRAINING COURSE
(BTC)



Arron Mark
SCHOOL OF HEALTH

MSC PSYCHOLOGY
(CONVERSION)



Sophie Young
SCHOOL OF HEALTH

MSC PSYCHOLOGY
(CONVERSION)



Chloe Guidera
SCHOOL OF HEALTH

MSC CHIROPRACTIC



Josh Brant
SCHOOL OF HEALTH

MSC CHIROPRACTIC



Jasmine Bahman
LAW SCHOOL

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN LAW
(GDL)



Jasmin Gant
LAW SCHOOL

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN LAW
(GDL)



Anastasia Welham
LAW SCHOOL

MASTERS OF LAW (LLM)



Chris Shipman
LAW SCHOOL

LEGAL PRACTICE COURSE
(LPC)



Ellen Eyers
SCHOOL OF NURSING

NURSING DEGREE
APPRENTICE



Hillary Ghinyerere
SCHOOL OF NURSING

MENTAL HEALTH NURSING



Kelsey Ryan
LAW SCHOOL

LEGAL PRACTICE COURSE
(LPC)



Rebecca Crowe
LAW SCHOOL

LEGAL PRACTICE COURSE
(LPC)



William Keith Radcliffe
LAW SCHOOL

LEGAL PRACTICE COURSE
(LPC)



Munamir Sheikh
LAW SCHOOL

LEGAL PRACTICE COURSE
(LPC)



Keira Koroma
LAW SCHOOL

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA
IN LAW (PGDL)



Khayli La Ball
LAW SCHOOL

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA
IN LAW (PGDL)



Laura Green
SCHOOL OF NURSING

ADULT DEGREE NURSING



Sarah Notira
LAW SCHOOL

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA
IN LAW (PGDL)

STUDENT WRITTEN SUBMISSION

online sessions

Student Voice Representatives have been able to regularly meet every couple of weeks since **September 2020** to plan this submission and to provide feedback on the student journey. Student Voice Representatives have been committed to their roles and have appreciated this opportunity to liaise directly with the University to provide feedback.

The students hope this submission is useful in continuing to improve the student experience at BPP University.

3

CHAPTER

INDEPENDENT REPRESENTATION

Independent Advice

The Students' Association's Independent Advice team provides free, confidential and unbiased advice to students. This ensures that students can discuss any matter or issue with the Independent Advice team, safe in the knowledge that it will remain confidential.

The Independent Advice team's main area of work is providing academic support when things don't go to plan, ranging from offering feedback on Mitigating Circumstances or Academic Appeal applications to advising students on the Complaints procedure. The team also support students through the Academic Misconduct process by discussing the process and attending Academic Misconduct hearings as an observer.

The small but hard-working team of two people have been commended and thanked for the support they provide students and for administering the Students' Association Crisis Fund, which is there to support students in an unforeseen financial emergency.

In addition, the team promotes student wellbeing through a range of initiatives. They run the Time-out Tuesday wellness sessions fortnightly and create a Time-out Tuesday post with a mindful tip or activity on the Virtual Campus every week. They have also created a range of wellbeing resources, accessed on the [Students' Association website](#), which provide wellbeing guidance and information on additional support if students are having a difficult time during their studies.

The team endeavours to provide an advisory service that empowers students to take their next best steps, helping them to maximise their time upon the student journey and to flourish within their studies.

After engaging with the team's services over the previous year, the Student Voice Representatives have shared this feedback of their experiences:

“ We find that the Independent Student Advice team is always available and provide proper support. The team has been quick to respond to student emails with effective advice, notwithstanding the fact that each student may have particularly complex reasons for approaching this office. ”

“ Warm and friendly communication, very thorough with their advice by consideration of multiple scenarios and outcomes then suggesting the best course of action to take. ”

Student Voice

Through the Student Voice, the Association and the University work collaboratively with students to shape effective representatives and leaders at the University. This submission and our sector-leading student representative system would not be possible without the efforts of the Student Voice, embodied by our appointed Student Voice Representatives.

Following recruitment, Student Voice Representatives were allocated to all School Education and Standards Boards, the Academic Council, the Education and Standards committee and the Equality and Diversity Committee.

Due to the challenges which have presented this year, the Students' Association decided to have multiple feedback sessions to ensure that students were being supported and any feedback was captured and actioned. To date, there have been 16 focus groups since September 2020 covering various topics, demonstrating a sincere commitment to implementing feedback and pre-emptively seeking views on changes and proposals in advance. This has been very successful in meetings with the programme design team where feedback has been compiled and actioned.

Since September 2020 there have been multiple town hall meetings with the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Juliette Wagner, where she has taken on board any actions and queries from students directly. These have been resolved almost immediately and students very much appreciate the dedication given in their prompt resolution. The Pro Vice-Chancellor also invites students to directly contact her if they encounter any problems. This has been noted as an area of good practice by students.

Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC)

The Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) is an essential feedback mechanism by which students and staff can communicate and obtain feedback about all aspects of the BPP experience, including feedback on their programme, facilities, student welfare, careers, activities and pro bono services. Students are elected to the SSLC at the start of the year to represent every tutor group on every programme at BPP. These representatives meet with staff to raise students' issues, suggest improvements and offer feedback on new initiatives.

Over the last year the Students' Association has worked with the University, supported by Ramita Tejpal, Director of Academic Quality and Policy, to streamline and improve the SSLC process, allowing for easier access to thematic feedback across the Schools. The SSLC themes are now shared on the Student Experience call, chaired by Juliette Wagner, where there is representation from schools and services across BPP. The actions that are raised within these SSLCs are also centrally tracked, and in addition, the Students' Association ensures that all actions are successfully resolved within a reasonable time frame. The implementation of this new process has been extremely successful.

