Meeting Number APC14/3
Confirmed

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2015

PRESENT:	Dr L. Amrane-Cooper, Dr R. Clougherty, Dr M. Ferguson (*vice* Mr I. Stewart), Professor T. Hilton, Dr N. McLarnon, Ms J. Main, Ms S. McGiffen, Mr V. McKay, Mr R. Ruthven, Dr S. Rate, Mr M. Stephenson, Professor V. Webster (Chair), Professor R Whittaker
APOLOGIES:	Mrs M. Henaghan, Mr J. Gaughan, Mr M. Jones, Dr M. Sharp, Mr I. Stewart, Ms E. Wilson
BY INVITATION:	Dr N. Andrew, Professor J. Pugh
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr S. Lopez, Dr L. Walsh, Mr P. Woods (Secretary)

MINUTES

14.180	Considered	The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2014 (APC14/75/1).
14.181	Resolved	That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

Mitigating Circumstances Regulations (*Arising on 14.136*)

14.182	Reported	By the Chair that she requested that Schools deal with groups of students affected by the same or similar issues, e.g. noise from building works, in a consistent way, particularly where students are in their final year. It should not only be a reaction to students who complained where there were verifiably broad issues affecting cohorts.
14.183	Reported	By Dr McLarnon that the ADLTQs were in close contact on this issue.

Qualifications Framework (*Arising on 14.151*)

14.184	Reported	By the Committee Secretary that the amendments had been made by Governance and Quality Enhancement and the document had subsequently been approved by Senate.

14.185	Discussion	Members raised the issue of advice on using level 11 modules at level 10. It was also noted that there was a particular issue with the transition of EBE modules related to pass marks at those levels. This would be discussed under the Assessment Regulations Working Group item.
14.186	Resolved	That the clarity of the guidance in in the Qualifications Framework in relation to use of mixed module levels is reviewed. (**G+QE**)

Module Feedback System Pilot Report (*Arising on 14.167*)

14.187	Reported	By the Director of Student Experience that the business case would be taken to the University Executive Board in due course and the Head of Governance and Quality Enhancement was preparing the case. Due to the contingent resourcing for the rollout of the system would necessarily be subject to a phased timeline.

AFRICAN LEADERSHIP UNLEASHED

14.188	Considered	A proposed collaborative arrangement with African Leadership Unleashed (**APC14/85/1**)
14.189	Reported	By the Chair that the intention was to give the Committee foresight of the proposal and developments to take place relating to approval by the Mauritian Tertiary Education Commission of the proposal. The context for the proposal was that GCU had been approached by Fred Swaneker of ALU to be a potential HE partner. In order to fulfil their ambitious plans, ALU require HE partners and this proposal was to establish the first African Leadership University in Mauritius in partnership with GCU. The proposal was to deliver four GCU undergraduate programmes to ALU students from September 2016 in the subject discipline areas of business, social sciences, computing science and psychology. GCU would have responsibility for the quality assurance framework and providing academic governance oversight. The programmes would be blended learning. The development would potentially involve many colleagues across the University. The Committee would be kept fully appraised of further developments.
14.190	Resolved	That the update be noted.

GCU NEW YORK

14.191	Considered	1. RPL Process for GCU New York (APC14/78/1). 2. Proposal to establish a GCUNY specific academic calendar to comply with US Practices and Regulations (APC14/97/1). 3. GCU New York Board Terms of Reference (APC14/98/1).
		RPL Process
14. 192	Reported	By Dr Clougherty that the RPL process was written to reflect standard US practice whereby students pay for their education by the term and by the module. Credit achieved via RPL could reduce their total cost of degree and is incentive for a target market of part-time students. The aim was to have the RPL process begin early and be completed quickly.

Dr Clougherty briefly summarised the process whereby all eligible students would be invited to a workshop on knowledge management and RPL. Thereafter any student following the process would pursue the following two stages:

1. Self-assessment and concept mapping
2. An interview

An assessor would make the final decision on the appropriateness of the RPL case.

