

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

BLENDING LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION TASK AND FINISH GROUP/UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON  
TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Minute of the Meeting held on 20 January 2021

*Present:* Ruth Taylor (Chair), John Barrow, Abbe Brown, Javier Gonzaelez Cuervos, Hazel Hutchison, Alison Jenkinson, Kirsty Kiezebrink, Ondrej Kucerak, and Kath Shennan with Simon Bains, Tracey Innes, Natalie Kinchin-Williams, Gillian Mackintosh and Emma Hay (Clerk) in attendance

*Apologies:* Rachael Bernard, Graeme Nixon, Patricia Spence, Steve Tucker and Richard Wells

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2020**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/001a)*

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed members to the meeting of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL).
- 1.2 Members of the Committee approved the minute of the meeting held on 12 November 2020 as an accurate representation of discussions held, subject to the addition of Simon Bains and Tracey Innes to the attendees list.

**Action: Clerk**

**MATTERS ARISING**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/001b)*

- 2.1 Members of the Committee noted the actions arising following the meeting of the Committee held on 12 November 2020. All actions were noted as complete or on the agenda for further discussion.

**HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING**

- 3.1 Members of the Committee noted the Campus Planning Group (CPG) papers and minutes of meetings, and noted that communications have been sent out regularly to all staff that include information about health, safety and wellbeing in the context of Covid-19. No specific concerns were raised with regards Health, Safety and Wellbeing and the meeting proceeded.

**UPDATED RISK REGISTER FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/002)*

- 4.1 Members of the Committee noted that an updated version of an excerpt of the University's Risk Register had been prepared, however, had not been included with the Committee papers. It was agreed that the updated Register would be circulated to the Committee by email. The Chair noted that the Register, listing risks specific to Learning and Teaching, had been updated to include new risks associated with compliance with Consumer Markets Authority (CMA) requirements, negative student feedback, the current lockdown situation and its potential impact on student learning, and the maintenance of good quality assurance processes.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **UPDATE ON THE BLENDED LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/003)*

- 5.1 Members of the Committee received a paper providing an update on the Blended Learning Implementation Task and Finish Group (BLITFG). The Committee noted the summary provided and noted that discussions regarding field trip and work placement opportunities for the remainder of the 2020/21 academic year were ongoing.

#### **NO DETRIMENT PROCEDURES**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/011)*

- 6.1 Members of the UCTL considered the draft No Detriment procedures. The Committee noted that the procedures had already been considered at a joint meeting of the Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught and Quality Assurance Committees. Members noted feedback received to date including:
- Proposed revisions to the section for postgraduate students, to better reflect the fact they can be either September or January starts and that they study over 3 terms;
  - Proposed revisions to the section on extensions, to provide guidance for Schools;
  - Comments on the use of MC and GC, and the flexibility that was introduced through the approved the revised Student Absence Procedures;
  - The inclusion of reference to full year courses and how these would be covered by the procedures.
  - The number of classifications required per student, and concerns about the suitability of any algorithm to address these requirements;
  - The timing of assessment, particularly dissertations that run across the academic year or across terms, and therefore the timing of when the No Detriment Procedures apply.
- 6.2 Members of the Committee discussed the support available for students impacted by difficulties in the first half session. The Committee agreed that while no detriment procedures should not apply to the first half session, that students affected by the impact of Covid-19 should be supported and have their cases considered in line with the Student Absence Policy (e.g. with the award of MC or GC where appropriate). Members of the Committee proposed that the sections on student support be improved to reflect the extent of support on offer to all students.
- 6.3 Overall, the Committee were content to approve the procedures for introduction and to forward to the Senate for consideration and approval.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **RACE EQUALITY STRATEGY: DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM SUB-GROUP**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/004)*

- 7.1 Members of the Committee received the paper on the proposed terms of reference and membership for the Decolonising the Curriculum Steering Group. Members of the Committee noted that the sub-group would report to the UCTL. The Chair informed members of the work ongoing at a national level in this regard. Overall, the Committee were content to approve the proposal for the setup of the group.