4

CHAPTER

QUALITY OF TEACHING

QUALITY OF TEACHING

One of the most important parts of this document is **feedback** on the quality of teaching, the heart of academic standards at BPP.

Year on year, the quality of teaching continues to be an area of strength. It is evident that BPP quickly and successfully transitioned to online learning from in-centre classes, allowing students to continue their learning without disruption.

The quality of the teaching this year has continued to be praised by students and student representatives, observing that tutors are professional, passionate and have detailed knowledge in their respective areas.

The transition to online learning has been a seamless process. Students have been given the opportunity to provide feedback after every online session and these comments are reviewed daily by the University to ensure that any concerns have been actioned immediately, where possible.

This feedback is reflected in the daily tutor scores, which is a new survey run on Qualtrics and managed by the Group Head of Student Experience, Hajra Babariya, and Head of Learning and Teaching, Joel Mills. This survey has received over 75,000 responses and a satisfaction score which currently stands at 4.30 out of 5 since March 2020. Responses are anonymous and are reviewed daily with the Group Head of Student Experience and shared with the IT Director, the Learning and Teaching Team and School representatives. The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Juliette Wagner, chairs a call with senior school leads three times a week to review feedback.

This again shows the efforts that the University goes through to ensure that teaching continues to be of a high standard. This is greatly appreciated by the students.

The daily feedback survey is recognised as being innovative in the sector and a feature of good practice.



5

CHAPTER

THEMATIC FEEDBACK

REGISTRATION

Overall, the registration process for most students was smooth and students felt well supported. Students enjoyed the aspect of meeting their colleagues during registration and attending some of the sessions on the day.

Students have commented that the registration process could be moved online permanently for students at their discretion. This would prevent students with long journeys to campus from having to attend in person just for registration.

Students feel that the January 2021 onboarding was much smoother than in previous intakes, illustrating that the ongoing work that BPP carries out in this area is positively impacting the student experience. Students are pleased that the University saw the streamlining of the onboarding process as the logical step forward.

AREA FOR

CONSIDERATION

Students, at the point of registration, to be assigned and informed of their personal tutors. The students would then have a designated person to liaise with during the registration process and this would help to establish a relationship with their personal tutor early on.

FINANCE

Students felt generally that their interactions with the finance team were positive. They appreciated payment notification a month before the deadline as it allowed better planning, especially for self-funded students. Overall, there were smooth communications between students and the finance admin team via email and telephone.

There were some errors noted in financial reporting or allocation of payments where students may have paid the required amount but were told that there were still outstanding fees – more due diligence and transparency is required in financial reporting before chasing payment when it has already been made, although the issues were resolved with proof of payment.

Most feedback in this area has been positive but there have been some individuals who have had a more difficult experience. To aid these students, these are some suggestions for continual improvement:

- Responding to students within a fixed period of time that is feasible for BPP departmental resources e.g. 72 hours – which is published to students in order to manage student expectations.
- The team being easy to speak with by means of having a direct line or phone number to call. Requesting a call back is not ideal as some issues regarding finance are time sensitive and extremely stressful for students. Whilst most BPP departments are not contactable at all via the phone, this department having a published direct dial number would alleviate severe stress and worry.
- Checking that student records are up to date to avoid payment delays from the Student Loans Company or the NHS before chasing for payment.

STUDENT ID Cards

A student ID is a form of representation to identify students as members of BPP. Most students understood that the ID cards could not be distributed due to COVID-19 and were satisfied with the substitute PDF version. This was sometimes up to 2 months' late and so students wondered whether these could automatically be generated upon successful registration rather than a manual email sent months later.

Students feel that a physical, high quality BPP Student ID card is a perfect brand opportunity for BPP – giving a physical reminder of BPP in the wallets of over 10,000 students for years after graduating. Therefore, once COVID-19 is over, it is suggested that BPP pays serious consideration to providing students with physical ID cards, perhaps with a QR code taking them to the www.bppstudents.com website, the case management system or the Virtual Campus, to maximise upon the strong, but inexpensive, branding opportunity an ID card provides to students.



TIMETABLES

As a result of previous student feedback, the integration of timetables with Microsoft Outlook has been a fantastic initiative. The calendars have always been accurate, and the links have always worked perfectly. The Outlook timetable is very useful as it updates in real time if there is a change.

Some student representatives had advised that their cohorts did not receive their timetables early enough. It would be useful to receive them at least a few weeks before the course starts.

Due to COVID-19, for some students there have been changes to timetables and class groupings, but it is understood that some alterations were inevitable. Most, if not all, students feel this was handled well with minimum interruption.

LIBRARY

Many student representatives stated that the quality of a university is only as good as its library; fortunately, BPP excels in this regard. Students have found the transition to the online library smooth and the resources available have been praised. The consensus of feedback has been that there are lots of online books, resources, and articles readily available and accessible, and that all resources are easy to find and download online.

Students have reported that library staff are incredibly helpful, and have praised the team's informative sessions, newsletters, and chat functions, which allows queries to be answered quickly and efficiently.

It has been suggested that during remote learning, the library team could run virtual study sessions where students could sign up and virtually 'silently' study with the company of other students online. This could enhance student communication, engagement, motivation and focus and allow questions to be raised with library staff about study techniques.

Solicitor Apprentices and online students already mainly used the online library for work before the pandemic. These groups have shared positive experiences with the Library to date – the 'Ask a Librarian' sessions are particularly useful if you have something quite urgent which you don't understand how to find. Also, the library email address typically responds to queries within 24 hours which is a great help as library resources are intrinsic for study. There are extensive materials which are available which means BPP does not limit access to gain further understanding or knowledge on topics.

The responsiveness of the library team, the innovative 'Ask the Librarian' sessions, the engaging library newsletter and the range of online resources including free student access to the FinancialTimes.com are features of good practice.

