UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Minutes of meeting held on Friday 18 October 2002

Present: Dr JG Roberts (Convener), Mr D Cockburn, Professor PR Duff, Miss A Harper, Ms C Lowe, Professor BD MacGregor, Professor M Player, Professor PA Racey, Professor AA Rodger, Mrs L Stephen and Professor DW Urwin with Dr D Comber, Professor MA Cotter, Mr JLA Madden, Dr W Naphy, Mr G Pryor, Ms J Duncan, Mrs M Park (for item 3), Mrs H Jennings, Mrs P Spence (for items 2 and 8), Professor The Lord Sewel (for item 3) in attendance with Dr G Mackintosh (Clerk)

Apologies for absence were received from Dr A Clarke, Professor SD Logan, Dr WF Long, Professor IR Torrance, Ms D McDowall and Dr T Webb

The Convener opened the meeting by welcoming a number of new members to the Committee.

MINUTES

514. The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2002.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/367)

MATTERS ARISING

515. The Committee noted, in regard to Minute 508.2 concerning revalidation of degree programmes, that Faculties were chasing those Schools/Departments who had still to submit documentation. Deans were asked to ensure any outstanding documentation was submitted by the final deadline of 31 October 2002.

NATIONAL PLAGIARISM ADVISORY SERVICE

516.1 The Committee received a report from the Manager of the Learning Technology Unit on the Joint Information Systems Committee's National Plagiarism Advisory Service.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/368)

516.2 The report provided information on the recently launched electronic plagiarism detection facility which was available for use by Universities. It was noted that five Departments at the University had participated in a trial of this facility in 2000/01. All Departments had agreed that they would use the software again if it were made available. It was further noted that briefing sessions were planned for Heads of School and other academics to provide information about this service and the benefits which it could offer in regard to the detection of plagiarism.

516.3 It was noted that in order to ensure compliance with EU copyright law, JISC advised that those using this facility should seek signed permission from students that their work can be uploaded, stored and cross-referenced against other material input into the detection facility. It was noted that seeking copyright permission had not been an issue for those Departments piloting the service. It was further noted that this facility worked most efficiently where the student was responsible for uploading their own work. Students who fail or refuse to upload their work into the plagiarism detection facility would still have their work marked. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Committee supported the use of a cover sheet which the student would be required to sign to indicate that the work was their own and to give their permission for the inclusion of their work in the plagiarism detection facility. It was agreed that a form of words for use on such a cover sheet would be circulated to Heads of School/Department as guidance. It was further agreed that students should be responsible for uploading their documents into this facility rather than the upload being undertaken by Schools/Departments. It was, however, agreed that it would be for Heads of School/Department to decide the exact approach they would wish to take in regard to the introduction of the new service.

Action: PS

REPORT ON THE TEACHING TIMETABLE

517.1 The Committee received a report on the teaching timetable for session 2002-2003.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/369)

517.2 Mrs Park informed the Committee that the timetabling had operated much more smoothly this year but that there were still a large number of clashes in the timetable. Timetabling at Foresterhill had been devolved to the Faculty of Medicince & Medical Sciences and was operating smoothly. Science Advising had operated more smoothly in comparison to 2001 with the 'Can Do' programme being rolled out to Levels 3 and 4. Timetabling of teaching accommodation and sports facilities at Hilton had been incorporated onto the central timetabling service. Work was on-going to explore the possibility of including the Butchart sports facilities, audio-visual and the exam timetable on Facilities CMIS. Concern was raised about the decrease in the size of the teaching pool with the planned McRobert Building conversion.

517.3 Faculties had been asked in 2001/2002 to review the number of degree programmes offered with a view to reducing the number of timetable clashes. However, no revisions had been made and indeed the number of degree programmes available had increased over the past year. It was, however, agreed that, in the development of costed academic plans, there would be a review of degree programmes.

4.   Furthermore, it was agreed that the current policy for resolution of timetable clashes should continue: clashes within the same School being referred to the Head of School, clashes within the same Faculty being referred to the Dean and clashes between two Faculties being addressed by the two Deans involved. It was agreed that Heads of School/Department and Faculties would be reminded of this policy.

