Meeting Number APC13/2
Confirmed

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2013

PRESENT:	Professor I Cameron, Mr N Clark, Dr J Edwards, Mr S Holt, Mr M Jones, Mr M Lamb, Ms A McCulloch, Ms S McGiffen, Dr S Rate, Mr R Ruthven, Ms E Smith, Professor B Steves, Mr I Stewart, Ms K Thomson, Professor R Whittaker (Vice-Chair).
APOLOGIES:	Professor D Greenhalgh, Mr S Laing, Professor D Smith, Professor V Webster, Professor J Wilson.
BY INVITATION:	Ms M Alexander (item A5), Ms P Anderson and Ms J Brown (items B1 and B7), Mrs I Bruce (to provide updates under matters arising), Professor L Creanor (item A6), Ms A McCulloch (item A7).
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mrs M Anderson (Secretary)

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair acknowledged that Mr Iain Stewart had been recently re-elected for his second term of office and Mr Martin Jones for his first, both of whom would serve for a period of three years. She also thanked Dr Pierotti for his valuable contribution to the work of the APC as staff nominee for the last three years. She also welcomed Ms M Alexander, Professor L Creanor, Ms A McCulloch, Ms J Brown and Ms P Anderson who were in attendance to speak to their respective items.

MINUTES

13.051	Considered	The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Academic Policy Committee (APC) held on 18th September (Doc APC13/18/1).
13.052	Reported	By the Director of Policy and Planning Dr J Edwards that she had a small matter to note in respect of the NSS Action Plans (arising 13.027) which she intended to discuss with the PVC Learning & Teaching.
		Mr N Clark, VP Education Students' Association, expressed concerns in respect of the Portfolio Refresh (arising 13.031) in particular, the move from "short-fat" to "long- thin" modules and the impact on students across all levels.

| 13.053 | Resolved | Other than these two items, the minutes of 18 September 2013 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting. |

MATTERS ARISING

Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) (arising 13.006)

| 13.054 | Reported | By Ms K Thomson that due to ongoing software problems the HEAR pilot would not be available for November 2013. Unit 4 were being chased for a solution, however even if a solution was delivered quickly, it would not allow sufficient time to get the HEAR properly formatted for the pilot by Graduation at the end of November. Three other Universities also using ISIS had also pulled out of the HEAR programme. The problems had been raised with Paul Hopkins, Interim Chief Information Officer and Professor John Wilson in his capacity as PVC Learning and Teaching. |

Making the Transition from College to University: the experience of HN Students (arising 13.021)

| 13.055 | Reported | By the Vice-Chair, that the final report would be circulated within the next few weeks internally via Caledonian Connected and externally via practitioner and policy making communities. |

Portfolio Refresh (arising 13.032)

| 13.056 | Reported | By the Vice-Chair, that Senate approved the 2013 proposals received from the three Schools at its meeting on 11 October having been assured that all operational issues would be resolved. |

Dignity at Work and Study Policy (arising 13.033)

| 13.057 | Reported | By the Vice-chair, that this was approved by Senate on 11th October 2013 and would be considered by the Staff Policy Committee on 13th November and Court on 28th November 2013. |

APC Sub-Committee and Working Groups (arising 13.039)

| 13.058 | Reported | By Mrs I Bruce, Head of Academic Governance & Quality Enhancement, that she would be undertaking a review of the terms of reference for this committee, its sub-committees and the remit and number of working groups. This would be undertaken as part of the Academic Governance Review which was ongoing this year in preparation for ELIR. |

External Assessors (arising 13.014)

| 13.059 | Reported | By Mrs I Bruce, that the Department of Governance & Quality Enhancement was continuing to review policies and procedures which related to the mapping of Chapter B7 of the QAA Quality Code in relation to External Examining to ensure that the University was compliant. |

Terms of Reference, Composition and Membership (arising 13.044)

| 13.060 | Reported | By Mrs I Bruce, that this would be undertaken as part of the Academic Governance Review which was ongoing this year in preparation for ELIR. |

APC ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

13.061	Considered	The annual report of APC activities 2012/13 (Doc 13/37/1).
13.062	Resolved	That the report be approved.