AREA FOR CONSIDERATION

Open-Athens: A quick introduction to using Open-Athens and a one page How-To-Sign-In document would help students make the most of the research tools that Open-Athens provides access to.

Students would like to be better signposted to the helpful video on the homepage of the online library which explains how to use the online library.

Students have also shared the following glowing feedback on the library services:

“

The library offers training on the use of the online resources, legal research and other like library services and this is fantastic. Like me, other students are very appreciative of these services which proved invaluable during the lockdown periods.

“

All of the library resources are excellent, and I especially like and appreciate the chat function which I have made use of both in the face-to-face environment and in the online space. The library staff are well versed and are approachable and very helpful. I appreciate the BPP library staff for their dedication, and I would like to single out the library manager at Holborn (Heleanna) and Tony, the Customer Service Advisor at Waterloo, they are exemplary.

CAREERHUB

and the Employability Service

The CareerHub is a professional, well presented, and easy to use resource for booking appointments, events, or applying for career opportunities. Students have observed that the CV, training contract and job application appointments are very useful.

Overall, there has been a significant amount of positive feedback on the careers services and resources. Students have suggested that careers appointments were very useful and aided their applications. The careers team has been described as outstanding, supportive, professional, and approachable; they have personally, successfully managed to help many students submit applications.

There are various career related events hosted by the employability team and all are viewable and accessible on CareerHub. The students appreciate the team posting recordings and slides from events, allowing for greater accessibility.

AREA FOR CONSIDERATION

The 'ask a question' section on CareerHub is fantastic – it has got a great turnaround time, with helpful feedback. However, a lot of students were not aware that it is there, so it would benefit from being advertised more to the students.

It would be great to have both an online and on campus careers-day event run by student representatives bi-annually for each course where businesses and professionals in the field of study might jump online or come to the university campus and speak to students about how they got into their roles or offer jobs! Job vacancies online are great but meeting people online and in real life is even better, and given how many people now work online, it is sure that having a virtual careers event day would work as well as getting people out of the house for an evening to chat to prospective work candidates.

The Autumn Career Development series had a great selection of panellists, used a solid platform and had an intuitive booking process. However, inviting practising professionals to participate in case study exercises would take this a step further.

More awareness can be raised to international students particularly who have not been able to leverage the resources available on the CareerHub (for example LinkedIn Learning).

PRO BONO

The University moved very successfully to online pro bono work. Students participated in a variety of projects and were very pleased that these remote volunteering opportunities were still available through the Pro Bono Centre, despite the inability to attend in person.

During the pandemic, the number of students wanting to take part has significantly increased. The wide range of pro bono opportunities available is a great way for students to gain experience and increase employability.

However, a lot of the deadlines for more regular pro bono opportunities are quite early and soon after students start the course and students feel they would benefit from some extra communication around reminders and deadlines.

Overall, students are extremely appreciative of this opportunity.

THE VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (VLE)

Some students and programmes are on the 'old VLE' (referred to within this document as the 'VLE') whilst other programmes are on the 'new VLE' (referred to as 'The Hub'). This differentiation is important as not all programmes have transitioned to The Hub and student feedback has been provided on both the VLE and The Hub.

Students using the VLE have commented that they find the VLE a very useful tool and that all the information they require is contained within their learning environment. At times, some notifications via the VLE were slow at the beginning of the pandemic; however, students understood that this was an evolving situation and the urgency surrounding pandemic-related announcements has now lessened. Students have commented that whilst information is accessible on the VLE, it is difficult to locate, as has been indicated in the previous SWS. Nonetheless, students appreciate that work has been undertaken to make improvements in this area.

Some student cohorts reported that the VLE is not very user-friendly compared to platforms at other universities. Some students are given access to a number of module materials that they are not undertaking, and this can cause confusion and make it difficult to navigate.

Students appreciate the flexibility the VLE offers with respect to students making their own timetable and developing a learning schedule that suits them.

The insistence of several lecturers and course-leads to use the VLE Notification System to update students puts a dampener on the organisational advantages outlined above. Most students forget to, or simply aren't aware they need to, authorise their VLE accounts to forward VLE Notifications to their email. This means that often very important notifications are not successfully communicated to students. Solutions could include VLE accounts forwarding notifications to the attached email address as a default setting or to include mandatory VLE training instructions on how to change these settings as students reportedly do not feel adequately trained on how to use the VLE.

AREA FOR CONSIDERATION

BPP should provide bespoke training for the VLE during induction including a 'How-to guide' for students to have this alongside them for referral as they access the VLE in the first few weeks of teaching. This document could contain screenshots of the VLE and be divided into a How-To for each of the main activities a student will perform in an ordinary week. For example, updating settings and accessing module material as well as a "Tips" section outlining common pitfalls or useful tricks. The document would initially need to be provided to students by email and/or in hardcopy and not via the VLE as students who have issues in accessing the VLE would not be able to see the guide.

THE HUB

The Hub is well presented with an easy-to-use user interface, is easily accessible, and seems more intuitive than the VLE.

Students feel that the Hub could be updated more regularly to reflect and to check that all the hyperlinks are working. Additionally, the Hub expands over time as increased content is added to The Hub and therefore information that is no longer relevant and information from other courses needs to be archived/put somewhere where it does not clutter the student experience. The separation of materials on the Hub is good as it makes it easier to find resources. Nonetheless, some resources are still buried, such as the announcements; giving the announcements their own tile would improve this. Similarly, notifications and alerts would be useful for important updates such as exam results, updated syllabus etc.

AREA FOR CONSIDERATION

Information that is no longer relevant and information from other courses needs to be archived/moved somewhere where it does not clutter the student experience. It would be beneficial for the announcements to have their own tile.

MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (MOPPS) AND GENERAL ACADEMIC REGULATIONS (GARS)

No detriment statement

A 'No Detriment' policy and statement was introduced from March to September 2020 to address students' concerns because of the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' qualifications and long-term career goals. This came at a time where the first national lockdown was implemented, which in turn changed everything for students. Students had multiple doubts, ranging from their studying techniques to performance on their assessments.

This was an extremely stressful time having to take assessments in sudden, new, and challenging conditions – many students approached our Vice Chancellor, Professor Tim Stewart, directly to express multiple concerns about the assessments. He was quick to respond and was sympathetic and understanding.

The 25% extra time per exam awarded to all students in line with other universities, was well-received and highly appreciated by all students. Furthermore, fundamental amendments to the deferral and mitigating circumstances processes were implemented for students who were worried about being disadvantaged by the

new online exam style. Students felt that all these amendments provided a comfortable 'safety net' and showed that the University had their students' interests at the forefront of their decision-making.

Self-certification has been welcomed by students, albeit many have only known about it if they have had to use it. It is something which students benefit from because it is not always possible to get a doctor's evidence and sometimes the problem is mental health related for which there is no obvious diagnosis or cure, save for time, space and regrouping.

Through the MoPPs, BPP are considerate of students' individual circumstances and give leeway to those going through difficult times. The detailed 'Narrative Guide' document, as well as a simplified 'Diagrams' document, provided to students, explaining 'What to Do When Things Go Wrong', has been much appreciated by students.

COURSE QUALITY

Online Learning

Student Voice Representatives recognise that some of the feedback on the online learning aspect relies on personal preference as well as technology. Firstly, we would like to mention that the staff are a huge asset to BPP and the students:

“ ...everyone recognises that the teaching team are doing their best to make the course as accessible and interactive as possible. ”

The ability to watch consistent recordings of each workshop ensures there is always a backup if a session is disrupted and is beneficial for revision and catch up.

Recorded lectures that are watchable on demand serve to avoid many of the issues of traditional lectures. For instance, recorded lectures allow students to both choose when to listen to lectures and to pause and rewind on tricky topics. Coupling this with uploaded lecture slides permits students to prioritise listening and learning over a frantic panic to note down everything the lecturer is saying.

This embracing of technology enabled BPP to adapt well to COVID-19 and students have felt that they had a smoother time during lockdown with their studies than friends at other institutions. With lectures and reading materials already online for most, if not all, programmes, BPP only had to move tutorials to adapt. This has allowed students to complete their studies without delay and without feeling disadvantaged by COVID-19 in the same way as others they know.

The lecture quality is still high for modules. Tutors have adopted various course delivery styles that allow students to engage through group presentation, quizzes, and business simulations. The breakout rooms tend to serve their purpose, allowing for interaction. All tutors seem to be proficient in how to use the platform and the classes have been well run.

Open-Athens is also an incredibly useful tool to BPP students studying Law since it allows easy access to Practical Law and Lexis Nexis.

AREA FOR CONSIDERATION

Out-dated content - Some of the PowerPoint slides used in the lectures have been from previous years' sessions and so it would be good to have the content updated regularly; especially when the area of study is constantly changing.

FORMATIVE EXAMS

Formative exams are a brilliant way to communicate to students their level of aptitude. Some students have noted that it would be helpful to receive an explanation at the start of the year of what formative assessments are and that they are optional, as many new students do not understand the difference between a formative and summative exam.

Some apprentices have praised formative exams. Inspira is an extremely intuitive system and has made taking exams online a stress-free experience. Apprentices enjoyed the fact that exams have been open book as it reflects the way things work in practice through having a wide range of materials available for reference. One suggestion for improvement is for Inspira to make it more obvious when a timed exam has started. Apprentices welcome the idea of using Inspira going forward as the main way to sit an exam. Overall, Inspira has been welcomed by students, particularly the intuitive interface.

Comments suggest that feedback from tutors has sometimes been inconsistent, and deadlines for receiving feedback back from tutors have been delayed. Many students were dissatisfied to receive formative feedback so close to their summative exams as this left little time to implement feedback received. Better course structures have sought to remedy this, and it seems likely to be improved for future cohorts.

Students were pleased that the format and deadline of formative exams were adapted after giving feedback from the first part of their course. Students remarked that they were pleased that the University had taken on board their opinions and acted quickly to support the concerns of students.

ONLINE EXAMS

Oral summative exams held online through Microsoft Teams have worked well. There have been little or no issues with technology, and it is comforting to know that they are recorded. It is also uplifting that from the beginning of the assessment students are notified that if there are any technical issues during the assessment it won't affect the grade given.

There have been some minor issues with Inspira, including being unable to remove an upload, to reupload, and show a preview of the document; however, despite these concerns Inspira works well and is intuitive to use.

The transition to the online examination system, Inspira, was relatively straightforward and many students have commended the accessibility and the abundance of online assistance and tutorials regarding the use of the Inspira program.

INCLUSION AND LEARNING SUPPORT

Learning Support

The Learning Support team has been supportive and helpful in previous years and students have found this has continued during remote learning this year. They have adapted to having online meetings with students, allowing learning support arrangements to be made via these calls. Students have reported that it was easy to apply for learning support and to be assessed by the team. Many students have reported that the learning support team kept in touch with them and repeatedly checked-in on them.

Students would like to see a more systematic approach in tutors' awareness of any students with learning support arrangements and BPP are already actively working on a data project to automate this process.

Personal Testimonial – Anonymous student

“

A special thank you to the learning support team (Paul and Christopher) for their great efforts with advice, attention to detail and following-up with students on their circumstances.

“

The Learning Support Teams work incredibly hard for students. They put in an incredible number of hours to support students.

