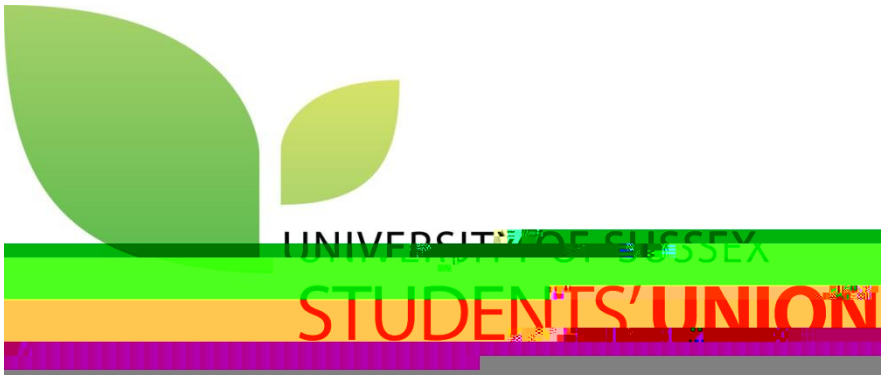

Student Written Submission
Quality Assurance Agency

3UHSDUHG E\ WKH 6WXGHQW

December 2012

7KLV UHSRUW ZDV VXEPLWWHG DV SDUW RI WKH 8QLYHUVLW\ R
Institutional Review to be carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency in 2013.

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Contents

Glossary iii
6 H F W L R Q , Q W U R G X F W L R Q W R W K H 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q 1
$ E R X W W K H 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q 1
5 H O D W L R Q V K L S E H W Z H H Q W K H 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q ..... 1 8 Q L Y H U V
How this report was written 2
Key areas & themes 3

Glossary

ARC - 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q $ G Y L F H 5 H S U H V H Q W D W L R Q & H Q W U H

Associate Tutor - Hourly paid tutors, usually research postgraduate students

FTEO - Full-time Elected Officer - the six students elected to work full- W L P H I R U W K H 6 W X G H Union for a year (known in some institutions as sabbatical officers). The six positions are President, Operations Officer, Communication Officer, Activities Officer, Welfare Officer and Education Officer. The document will refer to these positions individually where appropriate.

ISAO - International and Study Abroad Office

PGR - Research postgraduate students

PGT - Taught postgraduate students

Research Hive - study space for PGR students (based in the Library)

SEF - Student Experience Forum. A student-

Section 1: Introduction to the Students' Union

About the Students' Union

7 K H 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q L V W K H U H S U H V H Q W [1] Students at the University of Sussex and Brighton & Sussex Medical School (the latter in conjunction with the University of Brighton 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q 2 X U P L V V L R Q L V W R H Q D E G make a positive difference to their University experience[2].

We support around 150 student societies, 30 sports clubs and teams, hundreds of Y R O X Q W H H U V E R W K Z L W K L Q W K H 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q I R U W K H U H S U H V H Q W [1] community, four student media outlets and run two shops and two bars on campus. Our Advice service (ARC) provides advice and representation to students on academic and welfare issues within the University and externally. We also run campaigns and lobby the University and other organisations based on evidence we gather from Student Reps, casework and other sources.

We run the Student Rep Scheme in partnership with the University which elects and supports students to represent the views of their peers on academic issues within the 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q D Q G 8 Q L Y H U V L W Q S R W X G H Q W V R Q W H • D O V R H Q
6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q W R U H S U H V H Q W V W X G H Q W V R Q R X U F R P P L

The Union is led by an Executive of six Full-time and four Part-time Elected Officers who work alongside around 35 permanent staff members to provide services and opportunities to our members. The Union, as a registered charity, is overseen by a Trustee Board comprised of the six Full-time Officers, three elected student trustees and three appointed trustees.

Visit www.sussexstudent.com for more information and www.sussexstudent.com/strategy for our current strategy.

Relationship between the Students' Union & University R u

have been announced with no prior consultation with students or involvement from the 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q

We believe that the views of students should be considered in all decision-making as non-academic decisions ultimately affect the learning environment at the University. To this end the Union has recently devised a consultation protocol on non-academic issues[5] which was presented to senior University management on 17th December 2012.

