

**UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN  
UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Minute of the Meeting held on 26 February 2020

*Present:* Kath Shennan (Chair), Abbe Brown, Kirsty Kiezebrink, Ondrej Kucerak and Steve Tucker with Rachael Bernard, Tracey Innes, Natalie Kinchin-Williams, Patricia Spence and Emma Hay (Clerk) in attendance

*Apologies:* Ruth Taylor, Tim Baker, Colin Duncan, Dariya Koleva, Graeme Nixon, Bruce Scharlau, Richard Wells and Simon Bains and Gillian Mackintosh

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2020**

*(copy filed as UCTL/260220/001)*

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed members of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL). Those members of the Committee present acknowledged that the required 50% attendance of members of the Committee had not been reached and therefore the Committee was not quorate. Members agreed to continue with the meeting and to make recommendations on the agenda items, to be forwarded to the full committee by way of circulation for full approval.

**Action: Clerk**

- 1.2 Members of the Committee recommended the approval of the minute of the meeting held on 15 January 2020 as an accurate representation of discussions held, subject to some typographical revisions.

**MATTERS ARISING**

*(copy filed as UCTL/260220/002)*

- 2.1 Members of the Committee noted the actions arising from the meeting held on 15 January 2020. The Committee the status of the items listed and noted that these were included on the agenda for further discussion or in progress. Members of the Committee sought clarity on the composition of the Committee. The Clerk agreed to progress discussion in this regard with the Chair, in advance of the next meeting.

**Action: Clerk/Chair**

**REMIT MAPPING EXERCISE**

*(copy filed as UCTL/260220/003)*

- 3.1 Members of the Committee received a paper, mapping the Committee's remit to the activities undertaken on an annual basis. The Committee was asked to provide comment on the paper, particularly in regard to the following points:

- Responsible for the oversight of teaching-related credit-bearing activity related to student mobility;
- Consider and provide advice to the Student Experience Committee on aspects of the student experience which fall within both non-academic and academic areas;
- Approve changes to minimum entry requirements.

- 3.2 Regarding student mobility (*bullet point 1 above refers*), members of the Committee acknowledged the oversight provided by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), a sub-committee of the UCTL, of all credit earning provision, including that undertaken by students overseas.
- 3.3. The Committee discussed the remit point regarding the Student Experience Committee (SEC) (*bullet point 2 above refers*), noting that the wording in the remit may not be appropriate. The Committee acknowledged that there was Education representation on the SEC and that items for the consideration of both committees are shared. Members of the Committee proposed that the wording of the remit be amended to reflect a sharing of information rather than an advisory role.
- 3.4 The Committee noted that entry requirements are no longer approved by the UCTL (*bullet point 3 above refers*). Members of the Committee stated the importance of oversight of these by an Education Committee and agreed that discussions on this should be progressed further.
- 3.5 Members of the Committee proposed that the approval of items for inclusion on the 'Enhanced Transcript' should be specifically mention within the remit.
- 3.6 The Clerk agreed to discuss the remit and these proposed amendments in further detail with the Chair.

**Action: Clerk/Chair**

#### **HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING**

- 4.1 The Committee discussed the agenda item on Health, Safety and Wellbeing, acknowledging the ongoing work and setup of a Task and Finish Group regarding Coronavirus. Members of the Committee acknowledged work ongoing with students with physical disabilities.

#### **PENALTIES FOR THE LATE SUBMISSION OF WORK**

*(copy filed as UCTL/260220/004)*

- 5.1 Members of the Committee received the revised paper on the recommendations for the penalty to be applied for late submission of coursework in the absence of any mitigating circumstances. The Committee noted revisions to an earlier version of the paper with regards to reference to the weekend, taking into account that the weekend for students in Qatar is Friday and Saturday and not Saturday and Sunday, as it is for student based in Aberdeen.
- 5.2 Members of the Committee noted feedback from the Chairs of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Committees (*UCTL/260220/010b and UCTL/260220/010C further refer*) including feedback from the Undergraduate Committee regarding the merits of the proposal to cap penalties for work which would be awarded a pass but for the deduction for late submission. The Committee acknowledged concern that this would result in privileging students awarded grades between D3 and B3, particularly when compared to students who receive a grade of E1 or lower. The Committee discussed the issue and agreed, subject to full approval, that students in a position where they have produced work considered to be a pass should receive a mark no lower than a D3. They further recommended that students who fail should not be further penalised by the deduction of further marks.
- 5.3 The Committee discussed the proposal within the paper with regards the standard penalty. It was noted that there was broad agreement with the proposal within the paper.

