

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

Minute of the Meeting held on 12 December 2018

Present: Professor P McGeorge, (Convener), Dr T Baker, Ms D Connolly, Mr C Duncan, Professor A Jenkinson, Dr B Scharlau, Professor K Shennan and Dr Sarah Woodin with Dr R Bernard, Ms K Christie, Ms N Kinchin-Williams, Ms P Spence, Mr C Zimitat and Ms E Hay (Clerk) in attendance

Apologies: Mr O Kucerak, Professor E Pavlovskaia, Dr S Tucker, Professor R Wells, and Dr G Mackintosh

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 OCTOBER 2018

(copy filed as UCTL/121218/001)

- 1.1 The Convener opened the meeting and welcomed members of the University Committee on Teaching and Learning (UCTL) to the last meeting of the UCTL for the calendar year.
- 1.2 The Committee approved the minutes of the meetings held on 31 October as accurate representations of discussions held.

MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 The Committee noted that the actions arising from the meeting held on 31 October 2018 had been taken forward, as reflected in the minute by way of Clerk's Note.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

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

STUDENT EXPERIENCE PRESENTATION

- 4.1 The Convener introduced the agenda item on the Undergraduate Student Experience. The Committee were asked whether they felt the issues usually raised by way of paper to the Senate, which prompts little discussion, should more appropriately be discussed by way of a presentation. The Committee noted the importance of relaying the information to Senate to (i) pass on the good news contained within the data and (ii) to engage Senate in discussion to further improve practice within Schools.
- 4.2 The Convener provided a presentation on the Undergraduate Student Experience to the Committee. A copy of the presentation is filed as *UCTL/121218/007*.
- 4.3 Following the presentation, a short discussion of the data provided ensued. The main tenets of the discussion were as follows:
 - Members of the Committee sought clarity on whether the National Student Survey (NSS) data included in the presentation could be provided by School. This was specifically requested in relation to the 'Learning Resources' category.
 - The Committee noted the significant improvements in the academic support category.
 - The Committee noted areas of good performance in Schools and specifically acknowledged

the increase in attainment in Education.

- Members of the Committee noted that fall in positive responses under 'Teaching on my Course'. The Committee acknowledged that the Industrial Action may have impacted responses.
- The Committee noted the opportunities to discuss and disseminate the information included in the presentation, including at meetings of the Task Forces and the UCTL's sub-committees.
- With regards to the non-continuation data, the Committee acknowledged the drop in rates to 3.7%. The Committee noted the reasons provided by students for withdrawal and discussed the appropriateness of contacting students after a period of time to discuss readmission.
- The Committee noted that feedback received in relation to other surveys may also be useful in considering the data.
- The Committee acknowledged that changes in the University community, such as Brexit and Widening Access may impact upon the ability for this trend to continue.
- Considering the non-continuation data by School, the Committee noted that where students are undertaking a joint degree, both Schools' data will be impacted.
- Members of the Committee were reminded that the current way of DELHE data gathering had been brought to a conclusion, with the revised approach designed to survey students later and 15 months after their graduation. The Committee were informed of the risk of this approach in recording students as undertaking further study. The Committee noted the importance of ensuring responses to the new survey.
- Members of the Committee acknowledged the need to consider degree programmes and whether or not the volunteering etc. some students undertake post-graduation could be integrated into their degree programme.

- 4.4 Members of the Committee were asked if the information should be delivered by paper or presentation. They were also asked if they felt anything was missing from the presentation. The Committee agreed that a presentation to allow for an engaged discussion would be appropriate. The Committee acknowledged the importance of a paper for wider dissemination to the University community and other Committees such as School Teaching and Learning Committees.
- The Committee noted that it may be useful to include data which affects current students, such as that arising from Annual Programme Reviews (APRs) to engage staff.

- 4.5 Members of the Committee sought clarity as to how best the information contained within the presentation should be disseminated. The Committee agreed there are lots of opportunities, including asking Senate's advice in this regard. The Committee noted that asking questions of colleagues might help stimulate discussion and in particular targeting Schools or areas such as Education, who have demonstrated recent improvements in their results. The Committee noted the importance of feedback from across the Institution in engaging colleagues in teaching and learning matters. The Committee noted the work of the Task Forces and the promotion of this.

- 4.6 The Committee noted that, overall, the data is very positive and were supportive of the dissemination of this positive message.

