

## UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING & LEARNING

### Minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2006

Present: Ms CA Macaslan (Convener), Professor MA Cotter, Dr P Edwards, Mr J Hardey, Mrs M Pearson, Professor T Salmon and Dr M Young with Ms K Christie, Mr D Paterson (*vice* Mrs J McAndrews), Dr A Reid (*vice* Mr P Haley), Dr G Mackintosh, Dr D Comber (*vice* Ms P Spence) and Dr R Bernard (Clerk) in attendance

Apologies for absence were received from Professor G Burgess, Dr WF Long, Dr W Naphy, Mr M Radford, Dr P Schlicke, Professor G Seymour, Mrs L Stephen, Professor G Walkden, Professor FB Watson, and Dr T Webb

The Convener welcomed the members of the Committee to the first meeting of the new session (2006/07) and in particular welcomed those new members attending for the first time. It was noted that Dr McCausland had stood down from the Committee. The Convener thanked Dr McCausland for his hard work and the contribution he had made to the work of the Committee.

### MINUTES

55. The minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2006 were approved.  
(*copy filed as UCTL/271006/34*)

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- 56.1 The Committee noted that work was progressing with Personal Development Planning (PDP) (minute 36.1 refers) and that the Working Group were taking the project forward to the pilot stage.
- 56.2 The Committee noted that Human Resources had confirmed that it was not appropriate for individual members of staff to be named in Part B of the new SCEF form (minute 39.2 refers).
- 56.3 It was noted that the College of Arts and Social Sciences had submitted a paper on the Common Assessment Scale and Levels Descriptors in response to the Interim Report from the Working Group on CAS (minute 40.1 refers). The Committee further noted that the paper would be forwarded to the Working Group on CAS for consideration. A response would be brought to the Committee in due course.  
**Action: WG on CAS**
- 56.4 It was noted that the changes to the *Postgraduate Grade Spectrum*, were not yet reflected in the Academic Quality Handbook (minute 44.2). The Registry undertook to rectify this.  
**Action: Clerk**
- 56.5 The Committee were pleased to note that changes made to the advising and registration system had, in general, worked well (minute 48 refers). Dr Young reported that, from his perspective as an adviser, the new venue and the electronic system had been a success. Prof Salmon raised concerns regarding comments he had received from students who felt that the service was not as personal. The Convener agreed to test this comment through the various student focus groups which are ongoing as part of other work.
- 56.6 The Convener informed the Committee that the University was part of a consortium which had successfully bid for money as part of the First Year Enhancement Theme to develop case studies on PDP (minute 49.2).

## **DRAFT RESPONSE TO THE SECOND CONSULTATION DOCUMENT ON UK DEGREE CLASSIFICATION**

- 57.1 The Committee received the draft response to the second Consultation Document on UK Degree Classification.

*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/35)*

- 57.2 In approving the draft response the Committee reiterated their concerns, raised during the initial consultation exercise, undertaken during 2005/06. The Committee wished to stress its view that whichever system is adopted by the sector, institutional autonomy to determine how classifications are arrived at, should be maintained. It was noted that the current system enables a diverse approach to assessment in order to derive degree class, but the use of the External Examiner system ensures a level of inter-institution consistency. The Committee would not wish to see a change to this position.

### **UPDATE ON CLASS REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM**

- 58.1 The Committee received an update on the class representative system.

*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/36)*

- 58.2 The Committee noted that plans were well in hand for the training sessions, scheduled for 30 & 31 October, to be offered to new class representatives by the Students' Association (SA). The outcome of the training sessions will be reviewed by the SA in due course. In addition, progress was being made, through the Centre for Learning & Teaching, towards being able to provide online training for class reps.. It was further noted that representatives from the SA would be meeting with the appropriate Assistant College Registrars to agree a uniform system for the provision of information regarding elected class reps.

- 58.3 It was agreed that the SA would provide Schools with the details of students who had been trained as class reps by the SA on request.

- 58.4 It was further noted that the University is participating (together with the Universities of Dundee, Edinburgh, Strathclyde and Heriot Watt University) in a project looking at supporting effective postgraduate engagement in institutional quality assurance and enhancement systems, being run by sparqs.

### **ADVISORY BOARD ON LEARNING & TEACHING**

- 59.1 The Committee received a paper on the proposed remit and membership of the Advisory Board for Learning & Teaching.

*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/46)*

- 59.2 The Committee noted that the Advisory Board was being proposed to facilitate the strategic planning process, in particular to enable alignment of institutional plans with those of the three Colleges. It was intended that the Board would identify items for strategic discussion which would be brought to UCTL.

- 59.3 Whilst the Committee agreed that there was sense in bringing together many of the subgroups formerly overseen by the UCTL, concerns were expressed that the UCTL should not be simply endorsing decisions taken elsewhere. It was agreed that it should be made clearer in the remit of the Board that its role should be to bring forward ideas for wider debate, and that the UCTL remains the decision-making body.

**Action: CM**

- 59.4 Issues were raised regarding the proposed membership of the Advisory Board.

- 59.5 It was agreed that the issues raised would be considered with a view to a revised version of the remit and membership being circulated to the Committee prior to the next meeting.

