UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Minute of the Meeting held on 30 January 2018

Present: Professor P McGeorge (Convener), Dr T Baker, Ms D Connolly, Professor H Hutchison, Professor A Jenkinson, Professor C Kee, Mr O Kucerak, Professor E Pavlovskaia, Professor K Shennan and Professor R Wells with Dr R Bernard, Ms K Christie, Ms N Kinchin-Williams, Dr G Mackintosh, Dr J Perkins and Ms E Hay (Clerk) in attendance

Apologies: Mr C Duncan, Dr B Scharlau, Dr S Tucker and Ms P Spence

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER 2017
(copy filed as UCTL/300118/001)

1.1   The Committee approved the minute of the meeting held on 8 November 2017. The Committee agreed that the minute was representative of discussions held.

HEALTH & SAFETY

2.1   The Committee identified no specific issues arising relating to Health and Safety.

UPDATE TO CODE OF PRACTICE ON STUDENT DISCIPLINE (ACADEMIC)
(copy filed as UCTL/300118/002)

3.1   The Committee received the paper on proposed changes to the Code of Practice on Student Discipline (Academic). Professor Jenkinson, introducing the paper, noted that feedback on the use of the Code of Practice from Schools had resulted in the changes proposed, specifically relating to the treatment of suspected offences of Plagiarism and how these are resolved at School level.

3.2   The Committee acknolwegded the proposed two stage structure and its emphasis on a more educational approach in response to first instances of plagiarism so students can be instructed on best steps to avoid future instances. Additionally the Committee noted that Schools are currently unable to take into account mitigating circumstances of their students and a desire to permit this has been evidenced across the Schools.

3.3   Members of the Committee expressed their support for a more educational approach, however, noted concern of a lack of differentiation between new students and those in the later stages of their studies. Members expressed concern that students may use the revised process to their advantage and stated that it would be more appropriate for Schools to have the flexibility to exercise discretion based on circumstances specific to a case.

3.4   The Committee acknowledged feedback from the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Committees that the proposed process was too informal. They noted a revised proposal, to merge the two stages, in order to maintain current processes but to also to allow for for increased mitigation and an educational approach, where appropriate.

3.5   The Committee recognised the importance of acknowledging that students enter the University at all levels and that mitigation and education may be appropriate to any student, regardless of the programme year at which they are registered.

3.6   The Committee specifically noted that appropriate consideration should be given to (i) the sharing of information across Schools and (ii) consistency of approach with regards to mitigation. The Committee further noted the importance of training Heads of School and their delegates.

3.7   The Committee, for its part, approved the changes as discussed and asked that an appropriately revised Code of Practice be drafted and returned to the Committee for approval.

Action: Professor Jenkinson/Clerk

LECTURE CAPTURE POLICY

(copy filed as UCTL/300118/003)

4.1   The Committee discussed the updated version of the proposed lecture capture policy and the draft supporting evidence paper. The Committee acknowledged revisions to the paper following feedback from the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Committees.

4.2   The Committee supported the proposal that where a decision is taken not to record a lecture or a series of lectures, it is the responsibility of the individual lecturer(s) to explain the reasoning for this to students. The Committee encouraged the use of handouts and/or a written summary of a lecture where a recording will not be taken.

4.3   Members of the Committee noted the importance of the appropriate standard of recording facilities in order to support the recording of lectures.

4.4   The Committee noted the importance of educating staff and students in making the best possible use of recordings. The Committee noted that recordings would not be used for management purposes.

4.5   With regards to point 1 of the proposed policy, the Committee approved a revision to read as follows:

Staff should record all lectures unless there is a particular reason not to. Opt out may be appropriate if a large part of the lecture:

4.6   The Committee expressed concern as to how the University community could be assured of the security of recordings. The Committee noted that it would be preferential not to permit the download of material and that students should be required to destroy recordings at the end of their studies.

[Clerk's Note: Following the meeting of the UCTL, the following text was provided with regards to the security of recordings:

Panopto *digital capture software can be used to record lectures in a Panopto enabled lecture theatre or classroom, or to record digital content and presentations at your desk. All data is recorded to the cloud where it is encrypted and is accessed by secure passwords.*

Panopto have completed IT Services' third parties data protection questionnaire. The questionnaire comprehensively assesses how a supplier processes, stores or transfers personal

information. The answers provided were scrutinised by security experts within ITS and based on the assessment of risk Panopto are considered to have an acceptable level of data controls.

