

Meeting Number APC12/4 confirmed Document APC13/1/1

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2013

PRESENT: Professor J Wilson (Chair), Professor R Whittaker, Mr R Ruthven,

Professor B Steves, Mr I Stewart, Ms C Fyfe, Ms D Borrett, Ms J Main,

Professor D Smith, Dr J Edwards,

APOLOGIES: Professor D Greenhalgh, Professor N James, Mr A Pierotti, Ms S McGiffen

BY INVITATION: Mr D Myles, Ms T Boyle, Professor K Gartland, Dr P Anderson and Ms K

Thomson

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms J Malcolm (Secretary)

AGENDA

12.149 Approved: At the request of the Chair, item A11 was moved to item C1 on the

agenda

MINUTES

12.150 Considered The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Academic Policy

Committee meeting held on 6 March 2013 (Doc APC12/49/1).

12.151 Resolved: That, with the amendment of some minor typographical errors, the

minutes be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

(Action: JKM).

MATTERS ARISING

Blended Learning Roadmap (arising on APCMin 12.121)

12.152 Reported: By the Vice Chair that, in order to ensure full alignment with the Draft

Strategy for Learning, the Blended Learning Roadmap would be

considered at the next meeting of LTSC in June and brought to the first

meeting of APC in session 2013/14.

<u>Academic Policy Committee and Learning and Teaching Sub Committee: Sub-Committees and Working Groups (arising on APCMin 12.137)</u>

12.153 Reported: By the Chair that,

- i. an Away Day to consider various governance issues associated with APC and its sub committees would be held on 25 June 2013;
- ii. due to diary commitments it had not been possible to organise this event so that any necessary recommendations could be made to Senate at its meeting in June;
- iii. it was anticipated that any recommendations resulting from this Away Day would be made to the first meeting of Senate in session 13/14.

Review and Rebranding of Consideration of Special Factors (arising on APCMin 12.131)

12.154 Reported: By the Director of the Student Experience that,

- i. Senate had now had the opportunity to consider and approve, in principle, the revised process subject to minor amendments;
- The CSF Working Group would be meeting shortly to consider the comments from Senate and proposed amendments and to update the policy for subsequent promulgation across the University.

Employability (arising on APCMin 12.128)

12.155 Reported: By the Director of the Student Experience that,

- following on from APC approval in March of a distinctive GCU definition of 'employability' work is now underway on the development of the GCU Careers Development and Employability Strategy;
- ii. That this strategy will be a partner document to the Student Experience Framework and Strategy for Learning and together they will specifically drive GCU careers support for students to improve levels of graduate employment.

Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR)

12.156 Reported: By the Secretary that,

- the planned HEAR Pilot scheduled for selected programmes with students graduating in July had been postponed as a result of a necessary ISIS update which could not be rolled out by Unit 4 until August/September;
- ii. as a result HEAR would now be piloted with two programmes within the School of Health and Life Sciences, to coincide with the November graduations;

iii. a further update on the progress of the Pilot would be provided at the September meeting of APC.

STRATEGY FOR LEARNING

12.157 Considered The draft Strategy for Learning 2013 – 2020 (Doc APC12/65/1)

12.158 Reported By the Director of GCU LEAD that,

- The new Strategy for Learning (SfL) had at its core a single goal to develop graduates who will be proficient in their discipline, enterprising, responsible and capable of fulfilling leadership roles in different organisational and cultural contexts;
- ii. the new Strategy for Learning (SfL) had been produced following extensive external and internal consultation and had been informed by international and national developments and effective practice in learning, teaching and assessment;
- iii. the SfL supports the University's seven key Strategic Goals, but particularly,
 - globally networked
 - excellence in education
 - delivering for the business, public and voluntary sectors and,
 - o committed to the common good.

12.159 Discussion

Members welcomed the new strategy and congratulated all those who had been involved in its development. However, some members raised a number of issues relating to Appendix D, 'Measures of Performance' and, in particular, shared concerns that the measures as identified were too stark and appeared not to acknowledge how student performance may be affected by factors external to the University, outwith our control, which could impact seriously on our ability to achieve them. Members also felt that there were some omissions to the MoP including, the measurement of the use of technology in learning and teaching.