**Action: CM**

### **MONITORING STUDENTS' PROGRESS AND CLASS CERTIFICATE REFUSAL**

- 60.1 The Committee approved the criteria for consideration of students' appeals against (i) being deemed withdrawn through student monitoring and (ii) class certificate refusal.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/37)*
- 60.2 The Committee noted that concern had been expressed by Heads of School that the guidance given on the revised combined system of monitoring and class certificates made the process seem overly complex, and that there was still some confusion over the timings of the various events within the process. It was agreed that the Registry would work with Schools in order to clarify the situation.

### **GUIDANCE NOTE ON STUDENT COMPLAINTS**

- 61.1 The Committee approved amendments to the Guidance Note on Student Complaints made further to issues arising during a recent complaint hearing.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/38)*
- 61.2 Professor Salmon requested clarification on the status of any comments made by students during complaint, appeal or discipline hearings: can such comments be regarded as being made under, 'privileged' conditions? It was agreed that Professor guidance opinion would be sought on the matter.

**Action: Clerk**

### **TERM DATES**

62. The Committee approved the Dates of Term for 2007-2008, and, provisionally, those for the sessions to 2016-2017.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/39)*

### **EXAM DEADLINES**

63. The Committee approved the latest dates for the return of exam results for session 2006/07.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/40)*

### **REMIT AND COMPOSITION 2006/07**

- 64.1 The Committee noted the remit and composition for 2006/07.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/41)*
- 64.2 The Committee further noted that the newly formed Senate Business Committee (SBC) has been tasked with monitoring the effectiveness of Senate and its subcommittees. As part of this monitoring process the Convener of the UCTL is required to report annually on meeting attendance. The SBC is currently reviewing attendance during the last two sessions (2004/05 & 2005/06). The Convener will keep the Committee informed of any relevant conclusions.

### **DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME**

65. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the University is required to publish a Disability Equality Scheme by 4 December 2006. Following an extensive consultation

exercise, the Committee noted that an updated draft, including an action plan, would be considered by the Court on 31 October. Copies of this draft are available from the Registry on request.

#### **ENHANCEMENT-LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW FOLLOW-UP REPORT**

66. The Committee noted the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review Follow-Up Report which had been submitted to the Quality Assurance Agency in September 2006.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/42)*

#### **UPDATES TO QAA CODE OF PRACTICE**

- 67.1 The Committee noted that the QAA had published revisions to Sections 6 and 7 of the Code of Practice. The revised Section 6: Assessment of Students, and Section 7: Programme Design, Approval, Monitoring and Approval are available at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/default.asp>

- 67.2 Changes contained within these revised Sections would be considered by the Registry and any changes required would be brought to future meetings of the Committee.

#### **UPDATE ON THE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE ENHANCEMENT THEME**

68. The Committee noted the update from Dr W David McCausland on the QAA First Year Experience Enhancement Theme.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/43)*

#### **ENHANCEMENT THEMES NEWSLETTER**

69. The Committee noted the first edition of the new enhancement themes newsletter which can be downloaded from the enhancement theme website:

[http://www.enhancementscotland.ac.uk/uploads/documents/0906\\_ethemes\\_newsltr\\_vol1issue1.pdf](http://www.enhancementscotland.ac.uk/uploads/documents/0906_ethemes_newsltr_vol1issue1.pdf)

#### **ANNUAL INSTITUTIONAL STATEMENT ON INTERNAL REVIEW ACTIVITY: 2005/06**

70. The Committee noted the Annual Institutional Statement on Internal Review Activity: 2005/06, submitted to the Scottish Funding Council in October 2006.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/44)*

#### **REGISTER OF STRATEGIC RISKS**

71. The Committee noted an update to the University's Register of Strategic Risks in regard to Market Exposure : Teaching, the element for which UCTL acts as the monitoring committee.  
*(copy filed as UCTL/271006/45)*

## GRADUATION DATES

72. The Committee noted the dates and allocation for the November ceremonies as summarised below, approved by the Convener of the UCTL during the summer:

Friday 24 November at 11 a.m. – Higher Degrees in Arts & Social Sciences

Friday 24 November at 3 p.m. – Higher and First Degrees in Science

Saturday 25 November at 11 a.m. – First Degrees in Arts & Social Sciences and First and Higher Degrees in Education, Engineering, Divinity, Law and Medicine

## CHANGE TO SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATION 8 FOR THE PROFESSIONAL GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (PGDE)

73. The Committee noted changes to the PGDE regulations approved by the Convener of the UCTL during the summer. The changes, shown in bold italics below, had been made to clarify, and make more explicit, the procedures leading up to programme termination and to bring the regulation in line with Supplementary Regulation 7.

“Candidates on the PGDE (Secondary) programme whose performance is judged to be unsatisfactory in ***either (but not both)*** of School Experience 1 and School Experience 2, as detailed in the Schedule of Courses appended to these regulations, may be allowed to progress and make good any unsatisfactory performance in ***the immediately*** subsequent period of School Experience. If performance is judged to be satisfactory in that subsequent period, credit will be awarded for School Experience 1 or School Experience 2 as appropriate. Candidates who fail to complete satisfactorily School Experience 3 may, exceptionally, be given an opportunity to repeat School Experience 3 with the permission of the Director of Undergraduate Programmes (Education). ***Candidates whose performance is judged to be unsatisfactory in two periods of School Experience are not normally allowed to progress; and termination of their candidature will be recommended.***”