MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 1 MAY 2014
(copyright filed as QAC/240914/001)

1.1 The Committee approved the minute of the meeting held on the 1 May 2014.

MATTERS ARISING

2.1 The Committee noted that all actions arising from the meeting held on 1 May 2014 had been taken forward.

2.2 Members of the Committee, in noting point 1.2 of the May 2014 minute, acknowledged point 7.7.34 of the Academic Quality Handbook (AQH) as below:

Although it is University policy not routinely to return written examination scripts to students, students can expect to receive feedback on their performance in all written examinations other than final examinations. The mechanism by which feedback on written examinations should be given is left to the discretion of Schools. Students will be informed of the mechanisms and timescales via relevant handbooks.

Members of the Committee proposed that in order to avoid ambiguity in its interpretation, point 7.7.34 should be amended to remove reference to ‘final examinations’. Members of the Committee agreed that feedback should be available to students at all times.

Action: Clerk

[Clerk’s Note: This proposed amendment to the AQH will be referred to the UCTL at their meeting to be held on 22 October 2014]

REMIT AND COMPOSITION
(copyright filed as QAC/240914/002)

2.1 The Committee noted that some errors in the remit had been identified, including out of date references to Student Course Evaluation Forms (SCEF). The Committee acknowledged that the remit would be circulated to members once updated.

2.2 The Committee discussed the possibility of including further reference within the remit to the Committee’s role in approving proposed Collaborative Partnerships.

2.3 In discussing the responsibilities of the Committee, members agreed to pursue the possibility of having a member of the Committee sit on the Advisory Group on Student Recruitment and Admissions (AGSRA) to ensure adherence to Quality Assurance.

Action: Clerk
4.1 The Committee noted the response from the School of Language and Literature to the Internal Teaching Review (ITR) report. Overall, the Committee was content with the report provided. The Committee found the response to be, on the whole, positive and were encouraged by the many commendations that the school were afforded.

4.2 Members of the Committee noted point 14.5 of the ITR report, which recommended:

...that the School, begins to monitor student progress and achievement in terms of racial, gender social or other groupings, according to usual practice.

Committee members discussed whether such a recommendation was possible, given the data the University holds for the student population. Some members of the Committee noted the importance of gathering such data. The Committee agreed to seek clarification of the requirements of the University from the University’s Equality and Diversity Team.

Action: Clerk

[Clerk’s Note: Janine Chalmers, Equality and Diversity Officer has clarified the following in regards to this issue:

Schools do not I undertake this work as part of 'usual practice'. Although in theory it would be useful for schools to know the profile of their students and the attainment rate of specific groups, this is more usually done at university level.

At present the University is having to collect data for Athena SWAN admissions and this work will highlight to schools any discrepancies around gender. We are also collecting data to support the report on our Equality Outcomes, which is legally required to be published next April, and if we noticed any significant patterns regarding a school we would have a discussion about that with them.

Further information/clarification can be provided to the Committee, if required.]

4.3 The Committee wished to convey their thanks to the Head of School and all involved in the ITR process.

(ii) School of Law

4.4 The Committee noted the response from the School of Law to the ITR report. As with the School of Language and Literature, overall, the Committee was content with the report provided. The Committee noted the process to have been taken seriously and were encouraged by the many commendations that the school were afforded.

4.5 The Committee noted the school to be very good and vibrant but noted concern over the staffing levels reported, reiterating the calls to the College for increased staffing as detailed within the report. The Committee, in particular, acknowledged the issue of dissertation
supervision as raised by the ITR panel. The Committee were encouraged by plans to consider the issue in the school’s action plan.

4.6 The Committee wished to convey their thanks to the Head of School and all involved in the ITR process and looked forward to the submission of the One Year Follow Up report.

(iii) School of Social Science

(copy filed as QAC/240914/003c)

4.7 The Committee noted the response from the School of Social Science to the ITR report. The Committee found the response and the action plan provided to be very detailed and helpful.

4.8 Members of the Committee noted the somewhat disparate nature of the school’s disciplines but also that of both a research-led teaching environment and very strong student engagement. The Committee noted some conflict in the approach to dissertation supervision but was heartened by the actions as laid out in the attached plan.

