

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING & LEARNING**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2011**

*Present:* Professor P McGeorge (Convener), Professor M Cotter, Professor P Edwards, Mr P Fantom, Mr B Lockhart, Professor W Long, Dr G Mackintosh, Ms M McHaney, Dr J Morrison, Professor W Naphy, Mr R Parker, Ms P Spence, Professor G Walkden, Dr R Bernard (Clerk) Mrs S Vigers (Minute Secretary)

*Apologies:* Ms J Batty, Dr B Connolly, Dr PJ Murray, Dr M Young

Professor M Ross was in attendance for item 358.

Ms F Faulds was in attendance for item 359.

**MINUTES**

357. The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2010.  
(copy filed as UCTL/260111/001)

**REVISED POLICY ON APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS  
(AND OTHER ASSOCIATED POLICY CHANGES)**

- 358.1 The Committee considered the revised policy on appeals and complaints. The Committee was informed that this policy came from a Kaizen Blitz review in the summer at which it was agreed that the current processes were not fit for purpose. Emphasis in the new policy is on frontline resolution followed if necessary by a shorter 'formal' process.  
(copy filed as UCTL/260111/002a and UCTL/260111/002b)
- 358.2 The Committee noted that the policy had been informed by comments made at the Heads of School meeting on 20 January.
- 358.3 In addition to the revised policy procedures have been written as an annexe to guide the Head of School or Service and the Panel. New forms have also been produced.  
(copy filed as UCTL/260111/002c and UCTL/260111/002d)
- 358.4 The Committee noted that the intention is to introduce this policy for the current examination diet. As the revised policy is not advantageous regarding non-progression for postgraduate taught students, any such students who commenced studies in September 2010 will be treated under the new policy but will not be required to pass the competency test.
- 358.5 The Committee noted the importance of training and were informed that training sessions have been organised for the week after Senate.
- 358.6 The Committee noted that the new process will be kept under review. The Convenor thanked those involved in drawing up these policies and thanked the Committee for their comments.

**INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION PROGRAMME**

- 359.1 The Committee received a paper on the proposal for an International Foundation Programme run by the Centre for Lifelong Learning. The programme would offer an entry path to overseas students to a range of University degree programmes. The courses making up the programme are existing courses run by the Centre for Lifelong Learning.  
(copy filed as UCTL/260111/012)

- 359.2 The Committee were of the view that further thought needed to be given to the SCQF level at which these courses would be banded. It was recognised that if this programme is a foundation year with the view to bringing students to the level of a student having completed Scottish Highers, the courses should not be banded as Level 7 SCQF but should rightly be Level 6.
- 359.3 The Committee recognised that if the intention is to provide an access programme for international students then consideration should be given to the needs of these students. Offering cultural awareness to assist students as they settle in to Aberdeen would be an important aspect of the programme. In addition the Committee recognised that thought needs to be given to how students interact with the Schools in which they may wish to take a degree programme.
- 359.4 The Committee also noted that the programme is designed for international students and considered the impact upon other students. There was a general view that mixing local widening access students with the international students on this programme would be difficult for both groups.
- 359.5 The Committee also noted that the Language Centre has limited resources and considered whether the needs of students on the International Foundation Programme would impact upon other students needing to access the services.
- 359.6 The Committee noted that very few other Universities are running these types of courses but are rather outsourcing them to third party providers. The Committee felt that consideration needed to be given to UKBA requirements, particularly if these courses are SCQF 6.
- 359.7 The Committee recommended that the programme should be discussed firstly at College level and referred the paper to the Colleges. In addition the programme would need to be considered by the Quality Assurance Committee. The Committee also noted that the proposal would be referred to the International Recruitment Group which is meeting on Friday.

#### **PROGRESSION TO HONOURS FOR STUDENTS TAKING SUSTAINED STUDY AND SIXTH CENTURY COURSES**

- 360.1 The Committee received the paper on progression to Honours for students taking Sustained Study and Sixth Century Courses.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/260111/007)*
- 360.2 The Committee noted that students should know whether or not the course options that they choose at Level 2 will allow progression to Honours at the start of the academic year and that this should not be left to a decision at the end of the year. It was agreed that this part of the text needed to be amended.
- 360.3 The Committee recognised that progression is ultimately a decision for Schools and noted that Heads of School had been content with this proposal.

#### **OMNIBUS RESOLUTION**

- 361.1 The Committee were informed that the Omnibus Resolution is not yet finalised and that it will be circulated to the Committee in advance of the next meeting of Senate.

#### **GRADUATION DATES**

- 362.1 The Committee approved the dates and allocation for the July Graduation Ceremonies.

## **REVIEW OF THE UK PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK (UKPSF) FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

- 363.1 The Committee noted the University's response to the recent consultation on the UK Professional Standards Framework submitted to the Higher Education Academy in January.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/260111/005)*
- 363.2 The Committee also noted the Universities Scotland response to the consultation  
*(copy filed as UCTL/260111/006)*

## **PILOTS TO EXPLORE THE PROVISION OF ONLINE FEEDBACK ON ASSESSMENT**

- 364.1 The Committee noted the paper on pilots to explore the provision of online feedback on assessment. The Students' Association commented that they were encouraged when they read the paper on Pilots to Explore the Provision of Online Feedback on Assessment and are excited about what the University is doing in this regard.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/260111/008)*

## **UPDATE ON THE POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNING AND TEACHING**

- 365.1 The Committee noted the update on the Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Learning and Teaching  
*(copy filed as UCTL/260111/009)*

## **UPDATE ON THE PROGRAMME FOR POSTGRADUATES AND POSTDOCTORAL STAFF WHO TEACH**

- 366.1 The Committee noted the update on the Programme for Postgraduate and Postdoctoral Staff who Teach.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/260111/010)*

## **UPDATE ON THE QAA QUALITY ENHANCEMENT THEME 'GRADUATES FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: INTEGRATING THE ENHANCEMENT THEMES'**

- 367.1 The Committee noted the update on the QAA Quality Enhancement Theme 'Graduates for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Integrating the Enhancement Themes'.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/260111/011)*

## **ADVISORY BOARD FOR THE CENTRE FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING**

- 368.1 The Committee noted that a small Advisory Board for the Centre for Learning and Teaching is being established.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 369.1 The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held as follows:  
Wednesday 16 March 2011 at 2 p.m.