ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2011

(Copy filed as QAC/301111/001)

1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2011 were approved as an accurate record of discussions held.

MATTERS ARISING

2.1 The Committee noted all action points arising from the last meeting had been taken forward appropriately.

SENAS APPROVAL PROCESS

3.1 Following on from discussions held at the September meeting of the QAC, the Committee agreed to divide the responsibilities for SENAS approval amongst members. The Committee agreed that it would not be appropriate for members to have responsibility for their own area of expertise. The Committee were informed of the area(s) of study they had been assigned and were informed that while every effort had been made to ensure the divide was as equal as possible, the split would remain under review. The Committee agreed that members would be responsible for undergraduate and postgraduate forms.

3.2 The Committee were assured that they would receive further information on the SENAS process by way of email and a training session with Registry Officers in attendance. The Committee were informed that the SENAS deadline, for courses to be revalidated at levels 3 and 4, has been moved to the 23rd December 2011.

Action: Clerk

Clerks note: Further to the meeting of the Committee, clarification on SENAS approval process was circulated to the Committee. Feedback on SENAS and the approval process will be discussed at a future meeting of the QAC.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY (QAA) UK QUALITY CODE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION:

EXTERNAL EXAMINING

(Copy filed as QAC/301111/002)

4.1 The Committee considered current University policy on External Examinining to ensure that the requirements of the new QAA publication are being met. The Committee made the following points and proposals:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QAA Requirement</th>
<th>Current University Policy</th>
<th>Proposed Amendment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter B7: External Examining</strong> of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education</td>
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<td>Institutions do not appoint as external examiners members of a governing body or committee of the appointing institution or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the appointing institution or one of its collaborative partners. <em>(Indicator 5b (i))</em></td>
<td>This is not currently stipulated in University policy.</td>
<td>It is proposed that the AQH be amended to include this requirement.</td>
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<td>Institutions do not appoint as external examiners former staff or students of the institution unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the external examiner have completed their programme(s). <em>(Indicator 5b (vi))</em></td>
<td>Former members of staff should not be invited to become external examiners before a lapse of at least three years or sufficient time for students taught by that member of staff to have passed through the system, whichever is longer. <em>(AQH, section 9.5.5)</em></td>
<td>It is proposed that the AQH be amended to state: ‘Former students or members of staff should not be invited to become external examiners before a lapse of at least five years, or sufficient time for all students taught by or with the external examiner have completed their programme(s), whichever is longer.’</td>
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<td>External examiners normally hold no more than two external examiner appointments for taught programmes/modules at any point in time. <em>(Indicator 5c)</em></td>
<td>Normally, external examiners should not hold more than two other external examinerships at first degree level while serving at the University, in order to have sufficient time for the performance of their functions. <em>(AQH, section 9.5.5)</em></td>
<td>It is proposed that the nomination form be amended to include a reminder that external examiners should not hold more than two other external examinerships. In addition it is proposed that the appointment letter be changed to stipulate that QAA requirements allow them to hold no more than two appointments at any point in time.</td>
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<td>Institutions ensure that all external examiners they appoint are informed about organisational procedures, practices, and academic regulations, and the crucial value of external examiners’ feedback to the institution as part of the broader system of quality assurance and enhancement. <em>(Indicator 6)</em></td>
<td>Section 9.7 of the AQH currently addresses the issue of training.</td>
<td>It is proposed that current policy is amended to allow for specific training for external examiners. The QAC acknowledged that discussions regarding changes to the training provided to external examiners are already underway between the Registry and the Centre for Learning and Teaching.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Institutions include the name, position and institution of their external examiners in module or programme information provided to students. <em>(Indicator 8)</em></td>
<td>This is not currently stipulated in University policy.</td>
<td>It is proposed that the AQH be amended to include this requirement.</td>
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**Action:** Clerk

*Clerks note: Further to the meeting of the Committee, the above comments were fed to UCTL. Work has begun to make the changes proposed by the QAC to University policy.*
5.1 The Committee considered the business case, course and programme proposal forms for the MSc in Economics of Health, paying particular attention to the proposal that students admitted to this programme be permitted to resit. The Committee noted that this proposal was made on the understanding that the MSc was a conversion course and that those undertaking it would have little or no background in Economics. The Committee noted concern that the entry requirements, laid out in the proposal, asked for a 2:1 in Economics, disputing the argument that this was a conversion course. While in agreement that the programme proposal was acceptable, the Committee requested further information on the entry requirements for the degree before taking a decision on whether or not to approve the programme.