4.9 The Committee wished to convey their thanks to the Head of School and all involved in the ITR process.

4.10 The Committee, in considering all three ITR responses, noted the issue of dissertation supervision had been raised in more than once instance. In recognition of this, the Committee discussed the merits of a minimum number of meetings required between a student and their dissertation supervisor. Members of the Committee agreed that a ‘one size fits all’ approach was unlikely to suit each discipline.

4.11 Members of the Committee noted the decision of the Convenor of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL) to ask that, going forward, Heads of School should attend meetings of the QAC to present their ITR response. Members of the Committee agreed with the proposal, noting the positive impact of the ability to provide face to face feedback, thus closing the loop more effectively.

4.12 The Committee agreed that, taking into account the considerations of the Committee, appropriate responses should be provided for each school. Action: Clerk

[Clerk’s Note: The Schools of Language and Literature, Social Science and Law, have now all received responses from the Committee.]

COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

(copy filed as QAC/111013/004)

5.1 The Committee noted the proposed changes to the policy as currently being trialled. Members of the Committee acknowledged the extent to which the QAC is involved in the process. The Convener of the Committee informed members that a ‘Kaizen Blitz’ to address and simplify the process currently followed would shortly be convened after which, QAC would be updated on the revised process for implementation.

PROFESSIONAL STATUTORY BODY REPORTS

6.1 The Committee acknowledged that, in May 2013 the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL) took the decision that the QAC should review PSB reports as they were
received, in line with the requirements of the Scottish Funding Council and the Quality Assurance Agency. The Committee noted that this decision was made to ensure that any quality assurance aspects arising from the PSB accreditations and reviews were noted and acted upon as soon as possible.

6.2 The Committee noted that at a School/College level, it is the College who is responsible for collecting the reports from Schools, reviewing at the College Teaching & Learning Committee, noting the outcome and any actions required, and passing the reports to the QAC for consideration.

6.3 In line with this decision, the Committee would be updated shortly with information pertaining to PSBs and those for approval/consideration.

**FOR ROUTINE APPROVAL**

**STUDENTS’ PROGRESS COMMITTEE**
(copy filed as QAC/240914/006)

7.1 The Committee approved the remit and composition of the Undergraduate Students Progress Committee.

**STUDENTS’ PROGRESS COMMITTEE (MEDICINE & DENTISTRY)**
(copy filed as QAC/240914/007)

7.2 The Committee approved the remit and composition of the Students Progress Committee for Medicine and Dentistry, subject to confirmation that Mr Derek Auchie remains on the Committee in spite of his current sabbatical.

*Action: Clerk*

[Clerk’s Note: Mr Derek Auchie has been confirmed as continuing in his role as Convener to this Committee, despite his current sabbatical.]

**FITNESS TO PRACTISE COMMITTEE (MEDICINE & DENTISTRY)**
(copy filed as QAC/240914/008)

7.3 The Committee approved the remit and composition of the Fitness to Practise Committee for Medicine and Dentistry.

**FITNESS TO PRACTISE COMMITTEE (EDUCATION)**
(copy filed as QAC/240914/009)

7.4 The Committee approved the remit and composition of the Fitness to Practise Committee for the School of Education subject to the replacement of ‘Ms Joyce Clark’ for ‘Ms Mhairi Beaton’.

*Action: Clerk*

[Clerk’s Note: This amendment to the composition has now been made.]

**FOR INFORMATION**

**ITEMS UNDERTAKEN BY CIRCULATION**

8.1 A record of all items approved by the Quality Assurance Committee by way of Circulation and/or Convener’s Action can be found [here](#).
COURSE AND PROGRAMME PROPOSALS

8.2 A list of all Undergraduate courses and programmes approved since the last meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee can be found at the following link: http://www.abdn.ac.uk/senastracking/ascreport/undergraduate.php.

8.3 A list of all Postgraduate courses and programmes approved since the last meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee can be found at the following link: http://www.abdn.ac.uk/senastracking/ascreport/postgraduate.php.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 24 November at 2.00 p.m., in the Court Room, University Office.

AOCB

10.1 Members of the Committee acknowledged the issues arising from the recent registration week, noting that MyCurriculum had been largely unavailable for use. Members of the Committee noted concern that some students had actively sought out ‘advisers’ in terms of their curriculum choice. Members of the Committee noted concern that future provision would not allow for advising by any means.