Action: Clerk

517.5 It was noted that with the planned conversion of the McRobert Building there would be a reduction in the size of the teaching pool. Furthermore, it was noted that Estates had reported a significant under-utilisation of space within the University. It was noted that 78% of University space is not currently centrally managed. It was agreed that the Deans should be asked to review the amount of departmentally-owned teaching space and to consider whether any of this could be made available centrally-managed space through the teaching pool. It was acknowledged that some Departments make heavy usage (greater than 20%) of their Departmentally-managed teaching space. However, it was agreed that while the Department could continue to use that space for 20% of the time the other 80% could be available for use by other Departments.

DRAFT UCTL REPORT TO THE SENATE AND ASC REPORTS TO THE UCTL

518.1 The Committee received the draft Annual Report to the Senate and Reports from the three Academic Standards Committees.

(copies filed as UCTL/181002/370a-d)

518.2 The Committee approved the draft UCTL Report subject to a number of minor amendments as detailed below:

- o   deletion of 1999/2000 from paragraph 5.2
- o   revision of the second last sentence of paragraph 6.5

518.3 The Convener drew to the Committee's attention to the successful outcome of those Subject Reviews undertaken during 2001/2002 and, in particular, agreed to record congratulations to the Department of Philosophy for being highlighted as exemplary in regard to the way in which the Department has created a teaching and learning environment that provides students with a holistic and integrated experience of philosophical study.

518.4 In regard to the Reports from the Academic Standards Committees, the Committee noted that there was one omission from the Report from the Academic Standards Committee (Arts & Social Sciences, Education, Divinity and Law) in that the re-validations for the Department of Sociology had been omitted from the list included.

ISSUES IN REGARD TO GENERAL REGULATIONS GOVERNING STUDENT

PROGRESS AND THE STUDENTS' PROGRESS COMMITTEE

1.   The Convener updated the Committee in regard to a meeting he had held with the UPC Conveners to discuss issues relating to the General Regulations governing students' progress and, in particular, the ambiguities which had been identified during the meeting of the composite Students' Progress Committee in September 2002. He informed the Committee that the majority of these issues were of a technical nature and that revisions to the General Regulations would be brought to the next meeting of the UCTL.

2.   He informed the Committee that the areas of Arts & Social Sciences, Education, Divinity, Law and Science had combined to form a composite Students' Progress Committee to hear the cases of those students referred to the Committee having failed to meet the Regulations govering students' progress. It had been agreed that this composite Committee had worked effectively and in particular that it had ensured consistency in regard to the interpretation of the Regulations across these Areas of Study. Furthermore, it had meant that, in identifying certain ambiguities in regard to the Regulations, it had been possible to ensure that these were dealt with in a fair manner for all students and, in all cases, the Regulations were interpreted in such a way as to favour the student. It was further noted that the areas of Medicine and Engineering had retained single Students' Progress Committee as their Regulations were more complex. It had, however, been agreed that it would be appropriate to consider cross-membership between the composite Students' Progress Committee and these single Students' Progress Committees in order to ensure equity of decision-making. It had furthermore been agreed that the Undergraduate Programme

Committee in Engineering should be asked to consider whether it would wish to become part of the composite Students' Progress Committee in future years.

Action: Clerk

REVISED INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEW PROCEDURES

520.1 The Committee received a report from the Quality Enhancement Strategy Team (QUEST) detailing revised Internal Teaching Review procedures and documentation. In particular the Committee was asked to consider a Self-Evaluation Document template and draft Appendices 3.8 and 3.9 of the Academic Quality Handbook in regard to the new Internal Teaching Review procedures from 2003/04.

(copies filed as UCTL/181002/371a-c)

520.2 It was noted that the School of Modern Languages and the Department of Biomedical Sciences would be participating in the pilot of the new Internal Teaching Review procedures.

520.3 The Committee was invited to consider a number of recommendations from the Quality Enhancement Strategy Team. There followed a wide-ranging discussion in regard to these recommendations, the main points of which are noted below:

- o Concern was raised in regard to the number of externals to be appointed for the Review of the School of Modern Languages. It was queried whether there would be four externals or whether only one external would be appointed in line with Modern Languages representing one QAA Subject Group. It was agreed that this issue would be clarified.

Action: TW

- o Concern was expressed about the timetable for the Panel visit. There was a view that the complexity of some Reviews, particularly in some of the larger Schools, may require the Panel visit to be longer than one day. It was felt that the Guidance Note should highlight that there would be flexibility in regard to the length of the visit and state that, while the minimum for a Panel visit would usually be one day, it could well extend over more than one day. It was agreed that the detailed timetable for a day's visit should be deleted and rather a list specifying the types of groups whom the Panel would likely wish to meet should be listed.