At times our ability to represent all students is hindered by our inability to contact all students via email directly. At present, emails we wish to send must be agreed by the Universit \ ¶ V

Section 3:

Academic practice workshops

Our response	Our recommendations
A welcome recent development is the introduction of referencing workshops rather than academic misconduct proceedings following (in most circumstances) a stu G H Q first case of misconduct[17]. We are interested L Q D Q \ H Y D O X D W L R Q R I W K effectiveness.	Review the effectiveness of academic practice workshops by the start of the 2013/14 academic year including asking attendees about their experience and assessing the impact of the workshop on their future performance.

Student Mentors

Our response	Our recommendations
Student Mentors are second and third year undergraduates and postgraduate students who are employed by the University to offer support to other students, primarily study skills (e.g. workshops). There are mentors in all departments in all schools. We have concerns about the apparent lack of clarity and communication about the scheme, amongst staff and students. We are unsure how the student mentor scheme links with the different peer-led support projects run within different schools and also its relationship with the Student Rep Scheme. We also have concerns about the level of support given to the student mentor scheme, including training, support and mechanisms for feedback.	Review the student mentor scheme in light of its purpose, particularly against the individual school peer-led support projects. Establish a formal relationship between the student mentor scheme and the Student Rep Scheme.

Academic misconduct panels

Our response	Our recommendations

Section 4: + R Z H I I H F W L Y H O \ G R H V W K H L Q V W L W X W L R Q P D Q D J H learning opportunities (teaching and academic support)?

they know whether or not they need to make their own arrangements. We are also aware of cases where students had to re-book flights at personal expense due to timetabling being change with little notice. We appreciate that reports of these incidents may be lacking contextual information and the sheer number of staff members employed by the University however would like to emphasise the negative impact these apparently isolated incidents can have on V W X G H Q W V ¶ H [S H U L H Q F H V aggregate number is considered.	

due to ill health and students with learning difficulties who find it useful to replay lectures they have attended. Participants in our disabled students focus group reported being promised all lectures would be recorded which did not happen. A student trying to use their own recording device was told they F R X O G Q ¶ W G X H W R F R S \ U L	

Our response	**Our recommendations**
We asked PGR students whether their office space was suitable and 52% felt the current arrangements were inadequate[19]. *[3]there are 25 hot desks for a total of around 70 Phd students [20]* Shared desk/office space was cited by many respondents as a hindrance to their research. 7 K H µ G R W N L Q J ¶ D S S U R D F K V S D F H G R H V Q ¶ W D S S H D U satisfactorily. Students have told us that some students leave personal items on G H V N V W R µ F O D L P ¶ W K H P unused as students think they will be busy. Hot- G H V N L Q J Z D V G H V F U L E H P R V W D V [21]V. H U W L Y H ¶ Students, particularly self-funded students, felt that being offered their own desk space was a standard expectation. They felt they K D G Q ¶ W E H H Q D G H T X D W H O particularly when they are carrying out activities, such as marking, which benefits the University. Some students felt that, at minimum, lockers should be available for students without desks to store their equipment in. These are available in limited numbers to some PGR students however they do not seem well-managed with students reporting that several are held by students who have left the University.	Ensure all future building development plans allow for one researcher per desk. Provide well managed lockers for PGR students.

[19] 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q 3 R V W J U D G X D W H 6 X U Y H \

[20] 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q 3 R V W J U D G X D W H 6 X U Y H \

[21] PGR focus group participant

It appears the space offered to PGR students is inconsistent across schools and departments with some respondents answering that they were satisfied with office/desk provision and others forced to work elsewhere due to the high ratio of PGR students to desk spaces. Some of our focus J U R X S S D U W L F L S D Q W V U H I between departments over space and new PGR students not feeling welcome in shared space, both of which counter attempts to build a researcher community. We welcome the news that the School of Business, Management and Economics is investigating the allocation of space following student feedback. Some felt that there was a contradiction in being expected to form a researcher community but not being provided with facilities in which to do so. Many PGR students feel socially isolated in their roles. It should also be noted that the Research Hive was not originally conceived as a silent study space but rather as a means of creating a researcher community ±it appears that lack of workspace facilities elsewhere has changed its purpose. The Research Hive was valued as a workspace because it is silent and for PGR students only and our PGR focus group participants mentioned it could be extended. Personal office space was the preferred study space however with the Hive described D V µ D Q R Y H U V S L O O F D U S D	

Our response

investigating the case. We a U H Z R U U L H G W K D W W K H outsourcing proposals may in future have a negative impact on the provision of learning resources, e.g. increased prices, availability of staff. We fear that there will be less accountability to students from external providers and fewer opportunities for students to shape their experience by providing feedback. We are particularly concerned that, despite requests, the institution have been either unable or unwilling to provide us with any examples of cases where outsourcing on this scale has been successful.	negatively impact the student experience.