For further security details please contact the IT Service Desk.]

4.7   For its part, the Committee approved the Lecture Capture Policy and agreed that it should now progress to the Senate for consideration.

Action: Convener/Clerk

ONLINE EDUCATION

ONLINE ADMISSION PROCESS AND ACADEMIC SCRUTINY
(copy filed as UCTL/300118/004a)

5.1   The Committee received the paper on the Online Admissions Process and Academic Scrutiny. The Committee noted the following points:

- The Committee supported the proposed maximum of two course enrolments on a self-assessment basis with successful completion of these enabling a student to proceed
- The Committee noted that self-assessment should be course specific, however, should not attempt to gauge a student's understanding of the content of their course but their suitability to undertake it. (i.e. Evidence of study in the area, appropriateness of the level of study).
- The Committee noted the impact creating self-assessments may have on staff workload. The Committee agreed the importance of having appropriate guidance available centrally for staff and generic self-assessment content available for use, where appropriate.

For its part, the Committee approved the paper, however, agreed that it should be considered by the sub-Committees of the UCTL by way of circulation in advance of its consideration by the Senate.

SHORT COURSE APPROACH AND MAXIMUM PERIOD OF STUDY
(copy filed as UCTL/300118/004b)

5.2   The Committee received the paper on the Short Course Approach and Maximun Period of Study. The Committee noted that this issue had been raised at the Senate. The Committee considered the paper and made the following points:

- The Committee agreed that those registering on a short course basis (i.e. studying in a building block approach) should not be bound by any maximum time-limit for completion of a programme. Those studying in this way would be given no guarantee that a specific degree would be available on completion but at the end of their studies students would be able to receive the appropriate degree available at the time. In this regard, the Committee agreed more generic exit routes should be available in disciplines (e.g. MSc in Engineering Studies) to provide a fall back exit award for those where no other programme were available or the combination of courses taken does not fit with a more prescribed award.
- The Committee also agreed that for those registering on a programme basis (rather than short course basis) the existing defined maximum period of study would continue to.

For its part, the Committee approved the paper, however, agreed that it should be considered by the sub-Committees of the UCTL by way of circulation in advance of its consideration by the Senate.

MINIMUM COURSE INFORMATION
(copy filed as UCTL/300118/004c)

5.3   Finally, the Committee received the paper on minimum course information. Overall, the Committee were content to approve the paper though noted that information on more generic support arrangements (as detailed under 'Helping the Students' on the paper in Appendix A) might better be provided centrally in MyAberdeen as part of induction information for all online learners to ensure consistency and reduce the burden on Schools. The Committee agreed that the paper should also be considered by the sub-Committees of the UCTL in advance of its consideration by the Senate.

ELIR CONTEXTULISATION
(copy filed as UCTL/300118/005)

6.1   The Committee received the proposed ELIR contextualisation and noted the changes to the ELIR process by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Scotland to set the review in context, in order to allow the panel to focus on those areas that will be of greatest benefit and to allow the University to gain the greatest benefit from preparing the Reflective Analysis.

6.2   Overall, the Committee were content to approve the paper, however, noted the importance of the paper being more explicit in its description of the diversifying of the student population and its recognition that such diversifying is already underway.

Action: Clerk

UPDATE ON THE ENHANCED TRANSCRIPT
(copy filed as UCTL/300118/006)

7.1   The Committee received and agreed to approve the proposal that students recruited as Non-Medical Personal Assistants, who have met defined criteria (30 hours of support in any one academic year), receive recognition for their role within the Enhanced Transcript under 'recognised activities' for the remainder of academic 2017/18, and continuing in academic year 2018-19.

7.2   The Committee further received an update from Dr Perkins on (i) the approved roles for inclusion on the Enhanced Transcript and (ii) the process for the proposal of a new role to be added to the list. The Committee acknowledged the webpages as maintained by the Careers Service here and here as helpful resources for staff and students in this regard. The Committee asked if it was possible to receive notification of how many people access the Enhanced Transcript webpages.

7.3   The Committee noted that it may be appropriate to allow for more flexibility in the criteria for roles as listed. The Committee agreed to the addition of 'normally' in the line: *Must be an established University co-curricular role/activity* which has been running for at least 1 year.The Committee further agreed that the* wording of the webpages should be kept (within the constraints of Quality Assured activities) open and that conversations between staff, students and the Careers Service should be encouraged in this regard.

