

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE (UEC)

Minute of the Meeting held on 25 August 2022

Present: Ruth Taylor (Chair), Akua Agyeman, Euan Bain, John Barrow, Lyn Batchelor, Jason Bohan, Abbe Brown, Bill Harrison, Kirsty Kiezebrink, David McCausland, Samantha Newington, Rona Patey, Shona Potts, Susan Stokeld, and Joshua Wright with Simon Bains, Julie Bray, Scott Carle, Nick Edwards, Gillian Mackintosh, Fiona Ritchie, Patricia Spence, Louisa Stratton and Emma Tough (Clerk) in attendance

Apologies: Harminder Battu, Leigh Bjorkvoll, Stuart Durkin, Richard Hepworth, Alison Jenkinson, Graeme Nixon, Michelle Pinard, Anne-Michelle Slater, Steve Tucker, Russell Williams, Graeme Kirkpatrick, Brian Henderson, Tracey Innes and Louisa Stratton

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JUNE 2022*(copy filed as UEC/250822/001)*

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed members to the meeting of the University Education Committee (UEC). The Chair specifically welcomed new members to the UEC. Members of the Committee considered the minute of the meeting held on 23 June 2022 and approved it as an accurate representation of discussions held.

MATTERS ARISING*(copy filed as UEC/250822/002)*

- 2.1 Members of the Committee noted the actions arising following the meeting of UEC held on 23 June 2022. The actions were recorded as complete or in progress. The Committee noted that all actions could be marked as complete following the conclusion of the calendar month.
Action: Clerk

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

- 3.1 Members of the Committee acknowledged the agenda item on Health, Safety and Wellbeing, noting that while the Campus Planning Group (CPG) was still meeting, they were doing so on a less frequent basis.
- 3.2 A member of the Committee raised concern regarding arrangements for the return of students to the Foresterhill campus, ahead of the 2022/23 academic year. The Committee noted concerns raised in regard to mixed messaging surrounding issues including ventilation and required levels of social distancing. The Committee noted the importance of ensuring Schools were given accurate advice to enable planning for the academic year to take place.
- 3.3 A member of the Committee noted concerns raised by staff in regard to the entry and exit of students from lecture theatres, often resulting in queuing or crowding in small spaces. The Chair, a member of the CPG, agreed to raise this issue with the Group.
Action: Chair

RISK REGISTER

(copy filed as UEC/250822/003)

- 4.1 Members of the Committee received the updated Risk Register for Education, available as *UEC/250822/003*. Members of the Committee noted and agreed proposed changes to the Register ahead of the 2022/23 academic year. The Committee noted that the Register would return to future meetings of the UEC, as appropriate, to enable review and comment.
Action: Chair/Clerk
- 4.2 A member of the Committee proposed the addition of a risk (or edit of an existing risk) to reflect the return of students to an on-campus experience following the impact of Covid-19. It was agreed that the Register would be reviewed to reflect this concern.
Action: Chair/Clerk

ABERDEEN 2040 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

(copy filed as UEC/250822/004)

- 5.1 Members of the Committee noted the paper providing an update on the progress being made on the Aberdeen 2040 Implementation Plan. The Committee noted that the plan would also be considered at the next meeting of the UEC, in addition to specific actions for progression during the 2022/23 academic year.
Action: Chair/Gillian Mackintosh

NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS) RESULTS

(copy filed as UEC/250822/005)

- 6.1 The Chair introduced the item on the National Student Survey (NSS) results by formally recording that the University was now 4th in the UK for overall student satisfaction. The Chair thanked members of the UEC and colleagues from across the University for their hard work in achieving such a positive result.
- 6.2 Members of the Committee noted that individual Schools and disciplines had now received reports providing specific results and text comments in more detail. A member of the Committee noted that the data provided to Schools was extremely helpful, but not always broken down to each discipline level. The Committee was assured that this would be fed back to the Planning team and to determine if it would be possible to refine the reports any further in the future.
- 6.3 Members of the Committee recognised the specific areas for action following the publication of the results. Assessment and Feedback was highlighted as an area in which the University had significantly improved but in which further work and improvement was necessary. Members of the Committee, in respect of Assessment and Feedback, noted work being led by the Dean for Educational Innovation in this regard. An institutional action plan would be available to UEC at its next meeting.
Action: Kirsty Kiezebrink
- 6.4 Members of the UEC noted feedback from the Student Support and Experience Committee (SSEC) on the NSS results. The SSEC noted the excellent results received and highlighted Learning Communities as the category in which the University had dropped in ranking. Whilst excellent work was ongoing in this area, further review would take place through SSEC.
Action: Abbe Brown/Nick Edwards

