

**UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNDERGRADUATE COMMITTEE**

Minute of the Meeting held on 4th April 2014

Present: Professor R Wells (Convener), Professor S Davies, Dr A Jenkinson, Dr M Law, Ms N Matthews, Dr G McEwan, Dr M Pinard, Mr I Robotham, Mr M Whittington, Dr A Widfeldt, Dr D Wood, Ms C McWilliams (Clerk)

Apologies: Mrs J Bruce, Professor A Lumsden, Professor P McGeorge, Dr R Miller, Dr R Patey, Dr J Perkins, Dr A Zangelidis,

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2014

- 1.1 The Committee approved the minutes of the meetings held on 10 January 2014 as an accurate representation of discussions held. The Committee noted a number of omissions from the list of names of those present. The minutes are to be amended accordingly.

(copy filed as UG/040414/001)

Action: Clerk

MY CURRICULUM NEW COURSE CATALOGUE SYSTEM

- 2.1 The Project Director of the One Source Project assisted by Mr I. Robotham, gave a presentation on the new course catalogue system and the proposed requirements from Schools for its completion. Software Developer, Mr I. Robotham, walked the Committee through the development site, identifying the key aspects of the site such as the initial subject list, 250 character student friendly course description and key word searching. The Committee was informed that the site is operational and adaptable to modern devices such as iPhones and iPads.

[Clerk's Note: The 250 character limit for the student friendly course description has since been reduced to between 80 and 100 characters.]

- 2.2 The Committee discussed the new course catalogue system in its current format. The Committee welcomed the suggestion that 'Session' be included as a filter in order to reduce the number of courses that students would have read through. The Committee was informed that it is the intention of the OneSource project that it is the system that will be sovereign where discrepancies exist between the course guides and the system. This is not projected to result in much difficulty as most information will be SENAS based and as such will be fixed with the exception of the course-co-ordinator and the 250 character course description.
- 2.3 The Committee discussed who would be best placed to have control over those fields which are not fixed. The Committee considered and discussed suggestions such as the school administration officer and course co-ordinator. The Committee agreed that guidance will be required for all those with access as to how these fields are to be used.
- 2.4 The Committee was advised that for those courses that run at two different levels, the site will require them to be listed separately. The Committee was informed therefore that Schools will be required to indicate when these courses will be taking place.

- 2.5 The Committee agreed that they were happy with the progression of the development site and wished to pass it's gratitude onto the OneSource Project team for their efforts.

MY CURRICULUM: SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

- 3.1 The Committee was advised that the University is looking into ways in which to facilitate problems that may arise as the *MyCurriculum* initiative is rolled out. The Committee was informed that a triage system, designed to provide adequate support for up to and during Freshers' week, is being considered to attend to those students who encounter problems when registering.
- 3.2 The Committee, expressed concern at the rising levels of anxiety amongst staff, students and personal tutors particularly in relation to complex curriculum cases that may not be solvable by *MyCurriculum*. The Convener informed the Committee that a communication plan is currently being developed to help address these concerns. The Committee was informed that part of this communication plan is to develop FAQs for the purposes of providing students with information as to what to do when their query cannot be addressed by *MyCurriculum*.
- 3.3 The Committee requested clarification in relation to the deadline for the return of marks for the summer resit diet.

Action: Clerk

[**Clerk's Note:** The Academic Year Implementation Group proposed that the deadline for the return of marks for the summer resit diet to 13th August 2014. This was approved by circulation by the University Committee on Teaching and Learning on Friday 20th December 2013. This date has now been published and is available on the University website.]

UPDATE TO ACADEMIC REPRESENTATIVE CODE OF PRACTICE & ONLINE ELECTIONS

- 4.1 The Committee noted the paper from the Aberdeen University's Student Association (AUSA) concerning current issues around Academic Reps. The paper required the Committee to consider a number of recommendations.
- (copy filed as UG/040414/002)*
- 4.2 The Committee discussed the recommendations particularly the proposed universal move to online elections in time for the 2014/15 Academic Year. The Committee was informed that the rationale behind the move was as a result of very successful pilot rep elections which saw 90% of available roles filled in the first year. The Committee also discussed the proposed new timetable which would require Student Staff Liaison Committees meet during Week 6 at the earliest as opposed to Week 5. The Committee was informed that the rationale behind this change was to ensure that there is sufficient time to provide all Academic reps with the necessary training and guidance.
- 4.3 The Committee, for it's part, agreed to support the recommendations put forward and will report this position to the University Committee on Teaching and Learning.

Action: Clerk

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

ENHANCEMENT-LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW (ELIR) OUTCOME REPORT

- 5.1 The Committee noted the Final Outcome Report of ELIR from the QAA. The Committee was grateful to all those who contributed to this process in particular to Katja Christie, Deputy Academic Registrar, for her role in creating the Reflective Analysis.

NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS) RESPONSE RATES

- 6.1 The Committee noted the paper regarding the NSS 2014 showing the response rates as of 31 March 2014. The Committee noted that while response rates thus far are disappointing, there is a brief period in which to address this as the survey is due to run until 30 April 2014.
- 6.2 The Committee was informed that problems had been encountered in relation to those students whose degree intention had changed after the data feed had been taken. This is believed to have affected a considerable number of students and may affect the overall response rate. The Committee agreed that action should be taken to ensure this does not happen again in future years.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 7.1 The date of next meeting of the Undergraduate Committee will be confirmed in due course.