- o There was concern about the "random" selection of students to meet the Panel as detailed in the footnote on page 3 of the paper entitled *Information for Heads of School/Departments*. It was felt that this might in practice not be "random" but rather Departments would select students to meet the Panel. It was proposed that this might be better worded to state that the students in the second group should be representative and include part-time students, overseas students, an age balance and an appropriate gender balance. The wording of this footnote would be revised as follows:

  "The Panel will divide into two groups to meet undergraduate and postgraduate taught students who are representatives elected to serve on Staff-Student Liaison Committees and those who are not representatives (the latter group being a representative cross-section selected by Schools/Departments)"

o It was agreed that it would be vital for those drafting the SED to have access to someone in the Registry for advice and guidance in regard to the completion of the documentation.

o It was proposed that in regard to the proposal that the MBChB curriculum should be reviewed on a Faculty and not Departmental basis that this approach may be also appropriate for Education. It was also commented that the role of other stakeholders e.g. the General Teaching Council may also need to be considered in regard to the Review of the Faculty of Education.

o It was proposed that while the list of Appendices which a Department is required to submit has been reduced, it may that the Panel will decide that they need to see some additional documentation. It was agreed that this should not duplicate other processes already carried out to assure quality e.g. the SCEF exercise, but that it should be open to the Panel, where they felt it necessary, to request additional documentation. The reasons for this could be due to concerns or because the Panel wished to explore an avenue of possible good practice which they may wish to highlight. It was proposed that this should be highlighted in the Guidance Notes, perhaps with some examples of what additional documentation might be requested e.g. minutes.

o Concern was expressed that the KEY courses would only be reviewed in the KEY Review and that Departments would not be required to comment on their contribution to KEY provision in their SED. It was proposed that one way forward might be for KEY in preparing their documentation for Internal Teaching Review to take account of issues raised in previous relevant Internal Teaching Reviews undertaken in Departments contributing to KEY's teaching.

520.4 Subject to adoption of the comments listed above, the Committee approved the recommendations. The Committee further agreed that any comments in regard to the fine wording of the SED should be passed to the Clerk within the week following the meeting.

RACE EQUALITY POLICY

521.1 The Committee received a copy of the draft Race Equality Policy which had been prepared in response to the publication of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act which places a duty on a range of public bodies, including higher education institutions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate racial discrimination, promote equal opportunities and promote good race relations between persons of different racial groups. It was further noted that the legislation requires the University to prepare and publish a Race Equality Policy by 30 November 2002.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/372)

521.2 The Committee was invited to comment on the draft Race Equality Policy in order that its comments could be taken on board before approval of the final documentation by the University Court on 17 December 2002. Following brief discussion no amendments were proposed. A query was raised in regard to who would be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Policy. It was noted that it was likely that the Working Group currently responsible for the production of the Policy would also be responsible for overseeing its implementation.

C & IT AUDIT - FINAL REPORT FROM THE KNOWLEDGE

ECONOMY INITIATIVE TASK GROUP

522.1 The Committee received a report from the Knowledge Economy Initiative Task Group in regard to the audit which had been undertaken into the use of C&IT for teaching, learning and assessment. The Committee further noted a letter from the Senior Vice-Principal, on behalf of the Staffing Development Committee, congratulating the UCTL for the work undertaken on the Knowledge Economy Initiative. In this letter, the UCTL was invited to give consideration to the development of an institutional C&IT strategy to meet the main objectives of the Knowledge Economy Initiative.

(copies filed as UCTL/181002/373a&b)

522.2 There followed a wide-ranging discussion in regard to the information set out in the report from the Knowledge Economy Initiative Task Group. The main points of this discussion are summarised below:

- o It was noted that there were considerable resource implications in pursuing the increased use of C&IT within teaching, learning and assessment.

- o It was noted that the needs of disabled students should be taken into account in regard to the development of C&IT.

- o It was noted that one of the main resource disincentives was staff time and that, as Schools developed their own strategies in regard to C&IT, it would be essential that the resource implications are addressed in these policies both at School and Faculty level. It was noted Patricia Spence would be meeting with Heads of Schools to discuss the C&IT Initiative and to encourage the incorporation of this element into Schools' costed academic plans.

- o It was noted that development of such a policy would require a considerable amount of hardware and availability of this to students. It was noted that the University currently has a ratio of 10 students per computer and that no machines in the University are over four years old. It was noted that this compares favourably with that provision provided in other Scottish HEIs. It was noted that DISS are currently working on a new student strategy in regard to the provision of hardware.