4.3 There is an effective contribution of students to quality assurance

The Periodic Review is covered later in this report (see page 44). The Student Rep Scheme is one of the most visible ways in which students contribute to quality assurance. We cover this in more detail on page 4.

Module evaluation questionnaires

Our response	**Our recommendations**
There does not appear to be a central process for monitoring trends across student feedback via module evaluation questionnaires and assessing whether feedback is acted upon.	Establisfs5e quelisfs5e

Our main concern has been possible inaccuracy of the information given to potential students by some recruitment agents. The University has started making some progress towards addressing these concerns and we are keen to see these proposals being implemented as soon as possible.	talking to students recruited by them, is carried out during the 2012/13 academic year. Ensure that the commitment to make this a part of an annual review is upheld. Ensure improvements arising from this U H V H D U F K D Q G I H H G E D F N I Union is promptly acted upon.

English language proficiency

Our response	**Our recommendations**
One criticism raised in the Student Rep V X U Y H \ D Q G D Q L V V X H Z H ¶ of is the poor English language proficiency of some international students.	

approached the ARC for advice have given us cause for concern that the complaints procedure is often insufficiently clear, consistent, transparent or timely. It can be hard for students to understand what they should do and what time-frames apply (particularly when they can/should move to the next stage of the process). It is not clear what outcomes students can expect nor who they should contact for updates about their complaint. The present system does not ensure that the institution is held accountable for the changes they propose to a student unless the complaint was made with the assistance R I W K H 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L R Q We believe more resource - e.g. staff time and training - should be dedicated to dealing swiftly and effectively with complaints and that there should be clearer guidelines for staff to enable them to do this. There is also a lack of clarity as to how to deal with complaints that are made a considerable period of time after the incident giving rise to the complaint. At the time of writing this report, the University's complaints summary for the 2011/12 academic year has not been made available to the authors and was not included L Q W K H S D S H U V I R U W K H 8 Learning Committee. We are not aware of an annual complaints report ever being produced by the University. 2 Q H R I R X U F R Q F H U Q V D E R proposal to privatise campus services is how future complaints would be handled if external providers are running services. What rights would students have? What possible outcomes would there be? Would these be more limited at present? The accountability of these providers is a topic Union officers have raised with senior University managers.	complaints made by students about the University on a quarterly basis. This information should include any proposed University action plans. Data can be anonymised and summarised to avoid data protection issues. Review complaints procedure and information provided to students with input I U R P W K H 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L consideration of updates to complainants, timeframes, outcomes and impact on students. University to produce an annual report on complaints received, outcomes, recommendations made and implemented. We wish to reiterate our earlier recommendation that the University halts its outsourcing plan in light of our concerns regarding the accountability of service providers if these services are outsourced.

Mitigating evidence procedure

Our response	**Our recommendations**
Anecdotal evidence from the periodic review focus group highlighted a case in which a	Produce an annual report summarising the number and type of claims submitted,

student has been given inconsistent advice regarding submitting mitigating evidence this term. Additionally, the University changing its mitigating evidence procedures mid-term has caused confusion among school staff and students.

The University produces a report summarising changes considered and made to the mitigating evidence procedure but we are not aware of an institution-wide summary of the number and type of claims submitted, upheld, rejected and deemed inadmissible. We think this would help identify trends, for example across schools, and would be a

informal resolution of cases between schools, e.g. cases involving harassment. Staff responsible for handling complaints and discipline issues are not currently provided with suitable training for dealing with students raising difficult and/or personal issues e.g. where a student may allege they have been raped by another student. It is also unclear what action the University may take whilst criminal proceedings against a student may be in progress. We are also concerned about the guidelines provided for presenters and chairs as we are aware of cases where presenters have ended up almost cross-examining the student in a manner which could be intimidating.	

