

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

Minute of the Meeting held on 15 January 2020

*Present:* Ruth Taylor (Chair), Colin Duncan, Alison Jenkinson, Natalie Kinchin-Williams, Dariya Koleva, Ondrej Kucerak, Ekaterina Pavlovskaia and Kath Shennan with Simon Bains, Rachael Bernard, Gillian Mackintosh, Patricia Spence, Sandra Thomson and Emma Hay (Clerk) in attendance

*Apologies:* Tim Baker, Graeme Nixon, Bruce Scharlau, Steve Tucker and Tracey Innes

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2019**

*(copy filed as UCTL/150120/001)*

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed members of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL). The Committee approved the minute of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 as an accurate representation of discussions held.

**MATTERS ARISING**

*(copy filed as UCTL/150120/002)*

- 2.1 Members of the Committee noted that the actions arising from the meeting held on 12 November 2019 had been progressed. Regarding action point 6.2 and Registry representation at Examiners' Meetings, the Committee acknowledged that this issue would be taken away for further discussion and to allow for the preparation of a proposal to be brought to the April meeting of the Committee.

*Action: Chair/Rachael Bernard*

- 2.2 Regarding action point 8.1 and the new Library Management System (LMS), members of the Committee received an update that the new system was now live.

**REMIT AND COMPOSITION**

*(copy filed as UCTL/150120/003)*

- 3.1 Members of the Committee noted the Remit and Composition, acknowledging that further tweaks would be required, and the document would be brought back to future meetings for further discussion and approval. The Committee were informed that Bruce Scharlau had stepped down from his role as Convener of the Positive Outcomes Task Force and, as such, would no longer be a member of UCTL. Members of the Committee welcomed the new Education Portfolio Deans and noted that the process to appointment a Dean for Education and Employability was underway.
- 3.2 Members of the Committee were informed that an exercise would be undertaken by the Clerk to map the remit to the work of the Committee and that this would follow to the next meeting of the Committee for further discussion.

*Action: Clerk*

## **HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING**

- 4.1 The Committee identified no specific issues arising relating to Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

### **RISK REGISTER**

*(copy filed as UCTL/150120/004)*

- 5.1 Members of the Committee considered the current version of the Risk Register. Members were informed that the document was currently in transition and that work was being undertaken to revise it as part of the rollout of Aberdeen 2040.

- 5.2 Members of the Committee considered each of the risks assigned to the Vice-Principal (Education) and concerning the Student Experience (*page 20 of the Risk Register refers*). The Committee noted the following key updates to the risks associated with the work of the UCTL:

- The Committee noted the introduction of the Lecture Capture Policy. Members noted the importance of determining to what extent the policy was been used across the University.

**Action: Clerk**

- Members of the Committee noted that work on Learning Analytics was currently paused, but that it would soon restart and be ongoing.
- Members of the Committee acknowledged the importance of UCTL oversight of survey data (including that of the National Student Survey (NSS)). The Committee agreed the importance of aligning the work of the UCTL and the Student Experience Committee in this regard. Members of the Committee also agreed the importance of improving student understanding of surveys, the enhancement of the student experience in response to data and an agreed communication strategy across the University.

**Action: Chair**

- The Committee acknowledged the importance of the annual report from the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to the UCTL in order to assure the UCTL of the QAC's work regarding annual and periodic monitoring.

**Action: Kath Shennan**

- Members of the Committee acknowledged the work being undertaken regarding the review of the University's updated Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and its ongoing implementation.
- The Committee acknowledged the work ongoing regarding Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (*minute point 7 further refers*).
- The Committee acknowledged the appointment of the Education Portfolio Deans.
- Members of the Committee agreed that a review of the range of online programmes provided by the University would be usefully considered by the Committee.

**Action: Alison Jenkinson**

- Regarding TNE, the Chair noted that consideration should be given to the inclusion of the Dean for International Student Pathways on the UCTL.

**Action: Chair**

- The Committee acknowledged ongoing work to ensure the transparency and consistency of assessment practices, including work on the Code of Practice on Assessment and ongoing consideration of a proposed Late Submission Policy.
- The Committee noted that role descriptors were now in place for the UCTL's sub-committees.

