



Meeting Number APC16/1
Confirmed

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2016

PRESENT:	Dr N. Andrew, Dr R. Clougherty, Ms J Fisher (<i>vice</i> Ms S. McGiffen) Mr S. Lopez, Ms J. Main, Professor A. Morgan, Dr N. McLarnon, Mr R. Ruthven, Dr S. Rate, Dr M. Sharp, Mr I. Stewart, Professor B. Steves, Professor R. Whittaker (Acting Chair)	
APOLOGIES:	Professor I. Cameron, Professor T. Hilton, Mr V. McKay, Professor V. Webster	
BY INVITATION:	Mr I. Butchart, Ms D. Donnet	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Dr M. Acharyya, Ms L. Tucker, Mr P. Woods (Secretary)	
Welcome		
The acting Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of the new academic session and explained that the Chair sent her apologies as she was away on University business.		
MINUTES		
16.001	Considered	The minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2016 (APC16/01/01).
16.002	Resolved	That the minutes be approved as a correct record.
MATTERS ARISING		
PRE MASTERS (<i>Arising on 15.104</i>)		
16.003	Reported	By the Secretary that the proposal was now being taken forward by Academic Quality following scrutiny by the Exceptions Subcommittee of APC who had requested clear statements to the effect that students will have reached the IELTS level of the programme being progressed to by the end of the pre Masters programme and confirmation that visa compliance requirements have been met.
ACADEMIC PILLARS (<i>Arising on 15.141</i>)		
16.004	Reported	By the Acting Chair that Senate had endorsed the academic pillars outline of the programme of work which is to be taken forward in 2016/17 restating the University's core principles and priorities for learning, teaching and quality.

INTO GCU: CHANGE OF PROGRAMME TITLES		
16.005	Considered	A proposed reversion to the programme titles of the portfolio of programmes delivered at INTO Glasgow Caledonian University (APC16/09/01).
16.006	Reported	By Mr Butchart that there had been a previous change of titles around August 2013 but it had since been decided that this change was flawed and led to a lack of clarity. The differentiation written into the titles relating to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework was not considered to be relevant to the market or to INTO's agents, who preferred consistency across INTO centres. The reversion was considered appropriate due to this feedback and the concomitant need to aid recruitment.
16.007	Discussion	Members requested clarification on the current status of these titles. Mr Butchart stated that they were currently in use. Members felt that it was apparent that the titles issue had become confused and there was now a need to regularise it from a governance perspective. However they also made it clear that changes such as these should be made with approval in advance from APC and not retrospectively.
16.008	Resolved	That the proposal to revert to the titles <i>International Foundation, International Diploma</i> and <i>Graduate Diploma</i> be approved. (Action: AQ&D/INTO).
FITNESS TO PRACTISE POLICY		
16.009	Considered	A draft revision of the School of Health and Life Sciences Fitness to Practise Policy (APC16/01/1).
16.010	Reported	By Dr McLarnon that the policy revision was in order to align the Fitness to Practise Policy more closely with the University's Code of Student Conduct.
16.011	Reported	By Ms Donnet that although the two policies were not the same there was a degree of overlap and the revised version of the Fitness to Practise Policy aligned more closely particularly with regard to the timescales for the Code of Student Conduct processes.
16.012	Resolved	That the document be approved to Senate subject to some minor corrections. (Action: SHLS/Department of Governance)
REVIEW OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING SUBCOMMITTEE		
16.013	Considered	Proposals to reconfigure the terms of reference and composition of the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee (APC16/08/1).
16.014	Discussion	By the Acting Chair that the paper proposed revised terms of reference and membership of the Learning and Teaching Sub Committee (LTSC) in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarify the focus of APC and LTSC • strengthen the link between APC and LTSC • ensure appropriate representation from the academic Schools and relevant professional services to engage in the academic discussion and decision-making process.
16.015	Resolved	That the proposals be approved. (Action: Department of Governance)
NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2016		

16.016	Considered	An overview of 2016 National Student Survey (NSS) results at institutional, programme, sector level and a high-level overview of the open comments (APC16/02/1).
16.017	Reported	By Ms Roden that the results had been disappointing and were below the sector average. Analysis and the development of action plans to address the outcome were already underway and she asked members to provide their input to the process.
16.018	Discussion	<p>Members made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The module feedback system was described as flawed and a factor in programme teams not always being aware of where there are problems; • It was noted that HLS are focusing on electronic submission of assessment; assessment burden; assessment loading; module assessment structure design • It was suggested that guidance on assessment design best practice (allied to/similar to existing guidance on assessment loading) would be helpful to programme teams; • There should be more staff development and training on policy and procedures. It was noted that Academic Quality and Development have plans to implement more training; • There was a need to raise student awareness of notional effort so that they are aware that learning not just about attending scheduled classes. This could be achieved through student communications particularly at induction; • Induction – institutional guidance would be welcomed; rolling induction suggested (i.e. for each year tailored to levels) <p>In addition to the above members also welcomed that there would be an overall GCU action plan aligned to Strategy for Learning and Digital Strategy.</p> <p>Members also expressed the view that they would also like to have feedback on areas where the University is doing well.</p> <p>Some members voiced caution about the message on notional effort and that it should be nuanced to take into account part-time cohorts and different modes of attendance.</p>
16.019	Resolved	That the above comments be taken into account in ongoing discussions. (Action: Strategy and Planning).
HESA EMPLOYMENT INDICATOR 2016		
16.020	Considered	An overview of the University's Employment PI published on 7 July 2016 and the proportion of leavers in graduate level activity at School level. (APC16/03/1).
16.021	Reported	By Ms Roden that the information had been circulated to Schools and did not include part-time students.
16.022	Resolved	That the overview is noted.
RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) POLICY		
16.023	Considered	A proposed amendment to the University's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (APC16/04/1).
16.024	Reported	By Professor Whittaker that the change related to the transfer credit limit imposed at Masters level from 90 to 120 credits. This would enable applicants to Masters programmes with postgraduate diplomas, to gain full recognition of their prior credit and undertake 60 credits at GCU. This would provide a direct