- o The availability of such hardware to part-time students was discussed in particular in regard to those students working off campus and it was agreed that this issue should be referred to the Wider Access Strategy Team.

Action: Clerk

- o The Students' Association Education & Training Committee had undertaken a survey of the medical students and their expertise in regard to IT skills and it was noted that 25 out of those 119 students responding had stated that they did not feel they had the IT expertise that they would wish. The Students' Association commented that this might be an area where they could assist possibly through student-peer led training scheme.

522.3 In regard to the proposal from the Staffing & Development Committee that the UCTL give consideration to the development of an institutional C&IT strategy, it was agreed that the Convener should discuss the ways in which this should be implemented with DISS and report back to a future meeting. **Action: JGR**

VARIATIONS IN THE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO HONOURS

PROGRAMMES - ISSUE RAISED BY THE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

523. The Committee received a letter from the Vice-President (Representation) of the Students' Association inviting the Committee to discuss the issue of entry into Honours and the "artificial and arbitrary thresholds imposed by certain Departments within the University". The Students' Association was thanked for raising this issue and it was agreed that it would be appropriate to collect information in regard to thresholds and the reasons for setting such thresholds and to bring a report back to the UCTL for further consideration at a future meeting.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/374)

Action: Clerk

DEADLINE FOR REFUSAL OF CLASS CERTIFICATES FOR FIRST

HALF-SESSION - ISSUE REFERRED BY SENATE

524.1 The Committee noted that following a request from the Students' Association, the Senate, at its meeting on 9 October 2002, had agreed to invite the UCTL to consider whether the deadline for refusal of Class Certificates should be brought forward to the end of week 10 of teaching rather than the deadlines proposed. The Students' Association were concerned that the proposed deadlines gave very little time for a student to appeal against the refusal of the Class Certificate.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/375)

524.2 In discussion, it was noted that where a student has an on-going appeal against the refusal of a Class Certificate at the time of the examination diet, they should sit the examination. The result would be withheld until the outcome of the appeal is known. Where the appeal is successful, the Class Certificate would be re-instated and the result released. The Students' Association agreed that this clarification of the current procedures addressed their concerns and that no revision to the proposed deadlines for refusal of Class Certificates was required. It was, however, agreed that the current practice would be emphasised in any letters sent to students in regard to the refusal of Class Certificates and in particular that where an appeal was pending, they should sit the end-of-course examination.

Action: Clerk

CLASS CERTIFICATES AND ATTENDANCE

525.1 The Committee gave consideration to a letter from the Head of the School of Social Science in regard to Class Certificates and Attendance and, in particular, the wish of the Heads of Department in the School to maintain their current practice of requiring attendance at tutorials. It was noted that the School felt that such attendance requirements benefited the student by deepening their knowledge of the subject matter and by offering an important opportunity for the student to develop the generic skills of attentive informed listening, informal speaking to a point and questioning fellows. The School of Social Science was requesting permission to assign a percentage of the overall grade for every course in the School to tutorial attendance and to make the successful completion of that component an essential part of the overall assessment. Hence, any student failing this component would fail the course.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/376)

525.2 Following discussion, it was agreed that tutorials were an excellent way of developing generic skills but that these skills should be clearly listed within the learning outcomes and that there should be some method of assessing these skills. It was agreed that this advice would be passed back to the Head of the School of Social Science in order that he could bring forward proposals in the planning cycle.

Action: Clerk

HIGH PASS RATES

526.1 The Committee received a memorandum from the Academic Standards Committee (Arts & Social Sciences, Education, Divinity and Law) in regard to the degree examination statistics report for academic year 2000/01. Deans were routinely asked to seek comments from Heads of relevant Departments where failure rates exceed 20%. The Academic Standards Committee had queried whether it would be similarly appropriate to ask Deans to consider courses with exceptionally high pass rates and to also report to the Academic Standards Committee in regard to these.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/377)

526.2 Following discussion, it was agreed that rather than routinely flagging high pass rates (e.g. 100%), it would be more appropriate for the Academic Standards Committee, as part of its monitoring exercise, to highlight where it felt appropriate any repetitive high pass rates and to seek a report from the Dean as required.