Inclusion and Diversity

In the summer of 2020, British people marched in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter anti-racism protests ignited by the killing of George Floyd. This movement served as a catalyst for reviewing the extent of racial inequality within society and making changes to address this disparity.

BPP is committed to promoting equality and tackling any discrimination that creates barriers to learning and celebrating a range of cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds to ensure fair access to learning facilities.

There is a Reverse Mentoring programme at BPP, whereby BAME students mentor faculty to share what it is like for them to attend the University and to provide a cultural exchange. By approaching the dialogue at an individual level, staff and students can have open conversations, leading to far greater appreciation for diversity and inclusion. The Inclusion team also run Inclusion and Diversity podcasts which is a great initiative. Highlighting these initiatives to the wider student body would be welcome.

The Inclusion Team provides guidance and support to students in relation to inclusion and diversity at BPP. The team's Diversity groups facilitate opportunities for students to connect and provide each other with peer-to-peer support. The work of the Inclusion team covers all aspects of the student experience, including learning and teaching, staff training, IT accessibility and other areas of inclusive practice.

Students can contact the Inclusion team via the Query Form on the VLE/The Hub if they have any concerns with respect to racially motivated harassment. The Inclusion Team have a wide network of relationships with external partners and run events to promote and foster inclusion and access to both education and employment.

All student feedback we have seen shows that BPP is inclusive and provides all their students with equal opportunities.

SAFEGUARDING

Personal Testimonial
– Anonymous student

“

My Learning Support advisor put me in contact with the Safeguarding team... I have been given the opportunity to work through my difficulties at the time and the Safeguarding Advisor has always been there for me throughout this experience.

The University has placed a lot of importance on staff and student mental health. To this end, Safeguarding is a very important service to make sure the right care is given. In the present climate, a lot of students are struggling to cope with the side effects of a pandemic, including financial issues, lack of social interaction, move to online classes and other adverse ramifications, all of which contribute to high levels of anxiety, depression and mental health difficulties.

The Safeguarding team has always been appreciated for the quality of services provided. Safeguarding has also been more clearly demarcated during this time, being advertised in every email from the University. This is a positive step for individuals who could utilise this service during these difficult times.

TOTALWELLNESS COUNSELLING

Personal Testimonial
– Anonymous student

“

It is great that there is the option for counselling available, when compared to some of the NHS waiting lists, the relatively shorter waiting time to get a consultation is a massive bonus, especially during such an intense course ... during the pandemic.

“

I am very grateful for having these services available to me and I am sure all students feel the very same way. Kudos to BPP for the emphasis placed on good mental health and student wellbeing.

“

I have personally received excellent and life changing service from them. From the moment I was put into contact with them, I have been provided with the help that I needed. The support that they provide is exceptional. I have had frequent and timely sessions with them, and they have helped me throughout this difficult time. The service is 100% professional and confidential which makes it safe and perfect for students going through a hard time. Five stars to them!

As clearly noted in the student feedback received above, the counselling service is a key service that is incredibly important for a wide variety of students.

There are several students who do not wish to be named but would like to express their gratitude as this service has helped them with very difficult situations in their lives.

A WELCOME ENHANCEMENT

Time-Out Tuesday wellbeing sessions

The physical, emotional, mental and social wellbeing of students has been a major priority of BPP University during these difficult times. International students in particular expressed facing a difficult transition phase in their lives due to struggles with living away from family and being unable to have the opportunity to network and socialise in a face-to-face environment.

As a result of BPP initiatives, students have commended the range of workshops and events that are being held under the 'Time-Out Tuesday' banner on the Virtual Campus. These demonstrate a commitment to addressing wellbeing amongst the student body.

Time-out Tuesday is the Students' Association welfare initiative, where every Tuesday we share hints and tips on the **Virtual Campus** for how you can stay mentally and physically healthy during your studies.

Time-out Tuesday *Eating well*



We all know that we should eat well, that "we are what we eat," and that having a balanced diet is one of the most important factors for looking after our physical health. **Research** suggests that in addition to our physical health, what we consume also affects the way we feel. As such, making improvements to our diet can help us to avoid blood sugar drops which makes us feel tired, irritable and depressed, and can instead improve mental clarity and gives us more energy.

Eating regularly is crucial for avoiding blood sugar drops, so trying to have smaller portions spaced out across the day, ensuring we eat breakfast and avoiding large quantities of high sugar foods and drinks. Also, aiming to have a range of different coloured fruits and vegetables to hit our "5-a-day" target is vital for ensuring we are getting the minerals, vitamins, and fibre to keep us mentally and physically healthy

It can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour which, in turn, can make you feel worse. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals and drink enough water. **One You** has a lot of advice and ideas for healthy meals you can cook at home.

BPP are here to support you during this time. If you are feeling very overwhelmed and would like some extra support, please feel reach out to BPP's wonderful Learning Support team or Safeguarding team at learningsupport@bpp.com or safeguarding@bpp.com

You may wish to consider discussing your situation with someone outside of the University, as for example, BPP University has a partnership with Total Wellness which is an online counselling service. If you would like to know more, please go to their website www.totalwellness.info where you can arrange to make an appointment. This service is free to BPP students.

6

CHAPTER

THE VIRTUAL CAMPUS

THE VIRTUAL CAMPUS



The **Virtual Campus** is an innovative sector-leading, engaging and welcoming online space for BPP students, staff and alumni – a safe space to socialise, make friends, attend events and benefit from the university experience.

The Virtual Campus has been a great initiative that has brought together the students of BPP in a time when we are physically apart. It has provided a way to connect, network, wind-down, meet new people and enter fun competitions weekly. Students have enjoyed the different forums available and found it very easy to use, having a social media interface and being accessible as a smart phone app, with lots of opportunities and competitions to get involved with.