The issue of the lack alignment between the Measures of Performance and the KIS return was also noted and the Acting Director of Policy and Planning agreed to work with appropriate colleagues to provide detailed definitions to help align the MoPs to the KIS return.

12.160 Resolved

That the Strategy for Learning be commended to Senate for approval subject to the following amendments,

- The 'Measures of Performance' should be amended to include the opportunity for contextualisation of data which would allow programme teams to address the impact on provision of external factors;
- ii. There should be a Measure of Performance relating to the use of technology in learning and teaching;

iii. In the longer term, clarification as to how the Measures of Performance align to KIS definitions should be provided.

PORTFOLIO REFRESH TEMPLATE

12.161 Considered: A proposal for a template for the Portfolio Refresh to ensure consistency

across Schools (Doc APC12/50/1)

12.162 Reported By the Acting Director of Policy and Planning that,

- as a result of discussions at Executive Board, she had been asked to design a template for all Schools to complete in order to ensure consistency of the presentation of their Portfolio Refresh proposals;
- the School of Engineering and the Built Environment had requested certain changes to the template to represent their own specific school-based requirements;
- iii. if changes were to be made to the template to accommodate one school's requirements then the intended purpose of the template would be negated; the suggested template as provided by SEBE did not encompass all the information that Senate would require when Portfolio Refresh proposals are presented in October.
- 12.163 Discussion: School-based members of the Committee were of the opinion that the

original template provided by Policy and Planning did meet the needs of all schools subject to clarification of the references to University Strategic

Objectives and the Strategy for Learning.

12.164 Resolved: That the template be approved subject to the clarification of linkages to

GCU Strategic Objectives and the Strategy for Learning.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE FRAMEWORK 2013 - 17

12.165 Considered: The Student Experience Framework for 2013 – 17 setting out the

strategic direction for the delivery of the GCU student experience

(Doc APC12/64/1)

12.166 Reported: By the Director of the Student Experience that,

- The Framework had been designed as a result of a year-long development process which involved staff and students from across the University, culminating in a Student Experience Summit held in January 2013;
- The Framework had also been informed by consideration of the strategic approach that competitors are taking to the student experience;
- iii. The Framework had been endorsed by the Executive Board at its meeting on 15 May 2013;

- iv. The Student Experience Framework had been developed as a institutional level document that sets out the strategic direction for the delivery of the GCU student experience, with the overarching vision that, by 2017, 100% of students will recommend the University as offering a truly outstanding student experience;
- v. The Framework set out:
 - a. what students can expect from the University and what, in turn, the University expects from our students ("The GCU Commitment") and
 - b. our key priority student experience themes for 2013-2017 and how these will be delivered and measured;
- vi. A more concise, applicant/student version of the Framework, focusing on the GCU Commitment, will be developed for launch in September 2013;
- vii. The Framework was closely aligned with the University's other key strategies which together supported the delivery of the institutional goals and KPIs as outlined in the University Strategy for 2015:
- viii. Once the Framework is approved a Student Experience Forum will be established reporting directly to Executive Board in addition to the development and launch of Student Experience Webpages.
- 12.167 Discussed:

Members welcomed the paper and noted the extensive consultation that had been undertaken as part of its development. A number of areas of comment emerged from discussions including:

- the lack of alignment of the timescales of Framework with other key University strategies, in particular the Strategy for Learning which covered the period 2013 – 20;
- ii. the aspiration for 100% of our students to be willing to recommend GCU as offering a truly outstanding student experience was considered to be a very challenging target;
- iii. the focus on the student experience out of the classroom insofar as a student's experience is affected by factors which happen outwith the University would not be possible to measure;
- iv. how the Framework built on outcomes of the previous Student Experience Project carried out by CRLL was not clear;
- v. the augmentation of the membership of the Student Experience Forum to include a members of teaching staff and an appropriate colleague from CRLL;

The Director of the Student Experience explained that timescales associated with strategy had been aligned to other key strategies currently in place within the University, and, in particular, the Marketing

Strategy, and that on this basis, Executive Board had not commented on the timeframe proposed. However, she acknowledged that it would be appropriate to reconsider alignment to all key university strategies to ensure that the Framework dovetailed meaningfully with those currently approved and in place.