Action: Clerk

ALLOCATION OF SCHOOLS TO UNDERGRADUATE ASCS

527.1 The Committee approved the proposed distribution of responsibility for the approval of course proposals to the undergraduate ASCs in the light of the formation of Schools and, in particular, following the transfer of the Departments of Geography and Land Economy to the Faculty of Science and Engineering. The Committee also approved the proposed allocation of KEY courses to the two undergraduate ASCs.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/378)

527.2 In regard to the assignment of Schools to Academic Standards Committees, the President of the Students' Association raised concern about the burden imposed on the single student member of the ASCs. He felt that this did not ensure effective student representation and asked whether it would be possible for the other relevant SA Area of Study Conveners to be in attendance at these meetings.

527.3 Following discussion, it was agreed that this proposal should be adopted for the two undergraduate ASCs with immediate effect and that consideration should be given to whether any further student representation would be appropriate for the ASC(PG).

Action: Clerk

APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

528. The Committee approved the proposed revisions to the guidance for the appointment of PhD external examiners to indicate that an honorary member of staff could not normally serve as an external examiner. Exceptions might be made where a School/Department could argue a special case, for example, on the grounds that a given academic was the only available specialist in a given field and that he/she had no previous knowledge of the student.

EUROPEAN POLICY STATEMENT

529. The Committee approved the European Policy Statement, which was a required component of the University's application for continued SOCRATES funding.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/380)

WORKING GROUP ON STUDENT & GRADUATE FEEDBACK

530.1 The Committee approved the proposed remit and composition of a Working Group to investigate issues related to student and graduate feedback subject to revision of the composition to allow for the Convener and Faculty representatives to be drawn from Heads of Department as well as Heads of School.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/381)

530.2 It was further agreed that it would be helpful to new members of the UCTL if the remit and composition of the Working Groups could be circulated to members.

Action: Clerk

REPORT FROM THE SENATE UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC APPEALS COMMITTEE

531.1 The Committee received a report from the Senate Undergraduate Academic Appeals Committee (SUAAC) on issues raised by appeals considered by the Committee at their meeting on 2 October 2002.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/382)

531.2 The Committee approved the recommendation that the issue in regard to transparency in classification of degrees should be referred to the Qualifications and Levels Descriptors Working Group which would be reviewing the *Grade Spectrum*. It further agreed that, in so doing, the Working Group should be made fully aware of the issues identified by the SUAAC as the summary in the UCTL papers did not fully emphasise the full extent of the issue.

Action: Clerk

REMIT AND COMPOSITION: 2002/2003

532. The Committee noted the remit and composition of the Committee for 2002/2003. It was noted that the SA Vice-President (Representation) had been omitted from the list of those in attendance. Furthermore, it had also recently been agreed that the Director of Wider Access Policy should also be in attendance at meetings.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/383)

WORKING GROUP ON ADVISING & STUDENTS' PROGRESS REVIEW

533. The Committee noted that the final meeting of the Working Group on Advising and Students' Progress Review scheduled for early November had been deferred to allow for a meeting of UPC Conveners, Directors of Studies (Advising) and Deans to be held to discuss issues arising from Advising & Registration 2002. A report from this meeting would be considered by the Working Group. A final report from the Working Group would be brought to the December meeting of the UCTL.

WORKING GROUP ON QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND LEVELS DESCRIPTORS

534. The Committee noted that the Working Group on the Qualifications Framework and Levels Descriptors would hold its first meeting in early November.

WORKING GROUP ON STUDENT RETENTION

535.1 The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Working Group on Student Retention held on 18 July 2002.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/384)

535.2 The Committee further noted that this Working Group had now been formally dissolved. A successor group to the Working Group was being formed, entitled the Retention and Progression Strategy Team (RAPT), whose responsibilities included:-

- o reviewing the effect of the changes in the progress regulations
- o considering the outcome of the Labour Economics Group's survey
- o monitoring and supporting the new Academic Learning Support Unit
- o monitoring the operation of the new Student Monitoring Scheme
- o maintaining a review of HEFCE PI and internal indicators
- o advising UCTL on policy issues relating to student retention

3. Deans were being contacted for nominations for Faculty representatives.

OUTCOME OF SUBJECT REVIEWS UNDERTAKEN IN 2001/2002

536. The Committee noted that the Departments of Economics, Geography & the Environment and Philosophy had participated in Subject Reviews undertaken by the QAA during 2001/2002. Overall, the Reviewers had indicated that they had confidence in the academic standards achieved in the undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision offered in these departments. The Reviewers also formed judgements that the teaching and learning, student progression and learning resources were commendable in all three departments. Furthermore, the Reviewers for the review of the Department of Philosophy had highlighted as exemplary the way in which the department had created a teaching and learning environment that provided students with a holistic and integrated experience of philosophical study. The final reports for all three reviews had been received and, in time, would be published on the QAA web-site at http://www.qaa.ac.uk/revreps/acrev/scotintro.htm