Lack of awareness of and inconsistent application of policies and procedures for PGR students

Our response	**Our recommendations**
Our research suggests a lack of awareness amongst PGR students and supervisors of procedures for academic appeals, complaints etc, although information is contained in the Handbook for Doctoral Researchers. The Handbook makes no mention of mitigating evidence processes however and it is unclear how these might apply to PGR students.	Ensure that PGR students, supervisors and other relevant staff are aware of and adhere to appeals, complaints and misconduct procedures. Clarify the application of mitigating evidence procedures/relevant alternative procedures for PGR students.

Section 4: + R Z H I I H F W L Y H O \ G R H V W K H L Q V W L W X W L R Q P D Q D J H learning opportunities (teaching and academic support)?

Some students reported being happy with the support provided but being aware of more comprehensive support provided by other universities, e.g. students provided with their own copies of assistive software. The need to purchase specialist software was an unexpected cost highlighted by students in the focus group.

It appears that not all staff use the 8 Q L Y H U V L W \ ¶ V V W X G H Q W O individuals who may need additional support. One of our disabled students focus group participants reported that a demonstrator was apparently unaware of her disability and mocked her request for assistance.

Much support provided by the SSU is, understandably, broad and skills-based but members of our disabled students focus group would appreciate more assistance from academic staff.

The University provides ten dedicated PCs for students with a disability or specific learning need[26]. Students have told us that W K H \ D U H Q R W D O Z D \ V Z R U seem to be regularly checked and (in the case of the Library machines) it is unclear who can help with technical problems.

Students reported inconsistent guidance and application of policies, e.g. a student was

revised up to 10 years ago. Additionally we feel there is a lack of support for students with mental health problems and a lacking of University processes and training. For example respondents to our student mental health and wellbeing survey reported that: *³There has been a lack of communication between the Student Life Centre and the Student Support Unit, which left me going back and forth between the two with no help or guidance given ´* *³The overlapping roles of the PCS, SSU, and SLC can cause some confusion. I still don't know much about what the SSU do even though I've had some communication with them via email ´* The recent changes to the mitigating evidence process are likely to result in many more students registering with the SSU & yet the SSU is quite poorly resourced, e.g. they only have a part-time mental health adviser.	

Students with dyslexia

Our response	**Our recommendations**
6 W X G H Q W V Z K R U H F H L Y H ' L Allowance should be able to access regular one to one sessions with a specialist dyslexia tutor to help them with their reading, note-taking, assignment planning etc. Students have told us however that they have not been provided with this support due to a shortage of tutors and lack of resources within the SSU. For students on year-long courses, this could mean them completing large parts of the course without receiving the support they are entitled to. Students in our disabled students focus group also told us they feel they have to be persistent and proactive to receive support, and in some cases, simply useful responses and updates.	Ensure all students receive the support they are entitled to within a specified timescale, particularly individual tutor support. Greater support for students with dyslexia to ensure they are aware of, and encouraged to make use of, options available to them, e.g. training to use assistive software, stickers for their work, how to spend their Disabled 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ $ O O R Z D Q F H R (resources.

Support for disabled students on placements

Our response	**Our recommendations**

The ARC has previously been approached by disabled students who do not feel they receive adequate support whilst they are on placements. The number of cases we have been notified of has declined however it seems there may still be instances of students not being aware of support that is available to them and/or not being sure that their placement provider is aware of their needs. *"I feel I only found out that someone could come to my placement to help me because my tutor happened to have recently gone on a course about it"*[28]	

4.7 The quality of learning opportunities for international students is appropriate

Study skills & induction

Our response	**Our recommendations**
The ARC has seen an increasing number and proportion of international students being accused of academic misconduct (25 cases in 2010/11, - 58% of academic misconduct cases, 45 cases in 2011/12 - 67%, 5 so far in 2012/13). The most common school involved in these cases is Business, Management & Economics (58% in 2011/12, 100% of 2012/13 cases so far) and mostly new students[29]. Full-time international students for whom English is a second or additional language can attend optional academic development workshops which include information about referencing[30] and avoiding plagiarism[31]. The Unive U V L W \ ¶ V V W X G H Q W V programme, Study Success at Sussex (S3),	

affected the 817 overseas undergraduates returning for the 2012/13 academic year. At time of writing, the University have not formally given any explanation for the withdrawal of this option.

