UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

POSTGRADUATE COMMITTEE (TAUGHT)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING 14 NOVEMBER 2018

Present: Prof E Pavlovskaia (Convenor), Dr A Bryzgel, Dr A Cleland, Dr M Ehrenschwendtner, Mr B Kirectepe, Dr D MacCallum, Prof J Nelson, Prof G Nixon, Dr S Woodin, with Dr C Calder, Mr R Findlay (Clerk), Mrs N Kinchin-Williams and Ms J MacKay in attendance.

Apologies: Dr N Beacham, Mrs D Connolly, Prof C Kee, Dr D Muirhead, Dr A Sim.

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 3 OCTOBER 2018
Copy filed as PGC/141118/001

1.   The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2018.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTORS
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2.1   The Committee noted the role descriptors that had been created for members of the Quality Assurance Committee.

2.2   The Committee agreed that the members and Committee would benefit from role descriptors to clearly define the work expected and to give their role the appropriate recognition. The Committee agreed that such descriptors need not be too prescriptive and could be included as an appendix to the Committee's remit.

2.3   The Committee agreed that the key role of its members was to ensure good communication between the Committee and the School.

2.4   The Committee agree that a set of descriptors should be drafted for circulation.
ACTION: CLERK

ENHANCEMENT-LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW UPDATE AND DRAFT SCHEDULE
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3.1   The Committee noted that there would be visit from the ELIR panel in the week commencing 19 November 2018.

3.2   The Convenor thanked the committee for their cooperation and help in regard to the preparations for ELIR.

UPDATE ON THE EVALUATION OF TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE
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4.1   The Committee noted the update prepared for Senate regarding the evaluation of PGT student experience.

4.2   The Committee noted that the evaluation would look at three key areas: the 2018 PGT Student Experience Survey, leavers' destination data, and degree attainment and retention rates.

4.3   Dr Calder raised the issue as to whether the University would participate in the 2019 survey run by the Higher Education Academy, or whether it would conduct its own local survey. Benefits of both were discussed, but further discussion is required.

4.4   Dr Calder confirmed that schools can access programme specific data from the 2018 PGT Experience survey on request.

4.5   The Committee agreed that it would be useful to receive a presentation on the results of future surveys in order to better understand the data.

4.6   The Committee noted that not all Schools had provided feedback to the free text comments by students in the PGT Experience survey. It was noted that these would be required for the full PGT Experience paper that would be presented to Senate in spring. The outstanding responses would be chased.

ACTION: CLERK

4.7   The Committee agreed that the School responses to the PGT survey results should not be included in the paper that is presented in Senate, but that they will form part of the paper evaluating PGT student experience. The Committee agreed that it would be appropriate to moderate School responses to exclude specific comment on the PGT experience survey itself and so that responses addressed student feedback only.

ACTION: CLERK

UPDATE ON REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING

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5.   The Committee noted the update regarding a review of policies and practices for accessible and inclusive learning. The Committee agreed with the proposal that a working group should be established and that 1 representative from each of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate (Taught) Committees should serve on the group.

UPDATE ON LEARNING ANALYTICS

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6.1   The Committee noted the updated on Learning Analytics. It was noted that feedback had been sought via open forums and focus groups with students, and that a final paper would be presented to Senate in January 2019.

6.2   The Committee was asked about for process regarding how student activity would be flagged for concern and what would happen when they are flagged. It was confirmed that the working group were consulting with Schools to establish the system used for intervention and he spread of good practice.

6.3   The Committee expressed concern that most of the data collected would only be relevant to on campus students and that this could mean that online students would be treated differently. The Committee also agreed that the privacy policy needed to be more explicit in the final paper. It was agreed that this should be feedback to the working group.

ACTION: KINCHEN-WILLIAMS

FEEDBACK FROM SCEF WORKING GROUP

7.   The Committee noted that this item would be deferred to the next meeting.

REVIEW OF PILOT OF NEW INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEW (ITR) PROCESS

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8.1   The Committee noted feedback from the ITR pilot that had been conducted in LLMVC.

8.2   Members of the Committee expressed concerns that ITR discussion groups had not been structured enough, with often one or two individuals monopolising the time the group had for discussion. The Committee felt that moderation of such discussion groups was required in order to keep them focused. It was also felt that the discussions should focus more on what had been prepared and submitted as part of the ITR documentation.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1   Dr Cleland provided the Committee with initial feedback regarding the use of Personal Tutors for PGT students in the School of Psychology.

9.2   Dr Cleland stated that students on conversion programmes made greater use of their Personal Tutors than those on clinical training programmes. It was noted that those on conversion programmes might be students who had been out of education for longer periods of time, and therefore needed support to return to study. It was also noted that the conversion programmes had higher numbers of international students who valued support in order to help them adapt to an unfamiliar education system.