MINUTE OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 30 APRIL AND 25 MAY 2015
(copies filed as QAC/2015/001 and QAC/2015/002)

1.1 Members of the Committee approved the minutes of the meetings held on 30 April and 25 May 2015.

MATTERS ARISING

2.1 Committee members noted point 4.1 of the minute of the 30 April 2015 regarding the Students’ Association (SA) Class Representatives system. Committee members were advised that the SA sought to improve the system during the 2015/16 academic year. The Committee requested of the President for Education, a copy of the update report as presented to Heads of School and the forthcoming meeting of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL).

Action: LF and Clerk

Clerk’s Note: The report (copy filed as QAC/2015/018) was circulated to Committee members following the meeting.

REMIT AND COMPOSITION 2015/16
(copy filed as QAC/2015/003)

3.1 Committee members noted the remit and composition for 2015/16 as circulated. The Committee approved the remit, subject to the inclusion of Drs Harrison and Hole and the appropriate amendment of the SA representatives.

Action: Clerk

Clerk’s Note: The amended remit was circulated to Committee members following the meeting.

3.2 The Committee was informed that the membership of the Committee may change as a consequence of ongoing changes to University structures. The Convener informed the Committee that the Head of the Business School would be contacted regarding Business School membership, as a consequence of the removal of the school from the College Structure.

Action: Convener

3.3 Members of the Committee noted concern that a representative of the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) had not been able to attend a meeting of the Committee over the course of the last academic year. The Committee noted the importance of a member of the CAD attending, specifically in regard to the consideration of External Examining reports and the sharing of good practice across the Institution. The Convener agreed to approach the Manager of the CAD regarding their representation.

Action: Convener
3.4 The Committee noted the dates of Committee meetings for 2015/16, acknowledging that additional meetings may need to be scheduled should there be a requirement.

INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEW (ITR)

(i) School of Medicine and Dentistry

4.1 Members of the Committee acknowledged the response to their ITR report as provided by the School of Medicine and Dentistry. The Committee noted the appropriateness of the report and were confident in the responses given. The Committee noted the school’s own Academic Quality Handbook (AQH) and requested that the School be reminded of the requirement to submit this to the Committee for review.

Action: Clerk

Clerk’s Note: Feedback has been provided to the School by way of email

4.2 In addition to the ITR Report and response from the School of Medicine and Dentistry, members of the Committee noted the General Dental Council Re-Inspection Report (copy filed as QAC/201015/005). Members of the Committee were enthusiastic to note the positive nature of the report and wished to congratulate the school on all the work undertaken to achieve this outcome. The Convener informed the Committee that, on their behalf, this feedback had been provided to the Head of School.

(ii) School of Engineering

4.3 The Committee noted the lack of submission of the one year follow up report from the School of Engineering. The Committee agreed that the School should be reminded of the requirement to submit their report and would ask that they do so in time for its consideration at the meeting to be held on Wednesday 25 November 2015.

Action: Clerk

Clerk’s Note: An email querying the status of the Engineering report has been sent to the Head of School

(iii) School of Language and Literature

4.4 The Committee acknowledged the one year follow up report as provided by the School of Language and Literature. The Committee was encouraged to note the comprehensive nature of the report, which gave no cause for concern. The Committee wished to express their thanks to the school for the report returned.

Action: Clerk

Clerk’s Note: Feedback has been provided to the School by way of email

(iv) School of Law

4.5 The Committee acknowledged the one year follow up report as provided by the School of Law. The Committee was encouraged to note the full and constructive nature of the report. Members of the Committee did, however, note ongoing concern with regards to the appropriate supervision of undergraduate or postgraduate taught students during their
dissertation/thesis. The Convener agreed to refer this matter to the UCTL for discussion. The Committee wished to express their thanks to the school for the report returned.

**Action:** Clerk

**Clerk’s Note:** Feedback has been provided to the School by way of email

(v) School of Social Science

*(copy filed as QAC/201015/009)*

4.6 The Committee acknowledged the one year follow up report as provided by the School of Social Science. The Committee noted that the review had been chaired by Dr Hendry and agreed that his views should be sought in advance of a response being provided from the QAC.

**Action:** Clerk

**Clerk’s Note:** Feedback has been provided to the School by way of email

**EXTERNAL EXAMINING**

*(Responses are available copy filed as QAC/201015/010)*

5.1 The Committee discussed the responses to undergraduate External Examiners reports as provided by Heads of School. The Committee agreed the standard model of responses to External Examiners from the QAC as a generic response to all examiners within a particular school in addition to, where appropriate, an examiner specific response.

5.2 Members of the Committee noted that some External Examiners often return reports with little detail. Members of the Committee agreed that in instances such as these, it can be assumed that there are no issues arising where none are raised.

5.3 The Committee noted the issue of the role in External Examiners in changing the marks of students. The Committee agreed that Schools querying this matter should be reminded of University policy, that External Examiners should not make isolated changes to an individual student’s grades.