In terms of the aspiration for 100% of our students to be willing to recommend GCU as a truly outstanding student experience, the Director of the Student Experience explained that this issue had generated a lot of debate at Executive Board and was fully supported by the Board and the Students' Association.

Following further debate the Chair obtained general consensus that the 100% target should be viewed as a customer service aspiration on the basis that aspiring to anything less was not appropriate.

It was also acknowledged that the previous CRLL Student Experience Project had produced significant and valuable research data and discussions at the Student Experience Summit which involved colleagues from across the University, including CRLL, had informed the development of the new Framework.

Suggestions to augment the membership of the Forum, made in order to draw on the valuable experience which exists within the University, was accepted by the Director of the Student Experience.

It was further acknowledged that the 'whole life' student experience could be acknowledged in the Framework but that it would not be appropriate for the University to take any responsibility for factors not immediately within its control.

12.168 Resolved:

That, subject to the following amendments, the Student Experience Framework be approved and commended to Senate for consideration and approval.

- Membership of the Student Experience Forum should augmented to include a representative from the Student Experience Project in CRLL and a member of teaching staff;
- ii. The current timeframe attributed to the Framework should be reviewed, if appropriate, to ensure it aligned with other key University strategies.

KEY INFORMATION SETS

12.169 Reported:

By the Statutory Returns Manager that

- The preparation of the 2013 KIS submission was being coordinated by Policy and Planning, working closely with Schools and other key stakeholders across GCU through the KIS Working Group;
- ii. As a result of preparations for the 11/12 KIS return a number of actions were put in place and endorsed by APC which have informed practice and the production of data during session 12/13;

- iii. GCU is due to submit the data collection for the second KIS in August 2013;
- iv. As for last year, data will be submitted for 89 programmes although the programmes themselves have changed;
- Internal data has been collected relating to accreditation, programme delivery, learning and teaching activity and assessment activity;
- vi. Data on graduate employment from the DLHE Survey and student satisfaction from the NSS survey will added by HESA in July 2013;
- vii. Data collected so far indicates that scheduled learning, teaching and placement activity at GCU has moved closer to the KIS 2012 sector median and assessment by written exams has decreased bringing it further below last year's sector median.
- 12.170 Reported: By the Chair that
 - i. The oral report be noted;
 - ii. A fuller report reflecting on lessons learned from the gathering of KIS data in session 12/13 will be presented to the next meeting of APC;
 - iii. A meeting is currently being arranged with all stakeholders to reflect on the current status of the data submissions.

ENHANCEMENT LED INTERNAL SUBJECT REVIEW – DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

12.171 Considered: The report and action plan in relation to the Department of Business Management's ELISR held on 6/7 February 2013 (Doc APC12/61/1)

12.172 Reported: By the Chair of the ELISR Panel that:

- i. The report reflected a number of areas of innovative practice including (although not limited to),
 - a. The Fashion Higher Hub
 - b. The extensive use of relevant case studies that could be shared widely throughout the University
 - c. The allocation of £1K to each research student to attend appropriate conference and development opportunities
- ii. There were a number of areas explored over the duration of the event that the Panel felt required some attention in order that the student experience was fully enhanced and these are highlighted within the report and addressed within the Action Plan;
- iii. Significantly, there appeared to be a mismatch between the Department's perception of GCU graduates' preparedness for employment and the views of employers themselves which will

require attention by the Department but will also hopefully be addressed via the University's Careers and Employability Strategy;

- iv. There were also a number of issues that required to be addressed outwith the Department of Business Management and on which he sought the Committee's advice as to the appropriate route for action;
- v. On a more general note, he felt the process of ELISR was currently being carried out in a timescale that did not always allow for full consideration of additional documentation submitted by areas under review and that revised guidelines for the University's Enhancement Led Internal Subject Review process should be developed to ensure that the process is carried out as transparently and thoroughly as possible;
- vi. These guidelines should also include more robust detail on the composition of external Panel representatives and how as a University we assure ourselves that individuals who are asked to participate are fully able to contribute to all aspects of discussions during the course of the review.

12.173 Discussion

Members noted the various recommendations and associated plans for action contained within the documents presented to Committee and agreed that the areas contained within the report for University consideration required to be highlighted to appropriate Directorates for further action.