DRAFT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

537. The Committee noted that the UMG had agreed that the Draft Performance Indicators for 2001-2002 should be referred to the UCTL and the Working Group on Student Retention for information and more detailed analysis. In view of the dissolution of the Working Group on Student Retention, it was noted that the Performance Indicators would be referred to the Retention and Progression Strategy Team in future.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/385)

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT NUMBERS

538. The Committee noted that the University Management Group (UMG) had considered the analysis of the Student Number Projections for 2002-2006 accompanying the Strategic Plan and the funding implications associated with these. The UMG had agreed that (i) a detailed analysis of the current situation regarding retention issues should be brought to a future meeting of the UMG and (ii)

that the Vice-Principal (Teaching & Learning) should meet with the Conveners of the Students' Progress Committees to review current arrangements.

Action: JGR

WORKING GROUP ON STUDENT DISCIPLINE

539. The Committee noted that the Working Group on Student Discipline would hold its first meeting on 11 October 2002. Members of the University had been invited to submit comments, observations and experience from the academic community concerning student discipline, especially in relation to plagiarism and other forms of cheating, for consideration by the Working Group.

SHEFC CIRCULAR LETTER HE/29/02: AN ENHANCEMENT-LED APPROACH TO

QUALITY ASSURANCE: CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND THE WAY FORWARD

540. The Committee noted the letter from SHEFC setting out the responses to the consultation document on an Enhancement-Led Approach to Quality Assurance (minute 481.1 refers) and proposing the way forward.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/386)

PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LEARNING

541.1 The Committee received a report from the Educational Development Unit regarding how it saw the programme for Promoting Independent Learning developing.

(copy filed as UCTL/181002/387)

541.2 Dr Comber explained that the report described the work done to date and that the current project, started in 1997, had now run its course. He encouraged the Committee to consider the recommendations in the report with a view to considering at the matter on a wider institutional basis, and, in particular, proposed that the school-university transition should be addressed.

541.3 In considering the recommendations contained in the report, the Committee agreed to approve recommendations 1 to 3 and agreed that recommendations 4 and 5 should be referred to the Retention and Progression Strategy Team (RAPT):

Action: Clerk

MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESS

542. Following the approval by the Senate in June 2002 of the proposals for monitoring student progress, the Committee noted that a number of new screens had been developed for use by Schools/Departments and Advisers of Studies to ease the operation of the new system. The majority of these screens would be available by 15 October in time for the commencement of the new monitoring system. However, some of the screens would not be available until the upgrade of the student record system was complete. Guidance Notes had been circulated to Advisers of Studies and Schools/Departments in regard to the operation of these new screens.

WORKING GROUP ON ACADEMIC APPEALS AND STUDENT

COMPLAINTS ON ACADEMIC MATTERS (minute 493.5 refers)

543. The Committee noted that the Working Group on Academic Appeals and Student Complaints on Academic Matters would meet in November to consider the revisions to the various Guidance Notes which had been proposed by the University Solicitors. These revisions would then be brought to the December meeting of the UCTL with a view to them being referred to the January meeting of the Senate.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS (minute 493 refers)

544. The Committee noted that the Senate (9 October 2002) had approved, for its part, a proposal that the University should join a scheme proposed by Universities Scotland for the Independent Review of Student Complaints in Scottish HEIs.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2002/2003

545. The Committee noted that the Strategic Plan for 2002/2003 had now been published and was available at http://www.abdn.ac.uk/admin/plan2.hti

STUDENT PORTALS

546. The Committee noted that following the implementation of Student Portals, students would be able to access their results through Portals. As a consequence, results letters would cease to be sent to students with effect from January 2003. However, students wishing to receive a hard copy of their results would be able to submit a stamp-addressed envelope to Registry Service who would forward them a copy of their record card following the deadline for receipt of exam results (minute 405 refers).

DATES OF NEXT MEETING IN 2002/2003

547. The Committee noted the dates of meetings for the remainder of session 2002/03 (all at 2pm in Committee Room 2), as under:-

13 December 2002

7 February 2003

28 March 2003

30 May 2003