Action: Convener

Clerks note: Further to the meeting of the Committee, clarification on the entry requirements to the degree programme was provided to the Convener and the MSc was approved by Convener's action.

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN COLLEGE ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11
(Copy filed as QAC/301111/004)

6.1 The Committee considered the annual report submitted by the International Christian College and noted the following points:

- The Committee wished to pass on its thanks to the College for submission of the report, following the re-validation last year in 2010.
- Overall, the report received positive responses from the Committee.
- The Committee noted that student feedback levels could be improved upon.
- The Committee recommend that the College use eRegistration to smooth the registration process.
- The Committee agreed with the point raised by the College that a sole contact at the University would ease communication issues. The Committee noted that Sarah James in Registry would fulfil this role.
- The Committee noted some concern over the CV provided for the new staff member and commented that it was slender in content. The Committee would ask ICC to clarify what this member of staff will be involved in at the College.
- The Committee noted concern over the College’s lack of active research record.
- The Committee noted concern over the opportunity for staff development.

AL-MAKTOUTM COLLEGE ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11
(Copy filed as QAC/301111/005)

7.1 The Committee considered the annual report submitted by the Al-Maktoum College and noted the following points:

- Firstly, the Committee noted concern that the report had been received late and that no six monthly report had been submitted.
- The Committee noted concern that a significant amount of detail appeared to be missing from the report. For example, the Committee noted concern that there were no Student Course Evaluation Forms (SCEFs) or copies of External Examiners reports included in the report.
- The Committee noted serious concern over the number of Academic staff the College has and as a consequence, the number of students each Academic staff member is supervising.
- The Committee noted concern over the opportunity for staff development.
- The Committee were concerned to note talk of expansion, despite ongoing staffing issues.

Action: Clerk
8.1 The Committee considered the request from the School of Education to allow the award of PhD by publication. The Committee noted that if this were to be permitted, its effects would be University wide. The Committee noted that guidance for such a qualification would differ depending on the field of study. The Committee agreed to the proposal in principal and recommended that the issue be passed to the Postgraduate Committee for further investigation.

ITEMS FOR ROUTINE APPROVAL

REGULATORY CHANGES

9.1 The Committee noted that the Undergraduate and Postgraduate regulatory changes for 2012/13 would be circulated for approval as soon as possible.

STATEMENT OF INTENT SOCIO-LEGAL STUDIES CENTRE FOR RURAL CHILDHOOD, PERTH COLLEGE UHI

9.2 The Committee approved in principle the Statement of Intent for the area of Socio-Legal Studies from UHI.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

AGREEMENTS WITH SHANDONG JIANZHU UNIVERSITY, CHINA

10.1 The Committee noted the proposals for 3 agreements with Shandong Jianzhu University, China as approved by Convenors action.

BA SOCIAL PEDAGOGY (BASP) PROGRAMME CVS

10.2 The Committee noted the Convenor had been considering Staff CVs for the BASP programme.

COURSE AND PROGRAMME PROPOSALS

10.3 A list of all Undergraduate courses and programmes approved by Convener’s Action since the March meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee can be found at the following link: http://www.abdn.ac.uk/senastracking/ascreport/undergraduate.php.

A list of all Postgraduate courses and programmes approved by Convener’s Action since the March 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

11.1 The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 14 March at 2 p.m in the Videoconferencing Suite, University Office.