14. 135 Discussion — Members welcomed the process and the methodology of content mapping.

It was clarified that only credit is transferred not specific grades. Under the University's RPL regulations, calculations for Honours, Merit or Distinction are based solely on credit achieved at GCU.

14. 136 Resolved — That the RPL process for GCU New York be approved.

GCU New York Academic Calendar

14.137 Reported — By Dr Clougherty that the calendar was contextualised to comply with US regulations and to take account of US public holidays. Each trimester was required to be of equal length under US regulations.

14.138 Discussion — Members discussed the parity of student experience and potential issues with examinations for the same modules under taken by students in Glasgow or London and New York being scheduled at different times. The Chair informed members that she was working on a review of the academic calendar in collaboration with the Head of Registry and the issue with examinations would be looked at closely.

Members also noted the earlier start date for GCU New York. Dr Clougherty responded that this was in order to be comparable with other US HEIs.

14.139 Resolved

1. That the Calendar is approved in principle.
2. That potential issues with examinations are considered carefully (**Head of Registry/PVC L&SE**).

GCU New York Campus Board

14.140 Reported — By Dr Clougherty that the paper set out the terms of reference for the Campus Board which would be the governance mechanism for the campus. The paper also set out the relationship of the GCU New York Campus Board to the Senate and Standing Committees structure and its relationship to GSBS. The relationship to the University would be slightly different to GCU London as GCU New York was required to be more explicitly autonomous under US regulations.

14.141 Discussion — Members made the following points:

1. That there should be reference to "Schools" rather than GSBS in isolation.
2. The phrase "student learning experience" is replaced by student experience.
3. That the Head of Registry (or nominee) is added to the composition.
4. That the President of the GCU Students' Association (or nominee) replaces GCUSA representative.
5. That the Framework should demonstrate the relationship to the Senate Standing Committee structure.

14.142 Resolved That the document is amended in line with the above comments (**Founding Dean of GCU New York**).

ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS WORKING GROUP REPORT

14. 143 Considered Assessment Regulations Working Group Report (APC14/77/1).

14. 144 Reported By Professor Pugh that the report detailed a number of matters recently considered by the Assessment Regulations Working Group. These were:

1. Consider and approve revisions to the Policy and Procedures for the Creation, Moderation and Administration of Formal Written Examinations.
2. Consider and approve additions to the University Student Feedback Policy.
3. To consider and approve the regulatory text for Integrated Masters programmes.
4. To consider the recommendation for modifications to the MITs form.
5. Consider reinstatement of TPG Assessment Boards' discretion to require students with 30+ failed credit to resit before commencing the dissertation/project.
6. Consider allowing TPG Assessment Boards discretion to compensate a 30 credit module.
7. That a policy should be developed regarding the use of Turnitin.
8. That a database of minor plagiarism versus poor academic practice decisions be maintained, and in sufficient detail to inform future decisions.
9. That there should be detailed recording of all plagiarism offences in order to identify trends, precedent and reporting to the relevant Committee(s).
10. That all plagiarism assessors should be advised to cross check findings with another plagiarism assessor.
11. Consider the continuance of the Assessment Regulations Working Group.
12. Consider establishing a Plagiarism Working Group.

Additions to Student Feedback Policy

14.145 Discussion Members discussed the Addition to University Student Feedback Policy at some length. Members queried the difference between the timescale for coursework and formal written examinations. Professor Pugh stated that it was as a result of linkage to the May Assessment Boards. Another member also raised the issue of the difference with dissertations and possible issues with long thin modules. Members felt that long thin modules should have mechanisms for feedback built in and should not, therefore, be problematic but, overall, they felt that there was scope for confusion amongst students with differing timescales for feedback with different types of assessment.