## **STUDENT WITHDRAWALS UPDATE**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/005)*

- 8.1 Members of the Committee received a report on student withdrawal data, acknowledging that while each student was of individual value to the University, overall, the data demonstrated that non-continuation rates were very positive. Members of the Committee noted the need to keep the January 2021 non-continuation rate under close review. The Committee noted that, going forward, non-continuation data would be considered by the Student Support Committee (SSC), one of the UEC's sub-committees should the revised committee structure be approved by Court.
- 8.2 Members of the Committee agreed that it would be beneficial to look at the data in respect of certain groups, such as widening access students, in more detail. The Committee noted that further updates, including such level of detail, would follow to a future meeting of the UCTL.

## **INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/006)*

- 9.1 Members of the Committee received an updated version of the draft Inclusion and Accessibility Policy. Members of the Committee agreed with the proposal that the policy and related issues, such as how it could be monitored and integrated into existing practices, would be best discussed in detail by a small group. Members of the Committee noted the importance of ensuring support across the University community prior to full approval and rollout of the policy. The Committee agreed that work should be progressed to engage relevant parties in discussion before progression of the proposed policy to the Senate.

## **ENHANCED TRANSCRIPT UPDATE**

### **(i) STAR Award Enhanced Transcript Reporting Change**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/007a)*

- 10.1 Members of the Committee considered the proposal to report, where relevant, both recognised roles and the accredited STAR Award programme on the Enhanced Transcript. Members of the Committee were informed of the current position with regards the STAR award, where students are not permitted to receive it and the recognised activity they reflected on to achieve the award, on their transcript. While members of the Committee expressed concern that to list both could 'double count' effort by a student, overall, it was agreed that both should appear on the transcript. It was agreed that while the roles related to each other, the work undertaken to complete each was different and should be recognised as such.
- 10.2 Members of the Committee agreed, however, that this decision should not apply retrospectively and only for students undertaking the STAR award in 2020/21 and beyond.

**Action: Clerk**

### **(ii) Enhanced Transcript Review**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/007b)*

- 10.3 Members of the Committee received the proposal for the set-up of a short-term task and finish group to conduct a full review of the framework for enhanced transcript recognition of students' activities. Members of the Committee were supportive of the setup of the group, with timescales as described in the paper revised to reflect the current position with regards

lockdown and staff workloads. The Committee noted that the group should include a representative of the Student Records team.

**Action: Clerk**

- (iii) **Recognition for AUSA Student Group Volunteers** *(copy filed as UCTL/200121/007c)*
- (iv) **Recognition for Student Content Creator** *(copy filed as UCTL/200121/007d)*

10.4 Members of the Committee considered the proposal to include AUSA Student Group Volunteers and Student Content Creators on the Enhanced Transcript as recognised activities from September 2020. Members of the Committee were happy to support the inclusion of all the roles proposed. The Committee were pleased to note the collaborative work ongoing between AUSA and Careers with regards to the Enhanced Transcript.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CHARTER**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/008)*

11.1 Members of the Committee noted the Academic Integrity Charter, developed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) with the support of the Academic Integrity Advisory Group.

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

12.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 25 February 2021, at 1pm, by Microsoft Teams.

#### **TERM DATES 2021/22**

*(to follow, UCTL/200121/009)*

13.1 Members of the Committee noted that the draft term dates for 2021/22 would follow by way of circulation.

#### **ENHANCEMENT THEME INSTITUTIONAL PLAN**

*(copy filed as UCTL/200121/010)*

12.1 Members of the Committee noted the University's Institutional Plan for the QAA Enhancement Theme: Resilient Learning Communities.

#### **BLENDED LEARNING TASK AND FINISH GROUP (BLITFG)**

13.2 Members of the Committee noted the agendas and minutes of the Blended Learning Implementation Task and Finish Group (BLITFG), available on the UCTL webpages [here](#).