12.174 Resolved

- That the report and action plan in relation to the Department of Business Management's ELISR held on 6/7 February 2013 be approved;
- ii. That the recommendations contained on P6 of the report for University consideration be directed for action as follows:
 - a. Bullet points 1 and 2 Careers and Employability Service
 - b. Bullet point 3 Global Admissions
 - c. Bullet point 4 GCU LEAD
 - d. Bullet point 5 Directorate of People
 - e. Bullet point 6 Head of SAS and ISIS Operational Business Support Unit
 - f. Bullet point 7 Department of Governance and Quality

FEEDBACK ENHANCEMENT GROUP

12.175 Considered: A progress report on activities of the Feedback Enhancement Group (Doc APC12/53/1)

12.176 Reported: By Chair of the Feedback Enhancement Group that,

- The paper represented a summary of activities and actions carried out by the group, or on its behalf since its establishment in June 2011 and, more particularly in session 12/13;
- ii. One of the key activities carried out this academic session had been the piloting of the EvaSys Module Feedback Survey Pilot carried out in collaboration with the Department of Governance

and Quality in November 2012;

- iii. The output of the Pilot had been very informative but had required a significant amount of work in order to design and deliver system in time for use in Trimester 1;
- The time required to confirm the accuracy of the data obtained from central timetabling, Schools or module leaders was also substantial;
- v. The benefits of rolling out a pilot phase, however, should make any future usage considerably easier, particularly as schools now have a clearer shared understanding of what is required;
- vi. Staff were encouraged to comment on any aspect of the pilot and all comments received were favourable;
- vii. The speed with which scanning, data analysis, report generation and a range of report returns could be carried out was impressive;
- viii. Electric Paper (the company who produce EvaSys) also provide access to a wide range of report generation tools which may be of considerable use in any future trends analysis GCU may carry out;
- ix. An analysis of student feedback from the previous 12 months is required information for Enhancement Led Institutional Review (scheduled for session 2014/15);
- x. The EvaSys pilot trial demonstrates that comprehensive module feedback surveying and analysis for all modules is achievable but to attain this goal would require an extended commitment from Schools and professional support staff to implement;
- xi. As there is no specific policy, nor a University-wide system of module evaluation, the University should consider the adoption of a system tool to allow comprehensive module feedback data to be gathered from students and the development of a formal policy;
- xii. Should the University wish to proceed with further use of EvaSys negotiations for an extended trial or full purchase will be necessary and the costs involved are likely to exceed £78K plus VAT for full purchase.

12.177 Discussion:

Members thanked the Chair of the Feedback Enhancement Group for the extensive work that had been carried out over the last few months and in particular the work on the pilot of the EvaSys system. Members noted that although the University has no formalised module evaluation system in place that informal evaluation is carried out across most modules which provides valuable feedback to module and programme leaders which, in turn, informs enhancement activities. However, it was agreed that a more formalised system should be implemented without delay to ensure a cohesive approach to this critical activity.

12.178 Resolved:

- i. That the Report of the Feedback Enhancement Group be noted and commended to Senate for consideration;
- ii. That a University Policy on module evaluation and feedback should be developed;
- iii. That a final decision on resource requirements required for implementation of a formalised University-wide Module evaluation tool should be made without further delay.

FINAL REPORT OF THE GCU WORK AND STUDY RESEARCH REPORT

12.179 Considered: The final report of GCU's Work and Study research project by the Centre

for Research in Lifelong Learning (CRLL) (Doc APC12/52/1)

12.180 Reported: By Dr Pauline Anderson, the report co-author, that:-

- The report represented the final stage in GCU's work and Study Research project;
- ii. The project set out to provide up-to-date, GCU-specific information and analysis on work and study in order to establish:
 - a. How many full-time undergraduate students work
 - b. Why they work
 - c. How they manage to balance work/life/study
 - d. The impact of working on course and career progression and,
 - e. The identification of potential benefits
- That a number of updates, addressing some of the recommendations made in the report had been provided to APC by the Head of Careers and Employability (tabled paper APC12/66/1)
- iv. In particular, APC is asked to note that the over-arching recommendation made in the report to establish a Working Group to oversee the progress of the outcomes of the study has been superseded by recommendation made by the Head of Careers and Employability (see tabled paper APC12/66/1) ie, that the Student Experience Forum and the progress reporting of the Career Development and Employability Strategy should be agreed as the most appropriate mechanisms for overseeing and facilitating the detailed recommendations made in the report.