Action: Clerk/Dr Perkins/Ms Kinchin-Williams

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8.1   The Committee noted that th enext meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 28 March 2018 at 2pm, in Committee Room 2, University Office.

OMNIBUS RESOLUTION

9.1   The Committee noted that the draft Resolution. 'Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees', enacting changes in degree regulations recommended by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) would follow by way of circulation.

ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING

(copy filed as UCTL/300118/008)

9.2   The Committee approved, for its part, the proposed review of policies and practices for accessible and inclusive learning. The Committee specifically noted the following points:

- The composition the working group, should include student representation;
- With regards the consideration of the how the VLE can best be deployed to support students with learning differences, the Committee would ask that this be done in conjunction with the ongoing review of the VLE and the team undertaking this work;
- The Committee noted that the timeline for the working group was very tight and would ask that it be ensured that the timeline set is feasible and does not set the group an unachievable deadline.

Action: Clerk/Professor Hutchison

FEEDBACK FRAMEWORK

(copy filed as UCTL/300118/009)

9.3   The Committee approved, for its part, the attached draft Institutional Framework for Feedback on Assessment prepared by the Feedback and Assessment Task Force. The Committee asked if it was possible to add a cover paper to the framework, providing specific detail on (i) how the new framework differs from the previous version and (ii) how the group intends to disseminate and measure the impact of the framework.

Action: Clerk/Dr Baker

PGR EXPECTATIONS

(copy filed as UCTL/300118/011)

9.4   The Committee approved, for its part, the attached paper on PGR Expectations.

Action: Clerk

UPDATES AND MINUTES FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

(i)   Quality Assurance   *(copy filed as UCTL/300118/010a)*
(ii) Quality Assurance Committee Annual Report to the UCTL
                                                      (copy filed as UCTL/300118/010b)
(iii) Postgraduate Taught   *(copy filed as UCTL/300118/010c)*
(iv) Undergraduate   *(copy filed as UCTL/300118/010d)*

10.1   The Committee received the minutes from the Sub-Committees and, in particular, the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) Annual Report to the Committee. The Committee acknowledged the importance of the QAC report and agreed that it be an item for discussion at the next meeting of the Committee. In particular, the Committee noted the following issues from the report, to be further expanded on by way of discussion at the next meeting:

- Analysis of Degree Classifications following External Examiner feedback;
- Concerns raised by External Examiners regarding staffing levels;
- The training of External Examiners. In the meantime, the Committee asked that the QAC give consideration to the recently published HEA Briefing note on the Degree Standards project which may be helpful in this regard.

Action: Clerk/Professor Shennan

POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT STUDENT EXPERIENCE

10.2   The Committee received a brief update on work being undertaken to provide a report on the Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Student Experience. The Committee noted the intention to use metrics including, but not limited to, survey results, employability and distribution of results. The Committee acknowledged the intention to bring a paper detailing the process by which the PGT experience will be measured to the next meeting of the Committee, following discussion and approval at the Postgraduate Taught Committee.

Action: Professors Kee and Pavlovskaia

UPDATE ON THE VLE REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT
(copy filed as UCTL/300118/012)

10.3   Members of the Committee noted the proposed Exemplary Course Rubric adapted from Blackboard's original rubric for University use in identifying and disseminating good practice in exemplary course design. Members were invited to provide feedback to the implementation group.

CPD FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING & TEACHING: UPDATE ON THIRD YEAR OF OPERATION
(copy filed asUCTL/300118/013)

10.4   The Committee noted the CPD Framework and its implications for staff.

ELIR UPDATE
(copy filed as UCTL/300118/014)

10.5   Members of the Committee noted the composition of the ELIR Review Panel and that a workshop will be held for ELIR Steering Group and ELIR School Contacts.

SECTOR UPDATES

10.6   The Committee noted and agreed to disseminate as appropriate, the following recent sector updates:

(i)   Quality Assurance Agency Scotland Annual Report 2016-17

This report provides an overview of the QAA Scotland's work in 2016/17, covering highlights of review and enhancement activity, and its connection to the wider Quality Enhancement Framework.

AOCB

11.1   The Committee were reminded that University policy in regards to Exam grades (and the component sections thereof) does not preclude their release to students. The Committee noted that while it is understood some Schools are releasing this information to students, all Schools are encouraged to do so.