STRATEGY FOR LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT

13.063	Considered	A brief summary of progress towards completion of the action plan for implementation of the Strategy for Learning (SfL) (Doc APC13/21/1).
13.064	Reported	By the Vice-Chair and Director of GCU LEAD, that:

      i.   The three ADLTQ's in each of the Schools had met with the Director of GCU LEAD to agree the approach that would be taken to develop School action plans in relation to the SfL. The School action plans would be considered by the School SMGs prior to LTSC in December and by School Boards prior to APC in January.

      ii.   The need to align School SfL Action plans with School NSS action plans where possible was noted.

The following additional updates would be included in the SfL implementation progress report:

Feedback Enhancement Initiative
- *Improvement in the NSS Assessment and Feedback scores which were enhanced by 8% overall and from 10-14% for Feedback questions, in 2013. These were the largest increases in Scotland and of any Alliance University.*
- *The design, authoring and web launch of four new online learning packages for Feedback for Future Learning (FFL) available at: http://www.gcu.ac.uk/futurelearning/onlinelearningunits/*
- *FFL taster videos were recorded over the summer and were used in student induction events by all Schools.*

Research –Teaching Linkages
- *PVC Research will be initiating a piece of work on this after the end of November 2013.*

Heart of the Campus
- *The detailed design work is almost complete and the tender document for the main construction contract is being prepared.*
- *There will be many communications henceforth around the campus using a variety of media about the Heart of the Campus (HoC) progress.*
- *There will inevitably be disruption and increased noise levels particularly during the months of June and July 2014, but the University is working with the Project Managers (Turner & Townsend) to ensure we minimise these. Briefings sessions will be held to keep staff and students updated.*

- *Mr N Clark, VP Education Students' Association, asked that disruption to students be kept to a minimum and for students to be kept fully updated of ongoing developments and actions.*

UPDATE ON GGAP/COLLEGE CONNECT

13.065	Reported	By Ms M Alexander, GCU LEAD, key highlights from the progress update summary report of the GGAP/College Connect Operational Plan (Doc APC13/22/1).

13.066	Discussed	The following points were raised by the Committee:

    i.   In terms of the evaluation strategy, members asked what type of student research had been carried out and suggested that the Students' Association be contacted in order to address any concerns student representatives might have and to obtain their input.

    ii.   With regard to the Associate Student Scheme, Professor L Creanor made a point about access to the ISIS system for non GCU students. Her concerns were that that there would be issues for students being registered on ISIS. However this problem had now been resolved.

    iii.   The Schools and Colleges Engagement and Transitional Team (SCETT) to meet with Mr R Ruthven and other stakeholders to update them regarding what had been put in place for Associate Students.

BLENDED LEARNING ROADMAP 2013-15

13.067	Considered	An outline report of the key areas of blended and online learning to be addressed over the next two years in line with the new SfL (Doc APC13/23/1).

13.068	Reported	By Professor L Creanor, GCU LEAD, that:

i. The blended learning roadmap covered a period of two years and had already been widely circulated for feedback. It was effectively divided into 4 areas – Policy & Strategy, Learning and Teaching, Learning Technology and Continuing Professional Development.

ii. Some key actions had been identified and key target dates. A number of potential resource implications had also been identified.

iii. Under Policy and Strategy one of the actions would be to develop a strategy to guide GCU online distance learning provision. Members highlighted that a broader discussion was needed at senior management level and that it would be better to focus on policy and guidelines rather than strategy at this stage.

iv. Under Learning and Teaching one of the actions would be to create at least two online distance learning programmes in each School aligned to market demand. There was some concern that any such developments should adhere to existing Governance and Quality processes. The Committee was assured that this would be the case.

v. The blended learning roadmap would now be finalised, taking these comments and suggestions into account, and would be circulated to Schools and Central Departments.

FLEXIBLE LEARNING PATHWAYS: TRANSLATING POLICY INTO PRACTICE

13.069	Considered	A proposal for a research project to assess the extent to which flexible learning policy is being translated into effective learning practice (Doc APC13/25/1).
13.070	Reported	By Dr P Anderson and Ms J Brown, CRLL, an overview of the overarching purpose of the proposed research project. The following points were raised by the Committee:-
13.071	Discussed	i. The project/timescale had been agreed subject to minor changes, these should be expanded to include key milestones/deliverables to help inform ongoing work and to ensure consultation with those working on related research/developments in this area. ii. That the revised proposal be agreed by Chair's action rather than being considered at the next APC.