PASTORAL SUPPORT REVIEW UPDATE

(copy filed as UEC/240222/006)

- 7.1 Members of the Committee received the paper providing an update on the work of the Pastoral Review Task and Finish Group (TFG). Overall, members of the Committee were supportive of the content, principles and aims of the TFG's report, acknowledging its focus on supporting students at all levels.
- 7.2 Members of the Committee, however, noted significant concern, and the concern of their colleagues, regarding the workload associated with the proposals contained within the report. Members of the Committee further noted the innovations, particularly those in relation to IT provision, required to ensure the success of the proposals.
- 7.3 Members of the Committee noted that it may be necessary to implement the proposals in a phased way, to allow the IT provision required to follow should the recommendations from the review be approved.
- 7.4 Members of the Committee raised existing concerns regarding the engagement of students with their Personal Tutors. Members noted that students, in particular those most in need of interaction with a PT, sometimes fail to interact or attend meetings. The Committee discussed the importance of (i) providing training and support to PTs and (ii) educating students of the purpose and relevance of the PT system.
- 7.5 The Committee was advised that the report would proceed to the Senate for discussion and an academic view, before returning to a future meeting of the UEC for final discussion and approval.

Action: Abbe Brown

MONITORING, ABSENCE AND ENGAGEMENT REVIEW UPDATE

(copy filed as UEC/250822/007)

- 8.1 Members of the Committee received the paper providing an update on the report and associated appendices of the Monitoring, Absence and Engagement Task and Finish Group (TFG). In addition to the paper, the Chair of the TFG provided a presentation on the progress of the group, a copy of which is available in SharePoint.
- 8.2 Following the presentation, members of the Committee expressed their support for the principles and aims of the report, however, again noted concern in respect of workload implications and a lack of IT resource.
- 8.3 Members of the Committee noted that existing policy materials would require review and update as a consequence of the proposed changes. It was noted that this needs to be presented in a phased way, to reflect the changes that could be made with immediate effect, and those requiring resource to support their implementation. Members of the Committee were informed that work in regard to policy revision was underway.

Action: Abbe Brown/Academic Services Team

DEADLINE FOR THE RETURN OF RESULTS 2022/23

(copy filed as UEC/240222/011)

9.1 Members of Committee received the final paper outlining the deadlines for the return of results in the 2022/23 academic year. The concerns of members of the UEC, raised at previous meetings of the Committee, regarding the timescales and workload implications for staff were acknowledged on presentation of the final dates. It was noted that, in advance of the 2023/24 academic year, work would be undertaken to review assessment and feedback policy, to ensure a workable approach for all.

9.2 Members of the Committee approved the 2022/23 dates as contained within the paper.

Action: Clerk

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1 Members of the Committee noted that the next meeting of the UEC would be held at 10.05am on Monday 10 October 2022.

INTERNAL TEACHING REVIEW (ITR) GUIDANCE

(copy filed as UEC/250822/009)

11.1 Members of the Committee approved the attached updated Internal Teaching Review (ITR) guidance notes, amended to reflect a return to on-campus ITRs, where possible, from the commencement of the 2022/23 academic year.

Action: Clerk

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE DIPLOMA OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN DENTAL TECHNOLOGY

(copy filed as UEC/250822/010)

11.2 On the recommendation of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) members of the Committee approved the attached document, detailing changes to the regulations governing the Diploma of Higher Education in Dental Technology.

Action: Clerk

WINTER GRADUATIONS 2022 SCHEDULE

(copy filed as UEC/250822/011)

11.3 Members of the Committee approved the schedule for the Winter Graduations 2022.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE SCHEDULE 2022/23

(copy filed as UEC/250822/012)

12.1 The Committee noted the paper containing the dates of the Education Committees in 2022/23 and the proposed timings of associated agenda items.

DEANS APPOINTMENTS

12.2 The Committee received a short verbal update on the Education Deans, noting that the Deans for Employability and Entrepreneurship, and Educational Innovation will be up for review and renew in the next few months. Adverts for the Deans for Quality Assurance and Enhancement, and Student Support and Experience will be going out to the University for these academic appointments in September.

INSTITUTIONAL LIAISON MEETING WITH QAA SCOTLAND

(copy filed as UEC/250822/013)

- 12.3 The Committee noted the minute of the second Institutional Liaison Meeting with QAA Scotland.

AOCB

- 12.4 Before drawing the meeting to a close, the Chair informed Members of the Committee of forthcoming changes to Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (QAAS) institution review process. It was noted that a briefing paper on the new model of review, the Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) and Institutional Liaison Meetings (ILM) would follow to members of the Committee by way of circulation.

Action: Clerk