5.4 Members of the Committee noted consternation in the responses of some examiners regarding the length of time taken to respond to their reports. The Committee acknowledged this as an issue experienced in the last academic year, and that steps had been taken to improve the process overall.

5.5 The Committee acknowledged the comments of some External Examiners who disagreed with Enhanced Study at levels 3 and 4 contributing to classification. Members of the Committee noted that this issue was not exclusive to External Examiners and in fact an issue recognised by internal members of staff and students. The Committee agreed to pass this feedback to the UCTL but noted University policy in this regard.

5.6 Members of the Committee, who had not already done so, agreed to return comments on the External Examiners reports for which they had responsibility, to the Clerk. The Committee agreed that External Examiners should receive their responses as quickly as possible and, preferably, by the end of October.

**Action:** Clerk

**COLLABORATIVE PROVISION**

6.1 There were no matters arising pertaining to this agenda item.
7.1 There were no further matters arising pertaining to this agenda item.

STUDENTS’ PROGRESS COMMITTEE

8.1 The Committee approved the remit and composition of the Undergraduate Students Progress Committee, subject to a minor typographical revision.

Action: Clerk

Clerk’s Note: The remit was amended following the meeting.

STUDENTS’ PROGRESS COMMITTEE (MEDICINE & DENTISTRY)

8.2 The Committee approved the remit and composition of the Students Progress Committee for Medicine and Dentistry.

FITNESS TO PRACTISE COMMITTEE (MEDICINE & DENTISTRY)

8.3 The Committee approved the remit and composition of the Fitness to Practise Committee for Medicine and Dentistry.

FITNESS TO PRACTISE COMMITTEE (EDUCATION)

8.4 The Committee approved the remit and composition of the Fitness to Practise Committee for the School of Education.

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

9.1 The Committee noted the distribution of responsibility for the QAC consideration of items such as External Examiners Reports and SENAS submissions for the 2015/16 Academic Year as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Person</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>Paul Bishop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Steven Lawrie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divinity, History and Philosophy</td>
<td>Bill Harrison</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Malcom Hole</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>David Lurie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geosciences</td>
<td>David Hendry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language and Literature</td>
<td>Marie-Luise Ehrenschwendtner (Backup Malcolm Hole)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Steven Lawrie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical Sciences</td>
<td>Mhairi Beaton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicine and Dentistry</td>
<td>Mhairi Beaton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural and Computing Sciences</td>
<td>Kath Shennan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>David Lurie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>Paul Bishop</td>
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COLLABORATIVE PROVISION

9.2 The Committee noted the new Senate approved revisions to the Collaborative Provision procedure and form available on the University Staffnet webpages here.

ITEMS UNDERTAKEN BY CIRCULATION

9.3 The Committee is noted the approval of the following items by Convener’s action since the April 2015 meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee.

| Collaborative Proposal | (copy filed as QAC/201015/015) | Collaborative Proposal: Jump Digital
| Collaborative Proposal: North American Study Abroad and Exchange Agreements |
| Collaborative Provision: Mindfulness Annual Report |

9.4 Members of the Committee expressed, with regards to the Jump Digital proposal, concern with regards to the Business Case as approved by the Institution. Members of the Committee noted concern regarding the 80/20 revenue split with Jump Digital and the lack of Further or Higher Education Institutions listed as partners with whom the company had previously interacted. The Committee did, however, for its part, approve the Academic Quality elements of the proposal.

COURSE AND PROGRAMME PROPOSALS

9.5 A list of all Undergraduate and Postgraduate courses and programmes approved since the April 2015 meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee can be found on SharePoint here.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 25 November 2015 at 2.00pm in Committee Room 2, University Office.

AOCB

11.1 Members of the Committee noted the tabled request (copy filed as QAC/201015/019) from the University of the Highlands and Islands to seek revalidation in the areas of Energy Engineering, Energy and Environment and Energy Technology. The QAC approved the proposed revalidation in principle and agreed that a member of the Committee undertake membership of the panel required for the review of the validation documentation. The Convener agreed to pursue this matter with an appropriate member of the Committee.

Action: Convener

11.2 Members of the Committee noted the tabled paper on Grade Point Average (GPA) as prepared for consideration at the forthcoming meeting of the Senate. The Committee acknowledged the proposal to introduce a GPA as a Higher Education (HE) Sector move and not one limited to the University of Aberdeen. The Committee noted concern at the introduction of another means of assessment to the student population, while the Common Grading Scale (CGS) was still new to existing students.

11.3 Members of the Committee agreed that a move away from a classification model would not be appropriate and that if a GPA was adopted, this should be presented alongside the
standard classification (2:1, 2:2, etc.) and in line with a standard GPA model used nationally and, preferably, worldwide. Members of the Committee noted concern that a GPA would incorporate all courses undertaken by a student and not just those associated with their named degree. The Committee were assured that this feedback would be presented to the UCTL.

*Action: Convener*

*Clerk’s Note:* The issue of GPA was raised and discussed at the meeting of the UCTL held on 21 October 2015.