EXITING WITH AN ORDINARY DEGREE AND DEGREE CLASSIFICATION REPORT

13.072	Considered	The final report of the research project, with revised recommendations (Doc APC13/30/1).
13.073	Reported	By Dr P Anderson and Ms J Brown, CRLL, an overview of the final report and recommendations.
13.074	Discussed	The following points were raised by the Committee: i. There was a need to promote the benefits of progression to honours for articulating students and students from MD20 backgrounds which would usefully inform the work of SCETT and College Connect. ii. There should be ongoing gathering and monitoring of graduation data in relation to SIMD and protected characteristics to help establish longer-term patterns and trends. iii. Further nuanced analysis would be pursued with the Schools.

VACANCIES FOR STUDENTS AND GRADUATES – ADVERTISING PROCEDURE

13.075	Considered	A paper from Ms A McCulloch, Head of Careers and Employability with recommendations for improving student access to graduate vacancies and work experience opportunities (Doc APC13/24/1).
13.076	Reported	By the Head of Careers and Employability, that: i. The paper puts forward a number of recommendations to provide GCU students with improved access to graduate and work experience vacancies; provide greater security that advertising is compliant with employment law; to maximise employer engagement to the benefit of

GCU staff, students and employers and to ensure that student had easy, transparent access to vacancies.

ii. She would be meeting with S1Jobs in the coming weeks to establish a link with GCU to improve job prospects for students.

| 13.077 | Resolved | To agree the recommendations in principle and noting that discussions will need to take place with the Schools to refine procedures, taking into consideration specific School employer engagement and vacancy advertising needs. **(Action: Ms A McCulloch)** |

GSBS – AMENDMENT TO PROGRAMME TITLE

| 13.078 | Approved | A change of programme title from the MA Multimedia Communications to MA International Multimedia Communications (Doc APC13/26/1). |

ADDITION TO THE GCU LONDON PROGRAMME PORTFOLIO

| 13.079 | Approved | The addition of the MA Television Fiction Writing programme to the GCU London portfolio of programmes (Doc APC13/27/1). |

LEARNING & TEACHING SUB-COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMPOSITION

| 13.080 | Approved | The updated Terms of Reference and Membership of the LTSC (Doc APC13/28/1). |

LEARNING & TEACHING SUB-COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2012-13

| 13.081 | Approved | The LTSC Annual Report 2012-13 (Doc APC13/29/1). |

QUORUM

The Committee Secretary informed that due to Committee members leaving during the course of the meeting, that the meeting was now inquorate. It was agreed to continue with the remaining business on the agenda.

GSBS PROGRAMME CONCEPT PAPERS AND ACADEMIC CASE

| 13.082 | Approved | Concept papers for new joint BA (Hons) Economics Programmes (Doc APC13/38/1). |

| 13.083 | Approved | Concept papers for new BA (Hons) Risk and Law and LLB (Hons) and Risk programme (Doc APC13/34/1). |

| 13.084 | Approved | A concept paper and academic case for a new MSc Social Business and Microfinance programme (Doc APC13/35/1). |

SoHLS – AMENDMENT TO PROGRAMME TITLE

| 13.085 | Approved | A change of programme title from MSc European Midwifery to MSc Midwifery (European) with effect from the forthcoming graduating cohort in November 2013 (Doc APC13/36/1). |

GCU STRATEGY 2020

13.086   Received   An outline of the developing GCU 2020 Strategy (Doc APC13/31/1).

OUTCOME AGREEMENT SELF-EVALUATION REPORT 2012/13

13.087   Received   The final report of the self-evaluation report required by the Scottish Funding
                           Council (Doc APC13/32/1).

GRADUATION DESTINATIONS 2011/12

13.088   Received   A report from the Head of Careers and Employability providing an overview of
                           the DHLE survey, graduation destinations and commentary. This has been
                           approved by the Executive Board (Doc APC13/20/1).

NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY ACTION PLANS

13.089   Received   School action plans providing a summary of performance, highlighting areas of
                           concern and actions against each NSS category (Doc APC13/19/1).