Action: Clerk/Convener

Clerk's Note: This item will proceed to the next meeting of the Senate on 30 January 2019, as way of a presentation, with individuals from School asked to contribute to discussion

LEARNING ANALYTICS POLICY

(copy filed as UCTL/121218/002)

- 5.1 The Committee noted the revised paper on the Learning Analytics Policy ahead of its discussion at the Senate in January 2019. The Committee noted that the paper was clear in where it had been modified since its last consideration and reflected feedback from across the University and practice at other Higher Education Institutions.
- 5.2 The Committee noted that at the Postgraduate Taught Committee (PGTC), discussion had ensued with regards to who held responsibility for reviewing data for a student. The Committee acknowledged that this could be determined at School level.
- 5.3 The Committee noted that the Undergraduate Committee (UGC) had discussed future direction and acknowledged that this may be discussed in a future version of a paper. The Committee were informed that the policy was first to be developed before system procurement and development could be taken forward. They noted the policy must be agreed before any further action could be taken.
- 5.4 The Committee acknowledged the work being undertaken as part of the Enhancement Theme in regards to Learning Analytics. They also noted work taking place in this regard across Scotland, the UK and further afield.
- 5.5 The Committee agreed that the policy should proceed to the Senate for discussion.

Action: Clerk/Convener

Clerk's Note: This item will proceed to the next meeting of the Senate on 30 January 2019 for discussion

REVISED UK QUALITY CODE, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

- 6.1 The Committee noted the revised the UK Quality Code and Guidance had been published. The Committee noted the different approach of the Code and whether or not this revised approach would be appropriate. The Committee agreed that the revised code should be provided to the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to determine the appropriate approach to and route for dissemination.

ENHANCEMENT LED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW (ELIR) UPDATE

(copy filed as UCTL/121218/003)

- 7.1 The Committee noted the update on the Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) and the outcome as provided. The Committee issued their thanks to all those involved in the ELIR process. The Committee also specifically thanked Katja Christie for her involvement in the process.
- 7.2 The Committee noted the importance of the commendations and recommendations provided in draft form and acknowledged that the final report would follow in February 2019. The Committee noted the commendations far outweighed the recommendations and specifically acknowledged the work of the QAC and the revised Internal Teaching Review (ITR) process. The Committee also noted the commendations regarding Student Support, Widening Access and Communication.

- 7.3 Regarding the recommendations, the Committee acknowledged these as, in some cases, underway. The Committee agreed the importance of looking at the issues to ensure they are rectified as soon as possible.
- 7.4 In particular, the Committee noted the recommendation regarding the publication of External Examiners reports to students. The Committee acknowledged that the reports may require redaction and may complicate appeals. The Committee noted that this recommendation may arise from a conflict between practices in Scotland and England. The Committee considered the appropriateness of the publication of a synopsis of the External Examiners reports and associated information. The Committee also considered asking External Examiners to provide a summary as part of their report, suitable for publication.
- 7.5 The Committee agreed that it may be appropriate for the reports to be uploaded to MyAberdeen along with Annual Course Review (ACR) forms.
- 7.6 The Committee noted that the outcome had been publicised to the University Community and suggested that more be done to deliver the positive message of the work being taken across the University.

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

(copy filed as UCTL/121218/004)

- 8.1 The Committee received the update on the review of Policies and Practices for Accessible and Inclusive Learning. The Committee agreed with the progression of the review. The Committee noted that Students should be included in the composition, along with academic representatives and professional services representatives. The Committee also proposed a member of the Centre of Academic Development (CAD) be added to the membership.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 6 February 2018 at 2pm, in Committee Room 2, University Office.

CHANGES IN REGULATIONS FOR VARIOUS DEGREES

(copy filed as UCTL/121218/005)

- 10.1 The Committee approved, for its part, the draft Resolution Changes in 'Regulations for Various Degrees'. The Resolution enacts changes in degree regulations recommended by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).

MINUTES AND UPDATE REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

- 13.1 The Committee noted the minutes as provided by the sub-committees as follows:

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| (i) | Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) | <i>(copy filed as UCTL/121218/006a)</i> |
| (ii) | Postgraduate Taught Committee (PGTC) | <i>(copy filed as UCTL/121218/006b)</i> |
| (iii) | Undergraduate Committee (UGC) | <i>(to follow, UCTL/121218/006c)</i> |