A few students within SSLC meetings reported that they have not yet engaged in the Virtual Campus as much as they would like due to time constraints and also due to the fact at the start of the year there was less engagement and posts on the forum; following this they did not continue to engage.

This issue has already been resolved with the Virtual Campus now being more well-established with students and with engagement increasing, with over 8000 members on the platform. University study is much more than having access to an online learning platform, in terms of personal, social, and professional development the Virtual Campus goes a long way in fulfilling what it means to be at university and providing students with value for money.

Students appreciate the Virtual Campus, and this is reflected in the amount of engagement it has received in the past few months. It is a pivotal resource in these hard times, being stuck at home and not allowed to meet other students in person. Many students have appreciated the efforts of the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Juliette Wagner, in creating the Virtual Campus and commented that it has been a fantastic initiative. Some students also advised that due to cultural barriers they were not able to use social media channels, and thus the Virtual Campus as a closed system to BPP students and alumni was a lifeline.

Recently, student engagement has reached new heights with many thanks to the student engagement team who are constantly rolling out events and topics for students to participate in or discuss on the Virtual Campus.

“ This has been an excellent platform for students to engage with each other and socialise. This has been a positive and quick move with the sudden lockdown that was placed in the UK. Students were able to socialise with their peers and take part in various events, competitions, and activities. This has been a great boost in morale and have had a positive impact on mental health. Students are appreciating the university’s effort over this facility. ”

The innovative Virtual Campus is recognised as an area of good practice.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Events, clubs, and societies are central to student experience and engagement and are an important part of university life. It is within societies that students meet new people, create communities, and build essential employability skills. The Students' Association has one member of staff in the Student Engagement department, Catherine Devonald, who successfully manages the clubs, societies, and events on a national and virtual level across all centres.

Starting a club or society is a straightforward process via a simple form on the BPP Students' Association website. When a society application is received, Catherine helps the applicant to set it up via the creation of a page on the Association website as well as advertising committee positions and upcoming events.

As the student experience moved online it was important to continue engagement. This was done with maintaining the Students' Association presence on the Virtual Campus as well as creating online competitions and events. A great example of student engagement from the Students' Association in the academic year 2020/2021 was the successful January Freshers' Week. This was a programme of virtual events including:

- Speed friending – this used the breakout room feature of Microsoft Teams to encourage students to meet new people outside of their course. The feedback received was complimentary of the Association's effort to bring people together during uncertain times.
- Crafternoon colouring session – this session promoted the use of art as a wellbeing measure. A colouring page was circulated prior to the event and a competition element was added once students shared their completed colouring to the group. Students highlighted the fact that this was the first creative activity they had seen BPP facilitate and enjoyed the session because of this.
- Virtual Quiz – throughout lockdown virtual quizzes rapidly gained popularity and it was a great way to get people chatting and involved as they competed in a head-to-head quiz. This has traditionally been the most important and well attended weekly activity at BPP by students from all programmes ever since it was initiated by Shahban Aziz and is continued every week.

BPP Students' Association has a plethora of different clubs and societies that students can join for free. There are a range of focuses from academic to cultural opportunities as well as sport clubs.

During this difficult year these online events have helped many individuals studying at BPP who have felt lonely and they have really encouraged students to stay connected. This is a great credit to the Students' Association and BPP. Below are some quotes from students during Fresher's week:

MEET THE SOCIETIES

“...meeting members from different societies and learning about how their society is working was a great experience for me”

CRAFTERNOON

“...the Crafternoon is the first art event I had at BPP and it was awesome”

SPEED FRIENDING

“...thank you for helping us socialise during these strange times”

We currently have 53 active societies across 7 locations. Throughout lockdown these societies have hosted guest speakers, technique sessions, cooking courses and yoga classes.

It is important to note that some of our societies and events now have a successful national and international reach for all BPP students – this is one of the benefits we have seen as a result of regional clubs and societies moving to an online environment

MAGAZINES

Students love the BPP **Student Life Magazine!**

All students, including Apprenticeship students, appreciate the fact they can feature in the Students' Association magazines and find them interesting to read. Apprentice students note they rarely have time to look on the VLE/The Hub around their working hours and would like them sent round as part of an email update as they would be more inclined to read them.

The magazines include a great selection of material, serving as an opportunity for students to engage with the wider student body. The diverse voices of the student body feel central within the magazine. It has helped students to learn more about the different services, clubs and societies at the University and to gain insights from stories shared within the various articles.

Nursing students have actively been writing articles for these magazines, which have been an eye-opening read, putting things into perspective with their frontline experiences during the pandemic. All the students commend the work of these nursing students.