- 5.3 The Committee was informed that it should adhere to the Risk process as it currently stood, pending the approval and implementation of a revised process. The Committee acknowledged that it was expected that the Register would be reviewed as appropriate and, at a minimum, on an annual basis. Members of the UCTL noted the importance of the Committee taking ownership of its risks. The Chair stated that she felt assured work was ongoing, but the review had highlighted areas where further work was required. It was noted that the UCTLs relationship with the Student Experience Committee could usefully be further investigated.

**Action: Chair**

#### **ABERDEEN 2040 UPDATE**

*(copy filed as UCTL/150120/005)*

- 6.1 Members of the Committee received the Aberdeen 2040 strategy document. Members of the Committee acknowledged the extensive work which had been undertaken to prepare the document and the wide consultation with staff and students. Members of the Committee agreed the importance of an initial discussion and thoughts around areas for UCTL interest and/or engagement. The Committee were informed that work was currently underway to identifying the strategy's key actions for each Vice-Principal.
- 6.2 Members of the Committee noted the following key points arising from Aberdeen 2040 and for further, future consideration:
- Widening access and ensuring that the right degree programmes are offered, and the right support is provided to all students undertaking them.
  - Appropriate student support is provided for all student groups, including postgraduate students and online students. The importance of remembering, across the strategy, that not all students are based in Aberdeen.
  - Improving technology enabled learning and working to help the community to use it, access it and to receive appropriate support.
  - Strategic thinking and communication with IT Services to ensure the right solutions can be brought forward.
  - Education representation on the Digital Strategy Committee to ensure involvement in discussions about new technologies being piloted and a clearer strategy regarding engagement with users.
  - The centrality of the student voice and the engagement of the AUSA.
  - The importance of the delivery of an international experience for all students and the recognition of the complexities and uncertainty surrounding Erasmus.
  - Working closely with students and professional services departments.
  - Engagement in Estates and learning and teaching spaces.

- 6.3 Members of the Committee agreed that there was lots of exciting work to be progressed in relation to the strategy and that associated documentation would be released as appropriate. The Committee acknowledged the importance of their engagement with the strategy and its implementation.

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

*(copy filed a UCTL/150120/006)*

- 7.1 Members of the Committee received the draft Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR) one year follow up report. The Chair issued her thanks to the Dean for Quality Enhancement and Assurance for her work in preparing the document. Members of the Committee

acknowledged that following consideration and approval by the UCTL, the report would be considered by the Senior Management Team (SMT), Senate and Policy and Resources Committee (PARC) before receiving final consideration and approval by the University Court. Members of the Committee noted that document was required for submission to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) by 13 March 2020 and that updates would follow to the UCTL following Court, if required.

- 7.2 Members of the Committee were informed that section 3.1.1 was now complete and would be circulated to the Committee following the meeting.

*Action: Clerk*

- 7.3 Members acknowledged the proposal that an ELIR action plan should be discussed by the Committee on a regular basis in order to provide a starting point from which ELIR 2022 could be prepared. The Committee noted that there were several initiatives ongoing which could feed into ongoing preparation. The Committee discussed the importance of identifying the data which could and should be collected.

*Action: Clerk/Chair*

- 7.4 With regards to the detail of the report, members of the Committee proposed the following amendments:

- **Section 2.2.1:** Regarding Personal Tutoring in Schools, it was proposed that 'Principles implemented across Schools' should be removed.
- **Section 2.4.2:** Regarding preparation for teaching, members of the Committee noted the importance of ensuring Undergraduate demonstrators have access to same levels of training as Postgraduate demonstrators.
- **Recent Developments:** That all new Dean roles be included in this section.

- 7.5 Subject to these minor changes, members of the Committee confirmed that they were happy to approve the report and for it to be progressed to the Senate for consideration and approval.

*Action: Clerk*

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

- 8.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 26 February 2020 at 2pm, in Committee Room 2, University Office.

#### **ANNUAL COURSE REVIEW FORM**

*(copy filed as UCTL/150120/007)*

- 9.1 Members of the Committee noted the revised Annual Course Review (ACR) form and agreed that it should be circulated to Schools.

*Action: Clerk*

**CONSULTATION ON FUTURE APPROACHES TO THE EXTERNAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT OF UK  
HIGHER EDUCATION TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION**

*(consultation copy filed as UCTL/150120/008a)  
(response copy filed as UCTL/150120/008b)*

- 10.1 Members of the Committee noted the University's response to the Universities UK/GuildHE/Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) consultation of Future Quality Arrangements for Transnational Education (TNE).