

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING & LEARNING**

**DRAFT Minute of the meeting held on 25 January 2012**

*Present:* Professor P McGeorge (Convener), Ms J Batty, Ms T Birley, Dr B Connolly, Dr S Davies, Mr P Fantom, Mr B Lockhart, Dr G Mackintosh, Dr J Morrison, Professor W Naphy, Mr D Paterson, Dr K Shennan, Ms P Spence, Dr R Wells, Dr R Bernard (Clerk), Ms E Hay (Minute Secretary)

*Apologies:* Ms J Bjorkqvist

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2011**

*(UCTL/250112/001)*

- 13.1 The minute of the meeting held on the 21 October 2011 was approved as an accurate record of discussions held.

**COLLABORATIVE PROVISION**

*(UCTL/250112/002)*

- 14.1 The Committee considered the proposed changes to the administration of collaborative provision. The Committee noted that the paper had yet to be considered by the University Management Group (UMG) and, as such, the paper was very much in draft form at this stage.
- 14.2 The Committee agreed that current arrangements were complicated and noted that the new proposal was intended not only to improve this but also to provide strategic oversight to the process. The Committee were informed that the new process had been proposed based on research conducted into how other institutions, including the Universities of York, Durham and Exeter, deal with their collaborative provision. The Committee noted the proposals for a new, risk based process, with the desired outcome to identify those proposals which were high risk.
- 14.3 The Committee were informed that the paper would come back to UCTL for further discussion following consideration at UMG.

**PERSONAL TUTOR UPDATE**

*(Oral Update)*

- 15.1 The Convener updated the Committee on the Working Group on Enhancing Student Support and the Personal Tutor paper which has now been written following discussions at the group. The Committee noted that the paper would be circulated to the UCTL at the March meeting of the Committee.
- 15.2 The Convener reported to the Committee that the paper proposed a new model of advising students, led by the introduction of Personal Tutors. The Committee noted the following proposals:
- All members of staff being required to act as personal tutors, ensuring staff have responsibility for fewer students, allowing for a better and more consistent staff student relationship.
  - Recognising the need for Pastoral Support
  - Recognising the need for Curricular advice and, therefore, more detailed IT support.
  - Proposal to expect a minimum number of interactions between a Personal Tutor and Student.
  - The discussion of topics including graduate attributes, feedback and employability.

- 15.3 The Committee noted that, if approved by Senate, it is hoped that the process will be implemented in September 2013. The Committee noted the importance of implementing a new process effectively.

### **INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT SURVEY**

*(UCTL/250112/003)*

- 16.1 The Committee considered the paper on the Institutional Student Survey (ISS). The Committee noted the proposal to survey students before they were required to undertake the National Student Survey (NSS) at the end of their degree programme. The Committee noted that students who complete the NSS have graduated by the point at which the University receives their responses and, as such, is unable to implement any changes arising from the feedback provided. The Committee noted that the new survey would be designed to survey students at lower levels with similar questions to those included in the NSS and to respond to their feedback.
- 16.2 Members of the Committee did note some concern over the 'survey fatigue' of students and hoped that care would be taken to ensure that surveys did not run at the same time.
- 16.3 The Committee noted concern over the issue of students taking courses outwith their degree programmes for which they may have negative feedback which would be fed back to the School in which their degree programme lies. The Convenor acknowledged this issue.
- 16.4 The Committee agreed that the concerns raised were concerns that were perhaps unavoidable and noted that they can also affect the NSS. The Committee agreed to approve the ISS. The Convenor confirmed that the issue will now be sent to Senate for approval.

### **THE STAR AWARD AND THE HIGHER FOUNDATION ACHIEVEMENT RECORD**

*(UCTL/250112/004)*

- 17.1 Following its consideration in October 2011, the Committee considered a revised version of the paper on the STAR award and the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR).
- 17.2 The Committee noted concern over the third section proposed and the inclusive of non-assessed roles. Members of the Committee expressed concern over the opening of section 3 to include to any membership of a group a student may hold.
- 17.3 Following discussion, the Committee agreed that as the third section could cause conflict or allow for inconsistency, subject to consultation, the University should make no return under section 3. The Director of Academic Affairs and the President of the Students Association agreed to consult on this issue with the HEAR group and the Students Association respectively.

**ACTION: TB, GM**

### **UPDATE ON THE OPERATION OF THE CLASS REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM**

- 18.1 The Committee were informed that the update on the operation of the Class Representative System had been postponed to the March meeting of the UCTL.

### **REPORT FROM THE SUBCOMMITTEES**

*(Oral Update)*

#### **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

- 19.1 The Convenor of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) reported to the Committee on discussions held at the last meeting, which took place on the 30 November 2011. It was confirmed that the members of the QAC had held discussions on issues including, changes to SENAS approval process, changes to External Examining requirements (as set out by the QAA in their revised code of practice) and a proposal for PhD by publication. The QAC also

discussed annual reports received from the International Christian College (ICC) and Al-Maktoum College (ALMI).

## **POSTGRADUATE**

- 19.2 The Convenor of the Postgraduate Committee reported to the Committee that discussions were currently ongoing regarding the new PG admissions system and postgraduate taught fees. The Committee was also informed that postgraduate graduate attributes remained a subject of ongoing discussion.