12.181 Discussed:

Members welcomed the final stage report of the Work and Study Research project and noted it provided a robust evidence base for new Career Development and Employability Strategy, the Strategy for Learning and the Student Experience Framework. The tabled update paper provided by the Head of Careers and Employability was noted by members who also recognised that some of the recommendations made in the report were also addressed via activities proposed under the Student Experience Framework.

12.182 Resolved:

i. That the report and its recommendations be noted and approved, ie, that,

- a) GCU should develop a University-wide policy document on paid student employment during study. This document should address several key issues in relation to working whilst studying and should contain sections aimed primarily at students, staff and external stakeholders, including employers
- Practical steps should be taken to address the tension between affording students flexibility to accommodate paid work and other commitments whilst ensuring course and attendance requirements
- Mechanisms should be developed to increase the number of students undertaking internships
- d) Consideration should be given as to how best to celebrate, promote and sustain GCU's culture of student volunteering and commitment to the 'common weal';
- e) Students should be encouraged to reflect on the paid and unpaid work they have undertaken and the transferability, and how they present the transferability, of this experience/knowledge/skills;
- f) The University should continue to support ethical term-time paid employment;
- g) Students should be actively encouraged to think about their future careers as early as possible and not to delay their graduate job search;
- h) Much attention has focused on the transitions to and early experiences of GCU students, equal attention should now be paid to the later experiences of and transition from GCU extending to early labour market experiences, early destinations and the problem of 'localism.
- ii. That the supplementary paper and recommendations made by the Head of Careers and Employability be endorsed.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

12.183 Considered

The revised GCU Complaints Handling Procedure, developed in line with the Model Complaints Handling Procedure for Higher Education, published by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in December 2012 (Doc APC12/58/1)

12.184 Reported

By the Academic Policy Manager that

- A model Complaints Handling Procedure (MCHP) for the Higher Education Sector was published on 19th December 2012 in line with the Public Services Reform Act (Scotland) Act 2010;
- Under Section 16C of that Act all Universities were notified that the model CHP applied to them with effect from 19 December 2012;
- iii. By 28 June 2013 all HEIs must confirm to the SPSO their adoption of the MCHP (or intention to adopt);
- iv. All HEIs must implement the MCHP by 30 August 2013;
- v. The Glasgow Caledonian University Complaints Handling

Procedure conforms to prescriptive guidelines laid out by the Ombudsman and as a result there is very little scope for amendment or addition to the content other than sections where we have been given permission to include GCU-specific information, namely,

- a. Section 1 The Foreword
- b. Section 2 Governance
- c. Section 7 Maintaining Confidentiality
- d. Section 9 Managing Unacceptable behaviour (although it should be noted that this section is based on a separate SPSO guidance document);
- vi. The attached briefing document which prefaced the CHP outlined a number of implications for GCU of the adoption of the model CHP including,
 - a. The requirement for a programme of training and staff awareness raising across the University;
 - The need to establish appropriate processes within Schools and Departments to log, monitor and report on frontline complaints;
 - The necessity to develop an appropriate IT system to capture complaints data which meets the publishing and reporting requirements required by the adoption of model CHP

12.185 Discussion

Although noting the limitations for amendment to the proposed CHP, the President of the Students' Association requested that some consideration be given to the inclusion within the procedure of some indicative 'outcomes' for complainants.

12.186 Resolved

That the GCU Complaints Handling Procedure be commended to Senate for approval subject to further discussion between the Department of Governance and Quality and the President of the Students' Association on the inclusion of some indicative guidance on potential 'outcomes' open to complainants.