Modifications to the MITs form

14.146 Reported By Professor Pugh that the issue of students being benefitted by using both MITs and extensions had been raised with the ARWG with a proposal that MITs and extensions should be mutually exclusive. The ARWG had considered this too simplistic but proposed that there should be self-declaration section added to the MITs form to indicate that an extension had already been granted so that MITs Boards are aware of any potential advantage.

Reinstatement of TPG Assessment Boards' discretion to require students with 30+ failed credit to resit before commencing the dissertation/project

14.147 Reported By Professor Pugh that the regulation allowing Assessment Boards to prevent students with 30 or more failed credits progressing to the dissertation stage had been omitted from the updated regulations for taught postgraduate

programmes. There had been lobbying from some staff to reinstate the regulation as, in some cases, it was in the best interests of students not to undertake the work necessary to recover the failed credit in parallel with their project or dissertation.

TPG Assessment Boards discretion to compensate a 30 credit module

14.148 Reported — By Professor Pugh that allowing TPG Assessment Boards discretion to compensate a 30 credit module had been considered by the ARWG and it was proposed for consideration by APC. It was considered that the request was proportionate with the compensation allowed at undergraduate level.

14.149 Discussion — Members discussed the acceptability of allowing as much as 30 credits to be compensated. Professor Pugh informed members that as proportion of a single level it was the same as compensation regulations for undergraduate levels. Members also noted that the proposal was for Assessment Board discretion and were not convinced that it was to students advantage to allow it.

Turnitin Policy development

14.150 Discussion — Professor Whittaker stated that the LTQEN were developing guidelines for use of Turnitin and expressed concern about a single application policy. Other members felt that a flexible use policy was potentially useful and that there could be beneficial linkage to plagiarism policy and procedures.

Level 11 modules in Undergraduate programmes

14.151 Reported — By Professor Pugh that following the Assessment Board Chairs' Briefing sessions an issue had been raised regarding the pass mark of level 11 modules being used as part of undergraduate programmes where the module, also being undertaken by level 11 students, had a pass mark set at 50%. It was proposed that the students at undergraduate level should not be disadvantaged by the change to the pass mark at level 11 and therefore the School would have to manage the issue manually applying a 40% pass mark for undergraduate students only.

14.152 Resolved

1. That the revisions to the Policy and Procedures for the Creation, Moderation and Administration of Formal Written Examinations be approved (**Gov**).
2. That student feedback is given further consideration with a view to regularising timescales for different types of assessment (coursework, formal examinations, dissertation/projects) (**ARWG**).
3. That the regulatory text for Integrated Masters programmes be approved (**Gov**).
4. That the MITs form is modified to include self-declaration of extensions received (**MITs Working Group**).
5. TPG Assessment Boards' are allowed discretion to *advise* students with 30+ failed credit to resit before commencing the dissertation/project with immediate effect and will be allowed discretion to *require* students with 30+ failed credit to resit before commencing the dissertation/project from 2015-16 (**Gov**).
6. That allowing TPG Assessment Boards discretion to compensate a 30 credit module is not approved at this stage.
7. That the guidelines being developed by LTQEN dovetail with policy development in relation to Turnitin and plagiarism (**Gov/ARWG/LTQN**).
8. That a database of minor plagiarism versus poor academic practice decisions be maintained in sufficient detail to inform future decisions (**Gov**).
9. That there should be detailed recording of all plagiarism offences in order to identify trends, precedent and reporting to the relevant Committee(s) (**Gov**).
10. That all plagiarism assessors should be advised to cross check findings with

another plagiarism assessor as a matter of good practice (**Gov**).

11. That the Assessment Regulations Working Group should continue in session 2015-16 (**Gov**).
12. A Plagiarism Working Group is not approved.
13. Students at undergraduate level who have undertaken a level 11 module will have a 40% pass mark applied and be assessed under 2013-14 regulations for this session only (**EBE ADLTQ**).