## **UNDERGRADUATE**

- 19.3 The Convenor of the Undergraduate Committee reported to the Committee on discussions held at the last meeting, which took place on the 9 December 2011. It was confirmed that the members of the UG committee had held discussions on proposed changes to resit opportunities, advanced entry to degree programmes and academic writing. The UG committee also updated the UCTL on Programme Advisory Boards (PABs).

## **RISK REGISTER**

- 20.1 The Committee noted the importance of the Risk Register and agreed that it should become a standing item on future UCTL agendas. The Committee requested that Emma Forster be invited to a future meeting of the Committee to explain the workings of the Risk Register. The Committee agreed to pass any further comments on the Register to Dr Gillian Mackintosh.

## **ADVANCED ENTRY**

*(UCTL/250112/006)*

- 21.1 On the recommendation of the Undergraduate Committee and following discussion by Heads of School the Committee approved the proposals in relation to advanced entry.

## **EXTERNAL EXAMINING**

*(UCTL/250112/007)*

- 22.1 On the recommendation of the Quality Assurance Committee and following discussion by Heads of School the Committee approved the proposals in relation to external examining.

## **COMPENSATORY CREDITS FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE CONVERSION PROGRAMMES**

- 23.1 On the recommendation of the Postgraduate Committee the Committee approved the proposals in relation to compensatory credits.

*(UCTL/250112/008)*

## **OMNIBUS RESOLUTION**

*(UCTL/250112/009)*

- 24.1 The Committee approved the draft Resolution 'Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees'. The Resolution enacts the changes in degree regulations recommended by the Quality Assurance Committee since March 2011 which have not been the subject of separate resolutions. The Committee is further delegated authority to the Convener to approve any amendments required subsequent to this meeting.

## **GRADUATION DATES**

*(UCTL/250112/010, to follow)*

- 25.1 The Committee approved the dates and allocations of students for the July 2012 Graduation ceremonies.

## **MYABERDEEN ACCESS FOR STUDENTS REFUSED CLASS CERTIFICATES**

- 26.1 Following discussion at the Quality Assurance Committee, and with relevant staff, the Committee agreed with the proposal that students who lose Class Certificates (C7) also lose access to MyAberdeen. In the event that a student appeals the C7, Schools will liaise with the Centre for Learning and Teaching to ensure that students are reinstated and have the necessary access pending the outcome of the appeal.

## **TERM DATES**

- 27.1 The Committee note the following amendments to the dates of term for the MBChB, approved by Convener's action since the last meeting:

2011/12	Third Year Summer Term closes Friday 27 July 2012
2012/13	Third Year Winter Term opens Monday 10 September 2012 Third Year Summer Term closes Friday 26 July 2013

## **AGREEMENTS**

- 28.1 The Committee noted that the University has signed agreements to establish programmes as follows:

Shandong Jianzhu University: 2 + 2 Honours Degree Programme in English Language and Literature

Shandong Finance University: 1 + 1 MLitt in English Linguistics for Advanced Teachers of English

Shandong University: 1 + 1 MLitt in English Linguistics for Advanced Teachers of English

The Memoranda of Agreements were approved by Convener's Action.

The Committee noted that the University has signed an agreement with TMC Academy PTE Ltd to deliver the MBA in Singapore.

## **REVISED UK PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FRAMEWORK**

- 29.1 The UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning (UKPSF) was launched in 2006, following consultation across the UK. Details of the Framework can be found at <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf>

The Framework sets out a series of five broad Areas of Activity:

1. Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study.
2. Teach and/or support learning.
3. Assess and give feedback to learners.
4. Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance.
5. Engage in continuing professional development in subjects / disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices.

against which staff at various stages in their career can benchmark their teaching duties against four level descriptors. The UKPSF is administered on behalf of the sector by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). The Framework has recently been updated and was relaunched on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011.

The University of Aberdeen currently offers two formal programmes which are accredited by the Higher Education Academy and are aligned with the UKPSF:

1. The Teaching Programme for Postgraduates and Early Career Researchers. Successful completion of this programme confers Associate Fellowship of the HEA.
2. The Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Learning & Teaching. Successful completion of the first 30 credit course of this Programme confers Associate Fellowship of the HEA, with Fellowship conferred upon completing both 30 credit component courses.

Details about both of these Programmes is available online at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/clt/programmes/>, or for further information contact the Programme Co-ordinator, Dr Darren Comber ([d.comber@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:d.comber@abdn.ac.uk)), Centre for Learning & Teaching.

### **QAA ENHANCEMENT THEMES**

- 30.1 The Committee noted The QAA Enhancement Theme, 'Graduates for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' has produced its final outcomes report. This is available from [www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk](http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk). Hard copies have been sent to the Institutional Team for the new theme, 'Developing and Supporting the Curriculum' which includes the College Directors of Learning & Teaching and additional college representation.

The Committee is asked to note the attached updated on the current QAA Enhancement Theme, 'Developing and Supporting the Curriculum'.  
(UCTL/250112/011)

### **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

- 31.1 The next meeting will be held as follows:

An extraordinary meeting of the UCTL will be held on Wednesday 21 March 2012 at 2pm in Committee Room 2, University Office.