A number of returning students have reported being charged an increased (variable) rate for their fees despite opting for the fixed rate[34].

Students have reported unexpectedly having to find large sums of money which is affecting them in the long-term, e.g. affordability of further study, and short-term, e.g. not being able to afford food[35].

47% of respondents to our tuition fee increase survey reported being notified about the increase fees less than two weeks before the start of the academic year.

A member of our international student focus group reported trying to find out about fee increases before they arrived but was unable to find out this information.

There has been a similar problem with increased fees for postgraduate students too.

: K L O V W Z H Z H O F R P H W K H 8 and corrective action underway at time of writing we are concerned about the time taken to resolve the issue and seek reassurance from the institution that similar

Section 4: + R Z H I I H F W L Y H O \ G R H V W K H L Q V W L W X W L R Q P D Q D J H

Section 4: + R Z H I I H F W L Y H O \ G R H V W K H L Q V W L W X W L R Q P D Q D J H learning opportunities (teaching and academic support)

4.9 The quality of learning opportunities delivered through work based and placement learning is effective

Please see comments above about the experience of disabled students on placements.

Availability & allocation of placements

Our response	Our recommendations
Some students have reported difficulty finding placements. For the 2012/13 academic year some Social Work placements were allocated later due to a delay in the University receiving placement details. We are concerned this could be a problem in the future if the University is over-promising on placement opportunities.	Closely monitor placement availability and tailor recruitment accordingly.

Placement support

Our response	Our recommendations
Some students on placements have reported that their practice educator has not been suitably supportive and understanding of their trainee status[40]. Relationships between placement students and their supervisors typically demonstrate a similar power imbalance as that described for PGR students and their supervisors. Placement students may be unwilling to raise concerns about their supervisor for fear of consequences including their fitness to practise being questioned.	

Section 4:

Section 5: How effectively the institution manages the quality of the public information that it provides, including that for students and applicants

5.1 Is this information user -friendly, easy to find, accurate and up to date? Does it accurately describe course s and learning resources?

Misleading information (particularly for international and postgraduate students)

Our response	Our recommendations

Our response	Our recommendations
The University does not currently operate a compliance model as they feel this would unnecessarily restrict innovation in individual subjects. Innovation in subjects is important and we are pleased that the University considers this something to be protected. However we feel there is far too much inconsistency between Schools with regard to feedback. The only consistency we see regarding the timing of assessment and feedback is that students are generally unhappy with timeframes. 7KHUH LV VRPH FRQIXVLRQ guideline as students feel it is not adequately communicated that the 15 days means working days. We feel the University could do more to publicise this. Furthermore, even when there is an understanding of the 15 days, this is not often adhered to. This comes up consistently in SSEG minutes, surveys and focus groups. One solution that has been agreed by students in the School of Life Sciences is that tutors will have to provide an extra half a page of feedback for every day that it is late. Reps in other schools were unaware of this practice. If this sort of good practice was shared across schools then it could lead to feedback consistently returning on time across the University.	The University should clearly publicise to students the meaning of the 15 day feedback timescale to prevent misunderstandings. This could take the form of having the deadline date for feedback available to the student on submission of the work. More sharing of best practice from schools who succeed in meeting the timescales would be extremely helpful.

Inductions

Our response	Our recommendations
For the 2012/13 academic year, student inductions were changed as University management wished to see more integration between international and UK students. The University also wanted to give all students more information about student life and support available. Whilst we agree that international students should be fully integrated into Sussex life and interact with UK students, we believe that there are some shortcomings in this	Reinstate the ISAO specialised induction for international students on life in the UK. A review into the Sussex Signposting event should be carried out, with a focus on which sessions were effective, tailoring events to specific groups of students, how to better publicise the event to students and when it is best to hold them. We would welcome a review as to how best we can get student support information to students beyond talks and lectures.

to note that this has been taken forward and will be looked at as a result. Draft exam timetables for the winter assessment period in 2013 were released on 3rd December 2012 which caused problems for some students planning their return travel to the University after the holidays.	welcome clarification from University management about which senior manager has overall responsibility for equality and diversity so that we can better liaise with them on this matter.

occurred. Furthermore it appears that Heads of School were not required to submit their action plans to the Deputy VC or report on them centrally. Consequently there does not seem to be any systematic way in which good practice is identified and rolled out across the institution, nor in which poor practice is identified and improved.	