7

CHAPTER

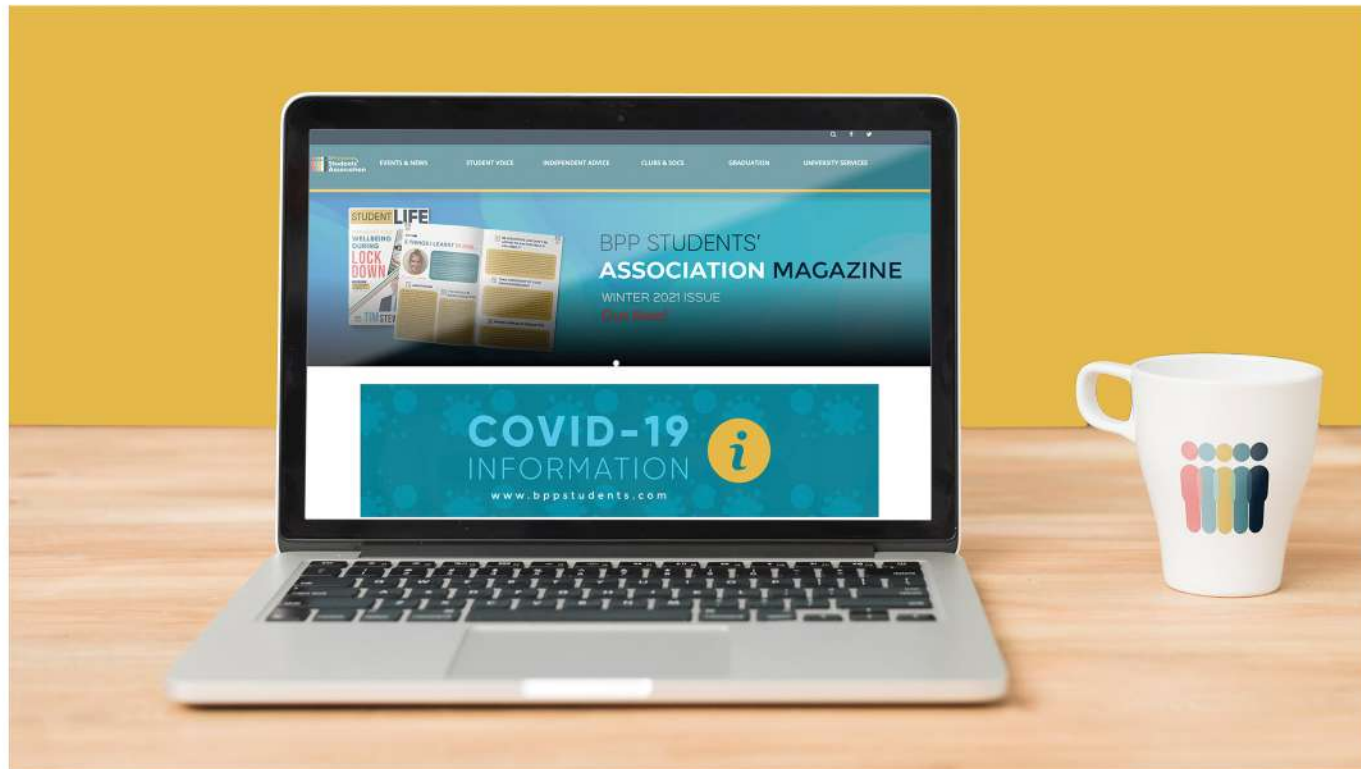
STUDENT PUBLICATIONS



BPP STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Website

The Students' Association has a dedicated student website that is popular with students and is managed by the Students' Association team: www.bppstudents.com. This year the Students' Association has worked with the University to post any COVID-19 related communications on its website to mirror the University announcements made on the VLE/The Hub.



This year the site has received an increased number of hits with the most popular month having over 40,000 visitors. In addition, to make the website more appealing and informative for students the Students' Association has decided to improve both the content and 'look and feel' of the site. The site will be developed over the coming months and it is hoped this will encourage more current and prospective students to visit the site. Many current students have stated that they visited the Students' Association website to get a feel of the student experience and to see what was on offer before making the decision to join BPP and, therefore, this remains an integral part of the overall student offering.

THREE

RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to minor areas for consideration, this Student Written Submission makes the following three recommendations for continual improvement:



THE CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM/ ONLINE STUDENT QUERY FORM

In 2019, the University introduced a Case Management System (CMS) which dealt with certain escalated student queries using a form in one centralised location on the VLE. In 2020, the system was rolled out to all programmes and all students' queries are now handled by that system.

The fact that students can log any type of query in one place is a welcome service; however, students have reported extensive delays in responses to queries. Students are unclear about the timeframe allocated to resolving queries and may be caught unaware if the query is urgent and is submitted last minute. Better guidance and education on using the CMS and how queries are handled on it would benefit the students.

Students have noted that at various times of the year some queries may be more important than others and this should be considered when dealing with escalations. Students recognise the challenges that have been posed by the pandemic and the work from home policy; however, the CMS can work well if student queries are dealt with within a reasonable amount of time and if, once escalated, the student is aware of what that reasonable amount of time is. Therefore, guidance is needed as early as possible in the student journey on how the system works, which queries are dealt with by the system and the expected timeframe for resolution.

“ The Student Query Form works for some departments and really doesn't for others. The system doesn't give updates, so students at times feel their query has been forgotten or lost which leads to a mixture of confusion, resentment, and annoyance. ”

“ A lot of students face difficulty in getting appropriate and quick responses once their query forms have been escalated. There has been some improvement to the system as compared to before where queries were closed without being resolved. ”

“ The student query form has especially been important with the move to online teaching as students are no longer able to speak to anyone face to face to resolve their issues. Whilst it is understood that this is constantly being updated, it would be much appreciated if there are further improvements made to provide quick and efficient solutions. ”

Suggestions for improvement:

Students would benefit from additional guidance around the types of queries that are eligible to be raised via the case management system and the estimated time-frame for resolution of each query. This would prevent students raising queries that are not designed to be submitted via the case management system. Additionally, it would help manage expectations if students know the estimated timeline, rather than students re-raising the same query again after two days if they receive no response.

It would also be beneficial to students if each department had a live chat feature or particular ‘office hours’ where a student could contact the department in real time as opposed to sending a query and waiting a number of days for a reply. This would be helpful with contacting Student Managers in particular.



TUTOR SUPPORT AND FEEDBACK ON ASSESSMENTS

The recommendation from students is for a central form to be created to provide students with individual feedback on assessments and this should be provided automatically to all students regardless of whether they have passed or failed an assessment.

Student representatives have made suggestions on the possible design of a consistent formative feedback form which could be implemented at BPP which would allow feedback to be provided in a more consistent format across modules and programmes.