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES REPORT

14.153	Considered	Revised Mitigating Circumstances Regulations (APC14/76/1).
14.154	Reported	By Dr Walsh that the Mitigating Circumstances Working Group was continuing to refine the MITs process and the Group would report back to APC at its November 2015 meeting providing feedback on the May and August exam diets.
14.155	Resolved	That the update is noted.

HEAR REPORT

14. 156	Considered	The final report from the HEAR Working Group (APC14/87/1).
14. 157	Reported	By Dr McLarnon that the report contained a number of recommendations following the conclusion of the HEAR pilot. The recommendations were both operational and academic policy-related. The academic policy considerations were: • Whether to implement from 2015-16 • To recommend the HEAR template (appendix 2) • To consider phased implementation • The desirability of HEAR "Champions"within Schools • The inclusion of resit indicators on transcript • Standard list of activities (appendix 4) • Guidance Materials (appendices 6a and 6b)
14.158	Discussion	Dr McLarnon informed members that HEAR was not mandatory but its use was becoming more widespread in Scottish HEIs. Members in favour of pursuing implementation at this stage but were mindful that implementation from 205-16 would be subject to all operational aspects being agreed by the University Executive Board. If this was forthcoming the roll out could be specified. With regard to Hear champions in Schools it was proposed that it would be appropriate to incorporate this aspect within the *Engage* programme. Members discussed whether it was better to include resit indicators on the transcript. At this stage there was no conclusive case for or against so it was agreed to conform with normal sector practice in the first instance but to monitor developments. Mr Lopez informed members that with regard to some of the operational aspects, the current institutional home of transcripts was the Registry and he anticipated that any future charge would only be for paper copies. He added that there had been some early stage discussion of student portal implementation but further discussion was required with the Chief Information Officer and other stakeholders.

14. 159	Resolved	1. That the business case is taken forward to the University Executive Board and the roll out plan is developed pending approval by the Board (**HEAR Working Group).** 2. That the resit indicator should be included at this stage **(HEAR Working Group).** 3. That concept of HEAR "champions" is incorporate into the Engage programme (**HEAR Working Group/Engage Team**).

STRATEGY FOR LEARNING

14.160	Considered	1. Strategy for Learning Refresh (APC14/80/1). 2. Progress update on the implementation of the SfL operational plan for 2014/15 (APC14/81/1)
14.161	Reported	By Professor Whittaker that the refresh of the Strategy for Learning had been undertaken to link more explicitly to GCU Strategic goals and a clarification of purpose in order to focus on developing curricula and provide guidance for staff. Metrics would be derived through existing sources, e.g. APAs and standard sector benchmarks and therefore avoid duplication of information gathering. The operational plan identified key areas and progress would be reported on a biannual basis to APC and Senate.
14.162	Resolved	1. That the refresh is approved. 2. The progress update is noted.

CONTEXTUALISED ADMISSIONS POLICY

14.163	Considered	A policy designed in response to part of the Outcome Agreement where the SFC is sought evidence that steps are being taken to address barriers to recruitment including HEI's approach to contextualised admissions (APC14/93/1).
14.164	Reported	By Ms McGiffen that contextualised admissions was becoming more common in the sector and a measure intended to enhance wider access. There were three contextual factors, specifically applicants who: are a Young Carer; are identified as having care experience; have attended a Glasgow Schools for Higher Education Programme (SHEP) School. The impact of the policy would be monitored closely
14.165	Discussion	One member pointed out that, under section 3 (Support for Applicants), "Student Wellbeing Service" should be replaced by "Student Services".
14.166	Resolved	That the policy be approved subject to the above change (**Admissions and Enquiry Service**).

CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

14.167	Considered	A policy designed to formalise current practice and procedures for applicants and registered students who declare a relevant criminal conviction (APC14/94/1).
14.168	Discussion	Members were concerned that there was no explicit delineation of the differing disclosure requirements for different subject areas. There was significant potential for confusion without it as this policy would not apply to a many programmes in Health and Life Sciences which, in order to meet professional compliance standards, required enhanced disclosure of applicants.
14.169	Resolved	That draft policy is revised with the required delineation of differing disclosure

requirements before resubmission to APC (**Admissions and Enquiry Service**).