- 5.4 Regarding the inclusion of weekends/holidays in the number of days late a submission is, the Committee noted the difficulty in gaining consensus on this matter. The Committee agreed the importance of consistency of approach but noted that (i) not counting weekends (ii) counting weekends as two days and (ii) counting weekends as one day were all feasible options, for further discussion at Senate.
- 5.5 Members of the Committee agreed to forward the paper to the Senate and to recommend to the wider Committee that the paper be amended to reflect the fact that (i) fail grades will not be further reduced and (ii) assessments worthy of a pass will not receive deductions below a pass grade, of D3.

**Clerk's Note: The policy has been amended (subject to approval) to include the following section:**

*For work that is up to seven days late, if the original grade given to the assessment was D3 or above but the penalty applied takes the grade below the pass mark, the student will be awarded the minimum passing grade, i.e. D3. If the original grade for the assessment is a fail, no further penalty will be applied.*

**Action: KS/Clerk**

#### **UPDATE ON THE ENHANCED TRANSCRIPT**

*(copy filed as UCTL/260220/005)*

- 6.1 Members of the Committee received the paper on the Enhanced Transcript and its recommendation that that externally awarded activities be withdrawn from inclusion on the Enhanced Transcript as 'recognised activities'. This would result in removing the Scottish Innovative Student Award (SISA) Level 2 and Level 3 from inclusion within the Enhanced Transcript from 2019-2020 reporting year.
- 6.2 The Committee acknowledged that, with the exception of the SISA, all other accredited or recognised activities on the transcript are delivered and assessed by or in collaboration with the University. The Committee recognised that the inclusion of the SISA award did not appear to be appropriate or in line with the intention of this section of the Enhanced Transcript. They emphasised, however, that the role should not be devalued or student engagement with it dissuaded. The Committee agreed to recommend for approval, its removal.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **ACCESSIBILITY OF AUDIO VIDEO LEARNING MATERIALS**

*(copy filed a UCTL/260220/006)*

- 7.1 Members of the Committee received the proposal paper regarding the Accessibility of Audio Video Learning Materials. Discussion ensued amongst members of the Committee regarding the different approaches to providing the captions or transcripts of video material. Members of the Committee shared experiences regarding the provisions provided for online students.
- 7.2 Following discussion of the options presented in the paper, the Committee agreed to recommend for approval, option 1. The Committee acknowledged the importance, however, of ensuring required academic input to check and amend the output of a system is stated. The Committee further noted it may be useful to enquire as to how many hours of video content currently require transcription.

**Action: Clerk**

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 8.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 15 April 2020 at 2pm, in room 223, the Suttie Centre, Foresterhill.

## **CHANGES IN REGULATIONS FOR VARIOUS DEGREES**

*(copy filed as UCTL/260220/007)*

- 9.1 The Committee agreed to recommend for approval, the draft Resolution Changes in 'Regulations for Various Degrees'. The Resolution enacts changes in degree regulations recommended by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).

## **GRADUATION DATES**

*(copy filed as UCTL/260220/008)*

- 9.2 The Committee agreed to recommend for approval the proposed dates and ceremony allocations for the Graduation ceremonies to be held in June 2020.

## **ENHANCEMENT LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW (ELIR) ONE YEAR FOLLOW-UP REPORT**

*(UCTL/260220/009)*

- 10.1 Members of the Committee are noted the ELIR one year follow up report, approved by the Senate, ahead of its submission to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

## **MINUTES FROM SUB-COMMITTEES**

- 10.2 Members of the Committee noted the minutes from the sub-committees as follows:

- |       |                                      |                           |
|-------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| (i)   | Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)    | <i>(UCTL/260220/010a)</i> |
| (ii)  | Postgraduate Taught Committee (PGTC) | <i>(UCTL/260220/010b)</i> |
| (iii) | Undergraduate Committee (UGC)        | <i>(UCTL/260220/010c)</i> |