The form need not be overly complex or detailed but student representatives believe that it should at least cover the following three fields – What was done well (i.e. reinforcing positive areas), areas for improvement (i.e. developmental feedback), any further comments not covered earlier (i.e. any group feedback or general themes).

Students recognise that the size of student population sitting an assessment may make this recommendation difficult to achieve, however, the benefits of such a system far outweigh this challenge for three reasons. First, it will help with increasing student morale because they will be

made aware of what they are doing well. Second, students would be better prepared for future assessments if they are aware of areas which need improvement. This would improve long-term attainment and retention. Third, students would be better placed to understand the grade they have received. Students are prepared to work with the University to see how this recommendation can be implemented.

Student representatives have also noted that audio feedback, as opposed to solely receiving written feedback, would be useful as a future area for improvement.

There were several students who commented on the timescales for receiving feedback and therefore students have recommended that consistent timescales are provided in advance of an assessment in order to manage expectations. Where possible, students would benefit from receiving their exam scripts alongside feedback as it is not always possible to recall how a student answered a particular question in the exam.



UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Student feedback indicates some central communications have been too slow. Whilst students understand the university has had to be guided by Government decisions, the general feeling is that students would like to be promptly kept informed of developments even where a decision is still outstanding.

Students expressed concern over the lack of comms regarding more high-profile issues that received media attention. A more proactive approach to internal comms in this area, for instance by setting out the difficulties and providing an indication of future university plans would help increase student confidence.

Similarly, students acknowledge that there are some fantastic initiatives that the University has taken but feel these are not always relayed back to them, and this may reduce the sense of community and involvement. If students knew about all the work ‘behind the scenes’, this would also improve confidence in the decisions being made by BPP. Sharing of positive stories and initiatives is to be encouraged.

Nevertheless, students are grateful to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Tim Stewart, who has helped foster stronger communication between BPP and its students and acknowledge the excellent work from the Students’ Association in providing comms and updates.

“ ...communication has certainly improved over the last 6 months ”

EIGHT AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

The Quality Assurance Agency defines Good Practice as

“ a process or way of working that makes a particularly positive contribution to academic standards and the quality and/or enhancement of the learning opportunities, all or some of which would be helpful for other institutions to hear about. ”

This Student Written Submission finds the following eight areas of **Good Practice:**

ONLINE TEACHING:

The move to online teaching is generally highly praised by the student population and has been a highlight during the pandemic. Students felt that the opportunity to continue their studies with minimal to no interruption is one of the most positive things to come out of this crisis.

LEARNING SUPPORT:

In the area of Learning Support the University is heavily praised by the student population for the availability of its services throughout the period of the COVID-19 crisis. Students were signposted and encouraged to seek support should that need arise as students faced various challenges to their wellbeing. The Learning Support team was able to assist students going through isolation and various mental health concerns resulting from the pandemic and its effects on their studies.

TOWN HALLS WITH PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR:

The town hall meetings with the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Juliette Wagner, which gave students the opportunity to provide any actions and queries directly to her, are highlighted as good practice. The speed at which these queries have been resolved has been appreciated by students and they welcome the dedication given in resolving these queries almost instantaneously. The invitation from the Pro Vice-Chancellor for students to directly contact her if they encounter any challenges has also been noted as an area of good practice by students as this is above and beyond what students see elsewhere in the sector.

QUALITY OF TEACHING:

The high standard of teaching is highlighted by the student population as an area of good practice as this gives students the confidence to trust and embrace the new online experience. The BPP ethos of 'professionals teaching professionals' and how expert members of staff always go over-and-above to produce engaging and educational programmes is the highest example of good practice.

LIBRARY:

All Library Services were seamlessly moved online during the pandemic and students were able to conduct research with minimal interruption. Additional bespoke resources were provided to students during this pandemic including free access to resources, an engaging and innovative newsletter, increased support during examinations and a world-class digital agenda are all found to be features of good practice.

VIRTUAL CAMPUS AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:

The Virtual Campus has received positive feedback from students from its inception and is another positive highlight coming out of the pandemic. It provides an invaluable avenue for students to continue engagement through events put on by clubs, societies, and the University across all centres. The Students' Association presence on the Virtual Campus is invaluable throughout the pandemic by creating online engagement, content, competitions and events and has been very well received by all students.

NURSING APPRENTICES:

The support the University provided to our nursing apprentices, whilst being on placement on the front line during COVID-19, has been exemplary and highlighted by their feedback throughout the Covid-19 crisis. This additional support has been highly commended as a feature of good practice

DAILY FEEDBACK SURVEY:

The daily feedback survey, with over 75,000 responses, has been well received by students. It is reviewed daily under the guidance of the Pro Vice-Chancellor to make clear improvements and is recognised as being innovative in the sector and a feature of good practice.

FINAL WORDS

This past year has undeniably been the most challenging year we have faced as a student body and, by extension, as a university in recent memory. The challenges have been highlighted but, although initially appearing daunting, are being overcome on a daily basis. Producing the submission this year was equally challenging; nevertheless, the proactive approach implemented by the University and the Students' Association to produce this submission is admirable.

We have been able to receive feedback from the Student Voice Representatives by using various methods, including topic-specific focus groups, town-hall meetings and an away-day, all of which were conducted virtually. The students have remained steadfast in their commitment to producing this document regardless of the circumstances faced, and this is testament to the resilience of the student body at BPP University and the Students' Association team.

WE THANK BPP FOR THEIR SUPPORT IN CONTINUING GOOD PRACTICE MEASURES AND MAKING IMPROVEMENTS BASED ON SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE STUDENT WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS.



If you have any questions, comments or feedback on this Student Written Submission, please don't hesitate to email hajrababariya@bpp.com