5.4 Where does the institution make available public information deemed important by the sector?

Our response	**Our recommendations**
he University makes information available on its website[44], most information deemed important to the sector is available in the µ D E R X W X V ¶[45] section of the site, one click from the main page. The University also publishes a prospectus[46] for UG and PG students; these are available E \ R U G H U L Q J R U G R Z Q O R D Z L W K X V ¶ V H F W L R Q R I W K H visible one click from the main university page. We are pleased the information is provided online but feel that it highlights a problem of the website as it is easier to find this information using a google search than using the search function on the website. Finding items on the website can be deemed not very accessible if one is unaware of the need to use a specific google search (and it is likely that prospective students will be unaware).	Ensure information is easily accessible by updating it the website taking into account the needs of users who find it hard to navigate. We also wish to reiterate this recommendation and request that the equality and diversity pages also be updated as they are also out of date.

Section 6: How effective are the institution's plans to enhance the quality of students' learning opportunities?

6.1 How well the institution communicates any strategies for enhancement and chan

significant variability in how much attention Schools gave to NSS results.

As mentioned above, following the

before the students have received feedback for their work, thus making it difficult for students to rate that aspect.	

6.3 How the institution uses the student voice to inform, develop and implement its enhancement agenda

The student voice in University meetings

Our response	Our recommendations
Student Reps are invited to a number of meetings across the University and within schools. This commitment to including student representatives at all levels is Z H O F R P H G E \ W K H 6 W X G H Q We are concerned however that some of the 8 Q L Y H U V L W \ ¶ V N H \ F R P P L W Investment Committee and the Doctoral 6 F K R R O G R Q R W L Q F O X G H Officers. Student and FTEO members of University	

learning environment at the University.	

We have opted not to comment on these topics in this section;

- The extent to which there is an ethos in the institution of constant improvement to services and the curriculum

We have chosen not to comment on whether Sussex has a case for a commended grade in quality or enhancement as we do not feel suitably well informed. The QAA assessors may find the key themes outlined at the start of our report useful.

Part B: Thematic element of review: Student involvement in quality assurance and enhancement

Section B1: Innovations in student involvement in quality assurance and enhancement

We are pleased to note that the University appears to be taking steps towards effective PDQDJHPHQW RI WKLV \HDU¶V WRSLF +RZHYHU WKHUH DUH V outlined below), and these generally align with the themes we identified in Section 1.

The University was advised in its previous evaluati RQ WKDW LW GLG QRW ³H[SORLW JDLQ D IXOO LQVLJKW LQWR WKH VWXGHQW H[SHULHQFH´ SDU University advised of actions taken to resolve this (section 5.1).

:KLOVW ZH ZHOFRPH WKH 8QLYHUVLW\¶V GHYLUH WR QRW restrict innovation within schools, we feel there is scope for sharing best practice to benefit all students. This because, in our consultation with students, we have again found many inconsistencies in the student experience between schools.

Periodic Review

Our response	**Our recommendations**
7KH 8QLYHUVLW\ FRQGXFW in 2012. The aim of this was to lead to ³*validation of programmes for a five year period´* 7KH SHULRGLF UHYLH involvement and consultation as a central theme, something we welcome. The University involved Student Reps from DOO VFKRROV DQG WKH 8Q the process by inviting them to attend review sessions within each school comprised of School academic staff and members of University management. All members of the review groups were asked to prepare by reviewing documents provided to them. As an incentive to involvement, Student Reps were also offered payment. This was well received and welcomed, as was the fact that Rep feed-in was driving the process and that Student Reps and FTEOs were equal members of all panel meetings. Student Reps involved in the periodic review gave us feedback regarding the process via focus groups[49]. Reps felt that as part of the process their opinions were taken into consideration. However, some felt that the SURFHVV ZDV µPRUH IRU V Students feel that the review was a worthwhile process but that the general	Implement mechanisms which facilitate the sharing of best practice in student involvement between Schools. Ensure that reviews focusing on student involvement are published and circulated in a timely fashion and that students are fully aware of any process that is being undertaken including how they can have input into it. Ensure that the most appropriate representatives are being asked for input on matters (e.g. PGT students must be asked about PGT issues). Review action plans arising from NSS and make certain that the changes recommended are being carried out and to communicate this effectively. Ensure that periodic review reports are available for all students to see. Produce an action plan following the institutional recommendations of the periodic review, to include timings, staff lead and appropriate student representation and involvement, e.g. working group to look at University signposting issues for student support.