REVISION TO THE RPL POLICY

12.187 Considered:

A paper from GCU LEAD proposing revisions to the RPL policy, enabling the double counting of credit for completed study at the same level (APC12/64/1)

12.188 Reported:

By the Director of GCU LEAD that

- APC was requested to approve a revision to the GCU RPL policy in relation to criteria which enable the double counting of credit from one completed qualification to another at the same level;
- ii. This revision had been driven by (although not exclusive to) the growing demand from prospective postgraduate students, already in possession of Masters qualifications, seeking to undertake further Masters qualification's to extend or specialise in their field of professional practice for career development;
- iii. Typically these prospective students will have already undertaken a research module equivalent to that contained in

the Masters programme to which they are seeking entry;

iv. Where this, or other levels of similarity occur, to avoid unnecessary duplication of learning and to provide an potential incentive to undertake (further) postgraduate study at GCU, the ability to double count be advantageous.

12.189 Discussion:

Members noted the proposal but retained serious concerns that the practice of 'double counting' was at odds with established academic practice across the HE sector. However, further debate established that if the wording of 7.12 was amended to remove reference to 'double counting' then members would be comfortable with the revision to the procedure. The Director of GCU LEAD also re-assured members that the practice of 'double counting', in these circumstances only, was now common-place throughout the HE sector.

12.190 Resolved

That the proposed revision be approved, subject to the amendment of wording in Section 7.12 to remove the phrase 'double counting' of credit should be avoided'.

ACADEMIC CASE

12.191 Considered: An Academic Case from the Graduate School for a Professional Doctorate (Public Policy and Management) (APC12/59/1)

12.192 Discussion The Chair noted that although the academic case had been signed off by

the Director of the Graduate School, there appeared to be no

confirmation that the academic area providing teaching contribution and *ergo* resources had signed off the proposal. Members considered that this was a serious omission in the approval process and requested that, in future, all necessary signatories be secured prior to academic cases

being submitted to APC for approval.

12.193 Resolved: i. That the Academic Case be approved;

ii. That prior to submission of future Academic Cases to APC, relevant signatures from all contributory academic areas must be included within appropriate documentation.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES – WITHDRAWAL OF EXIT AWARDS

12.194 Approved: The withdrawal of the following exit awards from the School's approved register of programmes, in line with the Portfolio refresh principles:

- i. BSc/BSc (Hons) Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (Post Registration)
- ii. BSC/BSc (Hons) Community Nursing with SPQ (Post Registration)
- iii. PgD Community Nursing with SPQ
- iv. BSc/BSc (Hons)/Graduate Diploma Advancing Practice in Primary Care (Post Registration)
- v. PgC Health and Social Care (Leadership in Practice Learning)
- vi. PgC Health and Social Care (Leadership in Practice Learning Social Work)
- vii. MSc Health and Social Care (Social Work)
- viii. MSc Health and Social Care (Employment Rehabilitation)
- ix. MSc Health and Social Care (Cardiac Rehabilitation)

x. MSc Health and Social Care (Falls Prevention)

xi. MSc Health and Social Care (Multiple Sclerosis Management)

MINUTES OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING SUB COMMITTEE

12.195 Approved: Minutes of the Learning and Teaching Sub Committee of 24th October

2012 and 23rd January 2013 (LTSC12/23/1 and LTSC12/30/2)

CHANGE OF PROGRAMME TITLE – GRADUATE SCHOOL

12.196 Approved: A proposal from the Graduate School to re-name the Masters of

Research (MRes) programme to the MSc Research Methods (with

similarly named PgC and PgD exit awards)(APC12/62/1)

CONCEPT PAPER

12.197 Approved: A proposal from the School of Engineering and Built Environment for the

development of an Integrated Masters Programme of Study: MEng (Hons) Digital Security Forensic and Ethical Hacking (APC12/63/1)

UPDATE ON 2013 LEAGUE TABLES

12.198 Received: An update report from the Director of Policy and Planning on the

University's performance in league tables (APC12/51/1)

CHAIR'S ACTIONS

12.199 Received: Chair's Action to approve an Academic and Business Case from SHLS for

the MSc Forensic Mental Health programme (APC12/56/1)

12.200 Received: Chair's Action to approve the addition of a GCU London delivery option

for the MSc International Project Management (Oil and Gas) Programme

(APC12/60/1)

ELIR 3

12.201 Received: A paper advising APC of the timeframe and recommended actions in

advance of the third cycle of QAA ELIR activity, scheduled for session

2014/15 (APC12/57/1)