

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING & LEARNING

DRAFT Minute of the meeting held on 19 March 2014

Present: Professor P McGeorge (Convener), Dr B Connolly, Dr S Davies, Mr C Duncan, Mr P Fantom, Mr R Henthorn, Dr C Kee, Professor A Lumsden, Dr G Mackintosh, Dr J Masthoff, Mr D Philip, Dr M Pryor, Dr K Shennan, Dr R Wells, Dr R Bernard (Clerk), Ms E Hay (Minute Secretary)

Apologies: Ms M Dunn

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT

(copy filed as UCTL/220114/010)

- 1.1 The Committee acknowledged the paper on the proposed Implementation of the Code of Practice on Assessment. Members of the Committee were reminded that discussions regarding changes to the Student Record System (SRS) required to allow changes, remained ongoing. The Committee was assured that updates to this effect would be provided as soon as possible and that discussions regarding implementation would continue.
- 1.2 In noting the implementation schedule, the Committee agreed with the proposal that the new marking system would be implemented in September 2014, at the beginning of the 2014/15 Academic Year.
- 1.3 The Committee noted that students entering into an Honours programme in 2014/15 would be advised that they would be classified twice, under both the old and new systems, allowing them to receive the classification favourable to them. The Committee noted the importance of clear and timely communication to all students.
- 1.4 The Committee acknowledged that Part Time students should be classified on the regulations under which they entered the University. Members of the Committee were in agreement that this principle would apply to all students, noting that no student should be disadvantaged by the implementation of the new code, regardless of their level or mode of study.
- 1.5 With regards to the specific questions laid out in the paper, the Committee noted the following responses:
 - i. The Committee maintained the importance of transparency to all students, particularly those who undertake time abroad and noted that agreements with institutions abroad should be reviewed to ensure clarity on grading. The Committee noted that the number of students studying abroad in their honours year(s) is low.
 - ii. The Committee noted that some Schools use elements in determining classification through the current Grade Spectrum. The Committee agreed that going forward this would not be possible and agreed that those Schools affected needed to formulate a plan to conform with the revised Code.
 - iii. The Committee noted that this issue (which included students undertaking 5 year Language programmes) remained outstanding.
 - iv. With regard to Integrated Masters programmes, the Committee agreed that (with the exception of the MSci) levels 3, 4 and 5 should count as Honours years.

- v. The Committee noted that the commitment to remove differential weightings.
- vi. The Committee, in considering the current monitoring system, noted the issues raised by the current use of 'c' codes. The Committee proposed the use of 'M' codes going forward to alleviate any potential confusion under the new marking scale.
- vii. The Committee again reiterated the importance of communication with students, the strategy for which should be discussed. Members noted their preference to maintain one Code of Practice where/if possible.
- viii. The Committee noted this point and agreed to place their response on hold pending further discussion.
- ix. The Committee noted this point and agreed to place their response on hold pending further discussion.

INDUSTRIAL ACTION UPDATE

(copy filed as UCTL/220114/011)

- 2.1 The Committee acknowledged the tabled paper providing an update on proposed Industrial action. The Committee acknowledged that the proposals were based on those laid out in 2006, the last time the University faced a marking boycott.
- 2.2 The Committee was informed that students had been advised of the potential for strike action and that further correspondence, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) would be circulate as/if appropriate. Members of the Committee were invited to forward any further comments by way of email.

Action: All

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES EVALUATION UPDATE

(copy filed as UCTL/220114/012)

- 3.1 The Committee noted the paper on the Graduate Attributes (GAs) Evaluation. Members of the Committee were update on the progress of students admitted to the University under the reformed curriculum and noted that work to determine their perception and ability to articulate the GAs was ongoing.
- 3.2 Members of the Committee acknowledged the importance of targeting the cohort of students set to graduate in summer 2014 (the first, fully under CRef). The Committee further noted the importance a review of the impact felt by employers may be. Members of the Committee acknowledged that the linkages may be more clearly presented by doing so.
- 3.3 The Committee acknowledged that the numbers of students who respond can often be small, however, noted the importance and valuable nature of these responses.