[49] Portfolio review focus group

itself being an innovative scheme and discussed ways in which their lecturers chose to interact with them: *Students are able to give their ideas to tutors on how to proceed in seminars… such as exercises which have aided learning* [52] *When our lecturer emailed us all, it was like an electronic system where anyone could add what they wanted onto it and it was anonymous. Also as we could all see the comments written so far the lecturer wasn't getting a load of the same responses from everyone on the course* [53]	

NSS

Our response	**Our recommendations**
The University is keen to perform well on NSS measures and the aforementioned action plans could be innovative if more emphasis was placed on carrying them out. As mentioned previously (see page 39) we have seen no evidence of this yet.	Ensure internal measures of quality, such as MEQs, are used in addition to NSS results.

[52] Student Rep Survey 2012

[53] Student Rep Survey 2012

Section B2:

Section B3: How contributions from students are acted upon, and how students know they are acted upon

How contributions from students are acted upon

Our response	Our recommendations
Mechanisms in place include School level and University committees which Student 5 H S V D Q G 6 W X G H Q W V ¶ 8 Q L only on University level committees) sit on. These include School Student Experience Groups (SSEGs) School Teaching & Learning Committees (STLC), University Teaching & Learning Committee (UTLC) and the Student Experience Forum (SEF). We welcome the collaboration between the University and the Union in re-writing the terms of reference for the SEF.	

How students know they are acted upon

Our response	Our recommendations
It appears that the main method for students to find out that contributions are acted upon is through the Student Rep Scheme. This means that there are inconsistencies between Schools and departments as to how much information the students receive. Minutes for University level committees are posted on Sussex Direct, however these are not advertised and it is not part of the Rep role description[54] to disseminate this information. Nor, in our opinion, should it be as Reps are giving up time for their role which would be best used in other ways. Due to this the wider student body is not made fully aware of1 deparawe	

setting aside time in meetings for PG issues, or having specific PG meetings would resolve this.	

Appendices

Appendix 1: Memorandum of Understanding

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

The University of Sussex

and

7KH 8QLYHUVLW\ RI 6XVVH[6WXGHQWV¶ 8QLRQ

Preamble

7KH 8QLYHUVLW\ RI 6XVVH[DQG WKH 6WXGHQWV¶ 8QLRQ LQ W
wish to set out in this document some principles underlying the relationship between the two bodies.

7KH 6WXGHQWV¶ 8QLRQ LV UHIHUUHG WR LQ WKH 5R\DO &KDUW
shes the University of Sussex.

The Uni Y H U V L W \ R I 6 X V V H [Y D O X H V W K H U H O D W The University of Sussex S Z L W K W K
recognizes the Union as the primary representative body for all Sussex students, and encourages students to participate in their union.

The University recognises the important role that the Union plays in the advancement and delivery of a positive student experience for all students.

The University is committed to a close working relationship and effective communication on matters affecting both the Union and the student community.

The University agrees to:

&RQWLQXH WR SURYLGH DQ DQQXDO EORFN JUDQW WR WKH 8Q
VWXGHQWV DV ODLG RXW XQGHU ³)LQDQFLDO 5HODWLRQVKLS

&RQWLQXH WR SURYLGH SUHPLVHV IRU Wthe space occupied by SXUSRVH
services provided to be subject to agreement between the two parties;

- A list of the external organisations to which it is currently affiliated and the details of any donations, subscriptions or similar fees paid to such organisations since its previous Annual Report.
- A report on any long term or substantial short term borrowing, or any sale, transfer, lease assignment or disposal of any real or other assets valued at more than £25000.

Maintain the agreed channels of communication as set out in this document.

Maintain appropriate insurance arrangements against all reasonably foreseeable liabilities.

Ensure that the University is kept appraised of the development, implementation and PRQLWRULQJ RI WKH 8QLRQ¶V IRUZDUG SODQV

Maintain and publish its own procedure for considering complaints regarding its services.