		progression pathway through RPL from post graduate diploma to Masters programmes, in line with all other levels and stages of taught awards at GCU. Practice in the HE sector varied but this particular solution was common.
16.025	Discussion	Professor Clougherty that this was at variance with the practice approved for GCU New York. The Committee noted the concerns and agreed that a variation may be required for GCU New York. Members also discussed the difference between students with RPL and students who take grades as well as credit with them on internal transfer.
16.026	Resolved	That the amendment be approved. (Action: AQ&D)
QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND ASSURANCE HANDBOOK		
16.027	Considered	Revisions to the Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook (APC16/05/1) .
16.028	Reported	By the Acting Chair that the overview of the revisions could be found on page 2 and the biggest revision from the previous iteration was in chapter 10 <i>Partnership and Collaborative Arrangements</i> .
16.029	Discussion	<p>Professor Andrew informed members that the revisions reflected to a large extent the work being done in relation to academic pillars. This was not primarily about changing policy and procedure but about reaffirming the existing policy and procedure. In the document the chapter headings were the same as before but there was greater alignment of the forms contained within them and enhanced guidance on how to complete them. The revisions would entail no additional work for colleagues but provided them with a clarified document, reaffirming the University's quality assurance and enhancement procedures. Minor annual updates, on a housekeeping basis, would be undertaken by Academic Quality and Development as required.</p> <p>The ADLTQs requested that, due to the limited time for consultation, there be additional time for consultation with their School colleagues and for further feedback to be taken into account by Academic Quality and Development. It was agreed that any additional feedback would be considered by Academic Quality and Development in a meeting with the ADLTQs scheduled for 22 September 2016.</p> <p>Members expressed some concern at the timescales for ratification of modules by a host Assessment Board and communication of this ratification to a Programme Assessment Board. The ADLTQs stated that they would welcome further guidance on this from Academic Quality and Development.</p> <p>The following amendments were proposed by members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify which version this is (<i>post meeting note: it was clarified that this was version 6 as stated in the draft</i>). • "CMA requirements" should replace "new CMA requirements" on page 2 • Under <i>Minor Changes to a Programme</i> there should be greater emphasis on consent and timing. • On page 30 clarify that the "preceding year" is preceding academic year. • On page 34 under <i>Programme Approval Panels</i> there clarification of what is meant by "digital learning". • Clarify accuracy of the 18 month approval timeline. • <i>Code of Student Discipline</i> is amended to <i>Code of Student Conduct</i>.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On page 65, paragraph 2.1, “should be” should be replaced by “must be”. • On page 135 to note that there is no position of “vice Dean”. • On page 144 “Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Student Experience)” be amended to DVC Academic. • In Section 9 <i>External examiners</i> the section should cross refer with policy document <i>Regulations for the Appointment and Responsibilities of External Examiners</i> and include process for termination of contract. • On page 102 there should be a more explicit delineation of responsibilities on module feedback. • The role of Associate Deans for Learning Teaching and Quality should be made more prominent throughout. • On page 81 the process for discontinuing a programme should be clarified. • Where there are <i>Common Good Curriculum</i> references, clarify what is policy and what is guidance. • Consider using formatting style that makes it easier to understand which chapters relate to which appendix.
16.030	Resolved	<p>That the APC approve the Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook subject to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The incorporation of amendments and clarifications highlighted in the discussion and bullet points detailed above; 2. Further feedback from the Schools via the ADLTQs being considered on 22 September 2016. <p>(Action: AQ&D; ADLTQs)</p>
AOB		
16.031	Reported	By one member that there was some concern that the academic calendar allowed only two working days between the end of the examination period and the start of trimester B.
16.032	Reported	By Mr Lopez that he was aware of this but it had been logistically necessary and Senate had agreed to the calendar.
ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMPOSITION & MEMBERSHIP 2016-17		
16.033	Considered	The Terms of Reference and Composition and Membership 2016-17 (APC16/06/1) .
16.034	Discussion	Members discussed proposed amendments, as previously discussed with the Chair, on the terms of reference and the Committee title to reflect the implementation of policy i.e. to explicitly state the <i>practice</i> responsibilities of the Committee
16.035	Resolved	That the terms of reference be updated accordingly. (Action: Department of Governance)
ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT		
16.036	Approved	The Academic Policy Committee Annual Report (APC16/07/1) .
GCU LONDON – ACADEMIC CASE		
16.037	Considered	An academic case for the proposed programme Post Graduate Certificate (PGCert) in Enterprise Operational Risk Management, GCU London (APC16/10/1) .

16.038	Reported	By Ms Tucker that the concept had been approved by APC in February 2015 and this was the follow up academic case. The partners were Chase Cooper, a leading provider of governance, risk and compliance solutions.
16.039	Discussion	Dr Andrew stated that Academic Quality and Development had more comments on this proposal and wished to have further discussion with the programme team.
16.040	Resolved	That further discussion take place before the academic case is brought back for approval. (Action AQ&D;GCU London Programme Team)
LEARNING AND TEACHING SUBCOMMITTEE		
16.041	Received	Confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2016 (LTSC15/55/1) .
ADMISSIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES		
16.042	Considered	A paper summarising the purpose and process of the Common Good Curriculum (CGC) development and progress to date. (ASC15/3/A2) .

Ag/apc/September2016/minutes