REFRESH OF TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE PORTFOLIO

14.170	Considered	Description and rationale for Taught Postgraduate Portfolio Refresh in reports from: 1. Glasgow School for Business and Society (APC14/82/1) 2. School of Engineering and Built Environment (APC14/83/1) 3. School of Health and life Sciences(APC14/84/1)
14.171	Resolved	That the refresh reports be approved.

GSBS - CHANGE TO PROGRAMME MODE OF DELIVERY

14.172	Considered	Proposals for a change to programme mode of delivery in undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes (APC14/95/1).
14.173	Reported	By Professor Hilton that the consultation process had shown a general desire to move from long-thin to short-fat modules. This paper presented the plan of how to get there. The aim was to progress the change without undue disruption.
14.175	Resolved	That the proposals are approved.

SEBE- INTRODUCTION OF A NEW PROGRAMME PATHWAYS:
MSC INTERNATIONAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT (ENERGY) and MSC ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (WASTE)

14.176	Considered	1. A proposed "energy" pathway for the MSc International Project Management programme (APC14/86/1). 2. A proposed "waste" pathway for the MSc Energy & Environmental Management programme (APC14/99/1).
14.177	Discussion	Members were interested in the large number of optional modules (9) on the MSc EEM waste management pathway. Dr Ferguson stated that these were generic across the programme and determined as the options that fit with this pathway.
14.178	Resolved	That the proposals be approved with additional caution that the number of optional modules be monitored for ongoing viability (**EBE ADLTQ**).

SEBE – FIRE RISK ENGINEERING, CHANGE OF AWARD TITLE AND GCU LONDON DELIVERY

14.179	Considered	A change of award from BSc to BEng and delivery of programme at GCUL (APC14/96/1).
14.180	Discussion	One member requested confirmation that, as the change was to the exit award and not the programme title, had the Quality Assurance and Enhancement procedures been followed. The Committee Secretary commented that colleagues in Governance and Quality Enhancement had advised the School on the appropriate actions to be taken in line with the University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement procedures. Dr Amrane-Cooper also welcomed the development from the perspective of GCU London.

14.181 Resolved That the proposal for the Fire Risk Engineering Degree Programme title change to BEng (Hons)/BEng and part-time delivery of the programme at GCU London be approved.

SHLS – ACADEMIC CASES FOR COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMMES

14.182 Approved 1. The Academic Case for the transnational delivery of the PgC Medical Ultrasound to Lifeway Specialized Training Center, Sharjah, UAE (APC14/88/1).

2. The Academic Case for the transnational delivery by GCU of train the trainer programme to Dasman Diabetes Institute, Kuwait (APC14/89/1).

GCU LONDON – CONCEPT PAPER

14.183 Considered A concept paper for a Postgraduate Certificate in Enterprise Operational Risk Management programme at GCU London (APC14/91/1).

14.184 Discussion Members drew a distinction between the overall programme concept and the accreditation or RPL of Chase Cooper modules.

14.185 Resolved
1. That the programme concept is approved.
2. That the accreditation of professional modules is addressed under normal University Quality Assurance and Enhancement procedures. (**Dean GCU London**)

HESA PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

14.186 Received A report on GCU and Scottish HE Sector HESA performance indicators for 2015 (APC14/79/1).

GGAP/COLLEGE CONNECT PROGRESS UPDATE FOR MAY 2015

14.187 Received A brief summary of progress has been indicated in relation to the GGAP/College Connect operational plan, which has been agreed by the SFC for 2013-15 (APC14/90/1).

LEARNING AND TEACHING SUBCOMMITTEE

14.188 Received Confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2015 (LTSC14/34/1).