Such procedure shall ensure that complaints are dealt with in an impartial, effective and timely manner. Where a complaint is not resolved through such procedure the Students' Union will refer it within ten working days to the Secretary to Council to be considered by the University.

Comply with the requirements of the Education (No 2) Act 1986 in relation to ensuring freedom of speech and to this end shall comply with the University's Policy on Freedom of Speech. This shall include the content of posters, notices, temporary signs and literature distributed on Union premises and where clubs and societies are using other University space.

Ensure that bars and entertainment operated on the premises shall be operated responsibly and with consideration for the occupiers of neighbouring premises and in accordance with current Licensing Laws. All licensees shall hold the National Licensees Certificate.

Financial Relationship

7KH 8QLYHUVLW\ LV WKH SULQFLSDO IXQGHU RI WKH 6WXGHQW
is in the form of the annual block grant agreed by the University Council and its relevant sub-committee after negotiation between the University and Union.

In accordance with s.22 of the Education Act 1994, the University Council shall exercise its statutory accountability for, and control of, the proper conduct of the Students' Union's finances through the following annual procedures for the approval of the Students' Union's budget and for the monitoring of its expenditure.

7KH 6WXGHQWV¶ 8QLRQ OLNH RWKHU VSHQGLQJ XQLWV LQ WK
notified by early May of its provisional allocation of funds for the following financial year.

7KH 6WXGHQWV¶ 8QLRQ VKDOO SUHSDUH HDFK \HDU D GHWDLO
its estimated income and expenditure for the following Financial Year (the "Budget").

7KH 6WXGHQWV¶

The main high level communication is via the student officers and the senior managers of the University, who will meet regularly for this purpose. Students' Union staff and student officers may access members of the administration direct on any issue. The Vice Chancellor will meet with student officers on a regular basis or as necessary.

Appendix 2: Consultation procedure for academic issues

This paper presents a model for how student consultation should take place at the University

3) Will assist the University with publicising information pertaining to the consultation, as well as any surveys, or meetings pertaining to consultation.

Appendix 4: Focus group participants

The following students were invited to be part of our focus groups. Almost all attended the VHVVLRQV :H¶G OLNH WR WKDQN (OOLH :LOOLDPV $P\ +RUZR focus groups.

Participants for general student focus groups were drawn from respondents to surveys FDUULHG RXW IRU WKH SUHSDUDWLRQ RI WKLV UHSRUW DV ZH were also invited via email from relevant University departments.

Student Reps A
Life Sciences UG
Media & Film PGT x2
Anthropology UG x3
Law UG
Art History PGR
English PGT
International Relations UG

Student Reps B
Science & Technology Policy Research PGT
Life Sciences UG x2
Psychology UG
Unknown
Economics UG x2
Mathematics UG
Business and Management UG
Media & Film UG
Psychology UG

Disabled students
English PGR 4th year
History, Art History & Philosophy UG 1st year
Business, Management & Economics UG 1st year
Life Sciences UG 1st year x3
Psychology UG 1st year
Life Sciences PGR 1st year
Education & Social Work PGCE
English UG 2nd year
Business, Management & Economics PGR 1st year

Portfolio Review participants
International Relations UG
Law UG
Physics UG
Life Sciences UG
Geography UG

Taught Postgraduates
Psychology x2
English
Business & Management x2
Contemporary European Studies
Institute of Development Studies
Engineering & Design
International Relations
Philosophy
Gender Studies
Global Studies

International students
Engineering and Informatics PGR 1st year
Life Sciences UG
Politics UG
Law UG 1st year
Marketing & Management UG 2nd year
Sociology & Media Studies UG 1st year
Education & Social Work PGR 3rd year
History, Art History & Philosophy PGR 2nd year
Art History PGT
Institute of Development Studies PGT
Neuroscience UG 2nd year
English UG 2nd year

Research Postgraduates
History, Art History & Philosophy 2nd year
Psychology 3rd year
Engineering and Informatics 2nd year
Media, Film & Music 3rd year
Mathematical and Physical Sciences 2nd year
Business, Management & Economics (Economics) 2nd year
Business, Management & Economics(SPRU) 2nd year
Life Sciences 2nd year
Physics and Astronomy 3rd year
English 2nd year
Law, Politics & Sociology 1st year
Education & Social Work 1st year